VASHON ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

Date: 09/27/16
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: 10019 SW Bank Rd, Penny Farcy Training Center, large classroom

REGULAR MEETING

Present: Candy McCullough, Chair
Brigitte Schran-Brown, Vice-Chair
David Hoffmann, Commissioner
Camille Staczek, Commissioner
Ron Turner, Commissioner
Robert Larsen, Interim Assistant Chief
Susan Wolf, Minute Taker

Guests: Michelle Plorde, Keith Keller and John Herbert from King County EMS; Susan Reamer, Vashon Beachcomber; Mark Brownell, Mike Brown, Craig Harmeling, John Staczek, Joe Ulatoski, Mike Garvey, Ben Davidson, Randy Tonkin, Andy Johnson, Ken Jackson, Myron Hauge, Jojo Weller, Matt McCann, Charlie Krimmert, Josh Dueweke, James Cottrell, Karol Lake, and Barb Huff; and several members of the public.

Amendments to Agenda

The Chair moves Medic One Proposal up on the agenda.

Medic One Proposal

- Chief Larsen introduced Michelle Plorde, Director of King County Emergency Services Division; the outgoing South King County Medic One Chief John Herbert and the new Chief Keith Keller. Michelle then gave the following presentation while copies of her proposal were provided to the audience.
- For the benefit of the audience, Michele rehearsed the history of the medic transition reconsideration starting with the letter from B/C of EMS Mark Brownell and Medical Program Director Dr. Warren. The letter expressed concern about the reduced number of critical calls which can result in a reduction of skills. The one unit program (two paramedics) with no back-up means that during vacations or when paramedics were sick or injured, the remaining staff has to work long hours or several additional shifts. In the summer of 2014, the Board of Fire Commissioners approved exploring Medic One options.
- Director Michelle Plorde has worked 20 years in the EMS Division. She met Kathy (Bonner) and Stan (Horan) "back in the day." (*These two individuals were Vashon Island Fire & Rescue's first paramedics and began the Advanced Life Support [ALS] program here.*) Now Vashon Island Fire & Rescue (VIFR) has a single unit with eight career paramedic employees.

- King County EMS included a plan to review at VIFR's ALS program in their strategic plan, which was the work of Tom Herne (the late former Director). But in 2008, there was no mutual interest to look at it.
- Jim Fogarty, a former Director who recently retired, and the union were in the midst of negotiations in August 2015. In May of 2016, Michelle initiated union talks and finalized negotiations this August.
- The intent of this proposal at this point is relatively high level. Some details still need to be worked out. Michelle stated that they all believe that this is not going to be much different than the current service. The model in the proposal is similar to what VIFR has now; leaving one paramedic behind during transport. There would be back-up from an additional King County Medic One (KCM1) unit available to meet the Vashon unit on the other side if patient worsens on the ferry.
- There's lots of depth for staffing – major benefits for merging.
- EMS financial policies state that fund balances are transferred to the new agency. Vashon hasn't bought a lot of equipment, probably in anticipation of the transition. The balance of equipment funds is $630,440. If you subtract for purchasing a new medic vehicle and re-chassis of a backup medic vehicle, plus through the end-of-year expenses, it leaves $132,440. The Operating Fund balance is estimated to be $623,144 at year's end, minus liabilities such as cash out for vacations or sick leave means KCM1 would leave VIFR with $275,144 in that category. Altogether that would leave approximately $407,000. Some dual purpose personal protective equipment would be left. The remaining funds would be left with VIFR to allow hiring of firefighter/EMTs. This staffing provision KCM1 is willing to offer VIFR.
- Once details of implementation plan are finalized, probably the first quarter of next year, the King County Executive and Council would need to approve it.

Public Questions/Comments:

- A question was asked about the loss of income to the District. It was explained the $2,000,000 that VIFR invoices KCM1 is not a loss because we were expending the same money. Whether it paid for medics here or over town, it would be the same.
- Depending on the type of call, usually two paramedics answer. The new system would increase medic capacity; it would be a single unit (two paramedics with one aid car) here on Vashon.
- Lauralee Mayorkinos asked several questions of the Beachcomber's article of Director Plorde and Chief Herbert. She commented that she believed VIFR paramedics do a great job. She is a nurse who has worked critical care. In Seattle there are knifings, gunshot wounds and large mass casualty pileups on I-5. There are not those types of calls here. So how necessary is this?
- Barb Huff expressed concern about having more local control or influence to make adjustments. She asked if VIFR would have any input or influence? Chief Herbert answered that the Medic Directors in King County make decisions regarding patient care for all King County. Proposals are brought up during their bi-monthly meetings regarding changes in protocol and new medicines. It would be the same here on Vashon as a single area and county-wide.
- Susan Reimer remarked that Natalie Martin (former editor of the Beachcomber) expressed concern about budget cuts and income a couple years ago. The answer was that all ALS funding goes to pay for paramedics. Vashon also gets some BLS funds. To purchase an aid car, for instance, 35% is paid from ALS funds, the rest is BLS.

- Mark Brownell commented that it is the firefighting paramedics we would lose. The District will need to figure out how to fill that void, but it is not necessary for ALS services.
- Ron Smothermon commented that for fire suppression the District would have to hire firefighters because the Paramedic/Firefighters will be gone. He noted that 7-8 Paramedic/ Firefighters would no longer be here.
- Andy Johnson answered that while two paramedics are on duty, only one can actually engage in fire suppression. That Paramedic/Firefighter has to be able to extricate from the fire within 10 minutes in case there is an ALS call. So it is really more like four firefighters while the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard is three. At present, