

**SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO 8
Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting**



MEETING MINUTES

August 8, 2023, 6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

A regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held at Station 82 and accessible on Zoom. Chair Lee Boling called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. In Attendance: Commissioner Andy Rorie, Commissioner Greg Hesse, Commissioner Lee Boling, Fire Chief Lonnie Rash, Assistant Chief Chris Wyrobek, District Secretary Carol Trescott, members of the District, and members of the public via zoom.

INTRODUCTIONS & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- Add: Executive Report, Item F, Fire Chief Transition

A motion was made by Commissioner Hesse and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: move to approve the Agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The following warrants and electronic transfers were approved for payment:

- Warrant Numbers 115015 through 115075 totaling \$172,009.73
- Electronic Transfers 07/01/2023 – 07/31/2023 totaling \$522,793.12

A motion was made by Commissioner Hesse and seconded by Commissioner Rorie: move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Fire Chief Position: Chief Rash presented the Board with a formal letter stating his notification of retirement. He has initiated the retirement process with the state of Washington Department of Retirement and received an estimate confirmation from their offices. Chief Rash was recruited and accepted a position from his hometown agency, Central Valley Fire, in Montana. He anticipates leaving the District in early September and expressed his appreciation and thanked the Board for their support and confidence in him during his time as Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, and Deputy Chief of the District.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: move to accept Chief Rash's notice of retirement. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Boling tabled the appointment of an interim Fire Chief until after the Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE REPORT: Chief Rash

A. Baltimore Road Property: Chief Rash will move forward in the process with the Baltimore Road property sale with realtor Shane Delaney. Mr. Delaney worked with the Chief earlier to establish the market value of the parcel. The property is currently leased for agricultural purposes and the lease notification agreement will need to be fulfilled.

B. Part-time Program: District 8's only part-time firefighter/paramedic accepted a fulltime position with Moses Lake Fire Department; there are no longer any members in the District's part-time program. Local 690's business agent contacted Chief Rash to initiate paperwork for decertification of the part-time group. In 2022, the Board granted the Fire Chief authority to make decisions relative to the part-time program. Chief Rash said based on the fact that the current contract expires at the end of this year, that most of the part-time funding has been transferred to the fulltime program, and that Local 690 approached the District to decertify, he will move forward with the process of decertifying the part-time program. PERC requires a simple letter when a decertification is not contested.

C. Strategic Plan Update: There was a great turnout at the Strategic Plan stakeholder meeting. The attendance at the community meeting was not as good; however, the community was responsive to the online survey. Bridge Group would like to meet with the commissioners in August; Chief Rash will confirm a date and return to the Board.

D. Human Resources Manager: Danny Klocko has been selected as the District's new Human Resources Manager and will start on September 5th. Mr. Klocko was formerly with Kootenai Health, and Empire Health and brings a wealth of education and experience to the District.

E. Finance-Executive Assistant: Second round interviews have been scheduled with several Finance-Executive Assistant applicants and Chief Rash anticipates a candidate selection will be made soon followed by a mid-September start date.

F. Fire Chief Transition: Chief Rash reported he will leave a transition plan for the Interim Fire Chief outlining detail of his vision for the District which includes station renovations, a new fire station, a property purchase in collaboration with the City of Spokane Valley, moving the maintenance facility, hiring HR and Finance positions, and Ambulance Service Contract negotiations. The Chief said he has completed the 2024 budget which will need to be finalized once revenue numbers are received. The 2024 fire levy will include a 3.5% COLA; and per contract, the labor group will receive a 3.5% salary increase.

OPERATIONS REPORT: Chief WYROBEK

A. Chief WYROBEK presented the Board with reports containing 2023 first half of the year Customer Care Card feedback. He stated District members continue to do outstanding work and the comments are reflective of that in the surveys.

B. Crews have been training with Blitz line nozzles and incorporating relay pumping into that for low frequency type of events.

C. The District has responded to several wildfires in the last week both locally and as aid with auto and mutual aid partners.

CORRESPONDENCE

A. A thank you from the president of the Tower Mountain Homeowners Association, and Chief WYROBEK's message to crew who responded to the Hilby Road and Katie Lane fires.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:21 pm, Commissioner Boling called for a 30 minute Executive Session Per RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee; and, per RCW 42.30.140(4)(b) that portion of a meeting during which the governing body is planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or grievance or mediation proceedings, or reviewing the proposal made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress. Chief Rash was asked to attend. Commissioner Boling said the regular meeting would reconvene at 6:51 pm.

At 6:50 pm, Commissioner Boling announced that Executive Session would be extended an additional 15 minutes until 7:06 pm.

At 7:06 pm, Commissioner Boling called the regular meeting back in session.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: To appoint Assistant Chief Chris WYROBEK as interim Fire Chief effective September 1st. The motion carried unanimously.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Rorie and seconded by Commissioner Hesse: to move Chief WYROBEK to the current Fire Chief's salary during that time period. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Boling asked Chief WYROBEK if he would accept the position of Interim Fire Chief on September 1st.

Chief WYROBEK said he would accept the position of Interim Fire Chief and would be honored to serve the department during the transition.

Commissioner Rorie said the Board will move forward in exploring the process of selecting a new Fire Chief.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Oath of Office/Swearing in Ceremony

The commissioners would like to recognize Chief Rash's retirement and will work with the Local on preparing the event.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:11 pm Commissioner Boling adjourned the regular meeting.

Lee C. Boling, Chair
Fire District 8 Commissioner

ATTEST:

Carol L. Trescott, District Secretary