# VASHON ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE
# BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

**Date:** 05/09/2017
**Time:** 6:30 p.m.
**Place:** 10020 SW Bank Rd, EOC Room

## REGULAR MEETING

**Present:** Camille Staczek, Chair
Brigitte Schran-Brown, Vice-Chair (participated telephonically)
David Hoffmann, Commissioner
Candy McCullough, Commissioner
Ron Turner, Commissioner
Charles H. Krimmert, Fire Chief
Robert Larsen, Assistant Chief
Avi Rana, Minute Taker

**Guests:** Ron and Barbara Smotherson, Bob Johnson

**Amendments to Agenda:**

Discussion on House 56 is postponed. The next meeting is on 5/23/17 and not on 5/30 due to payroll approval.

**Approval of 04/23/17 Special Meeting Minutes**

*Discussion*: The objectives listed on a separate sheet was Commissioner Schran-Brown's Objectives, and not for all the Commissioners.

**TABLED**

**Approval of 04/25/17 Regular Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

**"I move we approve the minutes of 04/25/17."**

**MINUTES APPROVED, 5-0**

**Voucher Approval**

Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

**"I move that we approve the referenced vouchers as detailed in Administrative Memorandum 05.09.2017-1."**

**MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

**Chiefs' Report**

*Chief Krimmert:*

- A/C Larson and Chief Krimmert are advancing on Part-Time Paid program (previously known as Enhanced Volunteer Program). Tentative target date is July. Transportation Fee Program will also begin at the same time since one is essentially funding the other.
- Investigating a voluntary "membership" program, where members pay a nominal fee and if there is any cost after transport, it will be waived.
- Two recruits are graduating on May 15th. Recruit Lenz will start his first shift on May 17th because he is already very familiar with the island. Recruit McMullen will start at the end of the month.
- Call Volume: We are at 550 calls. Last time this year we were at 560 calls. A volunteer meeting is scheduled for May 16th to discuss part-time paid and volunteer programs. The chief of staff is currently organizing Volunteer Fire Fighter Academy. We have 6-8 committed (targeting 12) for a condensed academy (4 months instead of 6 months). Tentative start date is July 25th-November 18th. The training will be done here on the island.
- Financials: Thank you to Barbara Huff for her services. We will still consult with Lake, Kennedy, McCulloch but on an as-needed basis instead of day-to-day.
- ALS Transition will be complete as soon as the final transfer of King County Medic Funds is complete. It is currently being processed.
- Chief and A/C attended Zone 3 Operational Chiefs and Chiefs meeting in Kent to stay updated with Zone 3 organizations. New Minor operational change (with exception of us) is that the call backs stating ambulance is enroute will be eliminated (46,000 calls a year). Callbacks will only occur when an ambulance cannot be dispatched.

**New Business**

Resolution 17-365 Surplusing Equipment

Resolution to surplus the Wildland Skid that slides into the bed of the Brush truck.

Motion by Commissioner McCullough:

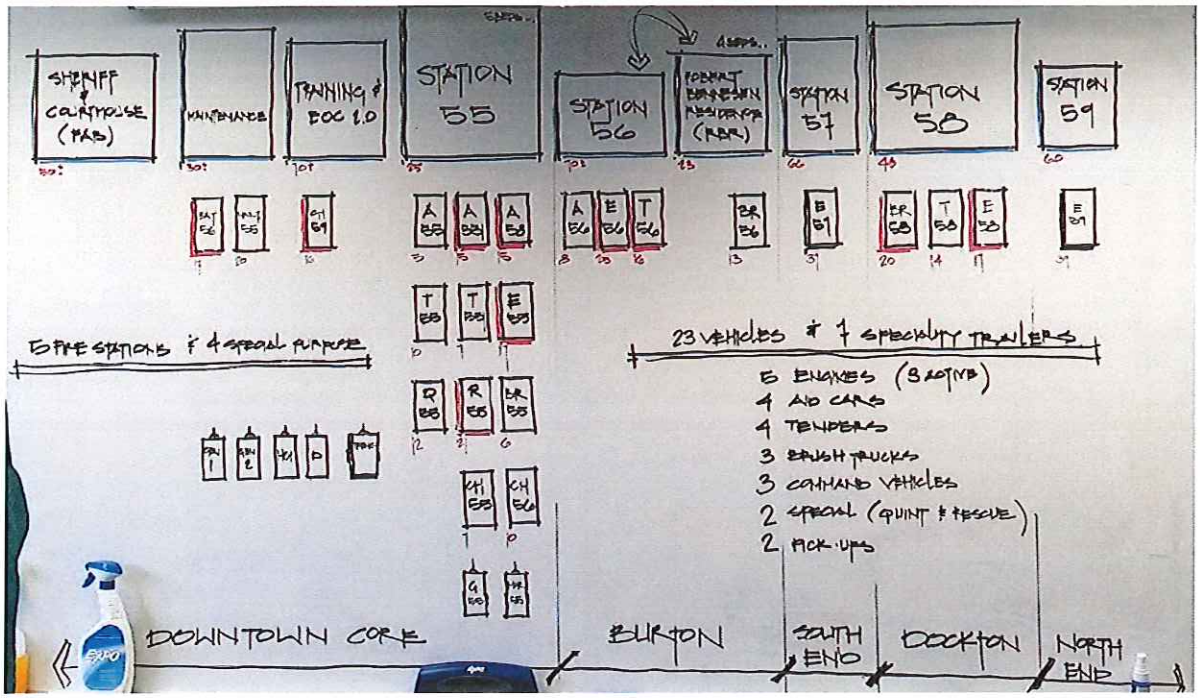
**"I move we approve Resolution 17-365 surplusing the wildland skid and gear."**

**MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

**Old Business**

District Overviews

*Chief Krimmert:*




FACILITIES:

- The district is responsible for five fire stations and four other buildings with special purposes. Red number under them denotes the year of the building & the smaller boxes are their Apparatus. The youngest building is 25 years and oldest building is 70+ years old (2 buildings). We are concerned about the age of the buildings; a lot of current codes and industry standards have changed dramatically. As the buildings get older, it is getting harder and harder to comply with the industry norms. Based on the age of the building, many of our building don't comply with the current seismic standards as well. Our Engineer's report specifically stated that Station 56 couldn't withstand a good shake.
- We need a larger maintenance fund. We have over $200,000 deferred maintenance across our buildings. There is no Capital Fund for future construction or for current maintenance.
- Many of the stations are poorly placed from response areas to volunteer core. Only one of them has living quarters. The Bennedsen house provides housing for Station 56.

FLEET:

- We have 23 apparatus and seven specialty trailers. There are two apparatus and one trailer that are essentially non-operational (since 2009). The Trench trailer's days are limited. FPA recommends any apparatus over 15 years old should no longer be frontline apparatus. It can still be used to respond but can no longer be the primary vehicles. Our Fleet has eight apparatus that are over 15 years old. If it's over 25 years, you just remove it from service according to the NFPA. That one, as a rural fire district, we can push, but they can't be first line – but could be held in reserve. Numbers under the apparatus is their age.
- *Question* from the Board: Where is the Ladder? *Answer*: We've changed the name to Quint because ladder trucks don't have water. This truck has a small amount of

water and will be placed in service June 1. It will be Quint 55. We have a particularly old fleet.

- Addition to the age, another concern is the distribution of these apparatuses. The bulk are stationed here. Three of the four aid cars operate out of Station 55; fourth is out of Station 56 (Burton). We currently don't have a retirement and replacing apparatus schedule. Aspirational goal is to have an aid car every two years (with an eight year cycle). We run two quite often, three regularly and at times we have all four aid cars responding at one time.
- Engines: We currently have five, three are active. One's 25 years old, which is troubling. We believe that figure should be reduced to four – three active and one in reserve. Four tenders are large capacity except for one; all 3,000 (gal.) except for one 1,500. That's a good number. Newer apparatus should be primary.
- We believe we can reduce the brush trucks down to two and we are currently pursuing that. There are three command vehicles and all are well used. One is 17 years old and starting to show its age. Then we have the Quint and the Rescue; Rescue truck is 21 years old.
- The chief would like to replace one aid car first, then an engine and the rescue truck third. To save money on rescue, the chiefs are all talking about in lieu of one heavy Rescue, maybe doing two smaller heavy-duty pickups and split the load. One for fire hauling air, lights and rehab; the other for rescue. The replacement with the two smaller trucks would replace the aging Rescue truck for half the projected cost.
- The reserve fund currently established for replacement has $500, so we have a lot of work ahead of us to replenish the capital funds for these vehicles.

*Discussion:*

- *Question* about the "GT" designation on the vehicles; *Answer* that abbreviation is for the specialty generator trailers. The Chief explained his drawing.
- *Question:* Do you know the age of the "boat?" While unknown, it is at least 30 years old.
- *Question (Bob Johnson):* Does the NFPA tie age to mileage, because there's a difference between a vehicle of 25 years on it with five miles and another vehicle running 16 calls a day. *Answer*: We concur. We plan to run our vehicle 25 years, except for the first line. The NFPA does not tie to anything else but safety features. While a new truck is $500,000 consideration is being given to buying a refurbished truck. Older trucks in reserve are still viable and can be re-tooled. Smaller engines can fit down long driveways and narrow roadways so rather than Type 1 larger vehicles, we're looking at smaller "urban interface" vehicles.
- *Comment from Ron Smotherson*: They came to a few meetings in regard to the switch of the medics to King County Medic One. They are very concerned with the article published in last week's Beachcomber. They are deeply concerned with lack of funds, age of the fleets and low volunteer core. They were "taken aback" that if only two firefighters show up, they can't enter the fire. If there's anyone in the home, they can't enter because of state law, if they read the article right.
- *Chief Krimmert*: We can do what they call "rescue mode." If we have three persons on the rig, two can enter while one remains outside for a short time. So,
    a) The Deppman Road fire had a series of challenges. It was toned out as a minor fire. So only the engine would have gone. If the medics were here, they wouldn't have gone.

b) When they got there, and declared it a working fire and that's when everyone else started to come.

- *Comment from Ron Smothermon*: Now he is even more deeply concerned in about the lack of funding. And you're talking about a deferred maintenance to a catastrophic level, which really alarms him and should alarm everyone on the island.
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: It does alarm us.
- *Comment from Ron Smothermon*: And you're saying that there's $500 for a vehicle replacement that may cost up to $500,000, even somewhat less refurbished? He compared it to the school bond for a track field that should have been budgeted for 40 years ago. Now he's here and hearing the same thing about an engine that costs a half million dollars.
- *Comment from Chief Krimmert*: Your point is valid. The purpose of this meeting is that up to now, we've not been keeping the public informed of where we are. I'm the new chief, so we are trying to get the information out. We are appreciative of the Beachcomber article to get this information out. While he appreciates the comment about the lack firefighters being tied to the Medic One issue, the chief is more concerned about the bigger picture. Our volunteer core is at an all-time low. That is a concern. Manpower is down; funding and low taxes.
- *Question from Barbara Smothermon*: How are you funded?
- Answer from Chief Krimmert: We are funded through your property taxes. We get $0.94 per $1,000 of assessed value.
- *Comment from Ron Smothermon*: I'm shocked! I'm so concerned for every person on this island about the lack of funding and the age of the fleet. There are budgets that are followed and replacement – especially for critical infrastructure like Search and Rescue, Fire Department. I'm really even more alarmed after being here than the Beachcomber article last week.
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: This is why we're doing this so everyone knows where we're at. We didn't really know how far we were in the stuff. Charlie came on and showed us we're in deep stuff here. In the past, we used to have a replacement schedule and somehow that funding got diverted elsewhere. Unfortunately, none of us were numbers people that caught it as it was happening. I apologize for my ignorance on that level. A couple years ago when we started pressing and questioning the administration at the time because I noticed that we used to have like $250,000 - $300,000 in reserve for facilities and for operations. And then we had like $1.2 million reserve, period. And then I watched it go away and I asked, "Whoa, whoa! Where's this going?" and the answer was, "Well, we have to do this because this happened." Then the next year, the other money went away.
- *Comment from Ron Smothermon*: But those requests for money going elsewhere, came from where?
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: Well, they move money around in the budget.
- *Comment from Ron Smothermon*: The county does?
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: No, no; the chiefs. Like if we needed an apparatus fixed and it was the end of the year.

- *Comment from Barbara Smothermon*: But aren't there meetings like this, where you have accountability and budget meetings?
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: Yes, we did; we have them regularly.
- *Comment from Barbara Smothermon*: And Candy, I'm just trying to understand.
- *Comment from the Board (McCullough)*: Yes, and I accept my responsibility that I was ignorant. When I started questioning it, we were already in the year.
- *Comment from Barbara Smothermon*: We have a lot of lives and a lot of property now at risk. So what the plan is moving forward and how we can help and make a difference? Because we need to.
- *Chief Krimmert* would like state that while we have $500 in our vehicle replacement fund and nothing in our facilities replacement fund, we do have a General Reserve for $1 Million, so there is some wiggle room. The best way to help is to pass on the information to your peers and neighbors and engage them. We're our own worst enemies in that when people call 9-1-1, we do everything we can to get in there and get the work done. Many times we overextend the players doing the work, quietly and unnoticed. He would like to go out to public with a plan in an organized manner when he requests for funds. We are funded predominantly through taxes (94¢/$1,000 assessed value) and the Fire District hasn't raised taxes in 26 years.
- He has set up a series of informational presentations to notify public about the VIFR issues. The next presentation on the 23rd is about Statistics (call volumes). Following meeting will be an Assessment of our Financials. Last presentation in June will be on the Overview of the District and where we should be going. In July, the Commissioner will have to work on the discussion of Tax Levy. We have to file by August if they decide to go ahead with it. That will give the public until November to raise awareness, get familiar with the issue and get informed.

House 56

**TABLED**

**General Comments**

None

**For the Good of the Order**

Thank you Firefighters and paramedics for all their terrific service!

**Documents Signed**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

*The next Regular Meeting will be on Tuesday, 05/30/17 at 6:30 p.m.*
*at 10020 SW Bank Rd, Vashon, EOC Room*

Approved this 13 day of June, 2017.

Camille Staczek

Camille Staczek, Chair

Avi Rana, Minute Taker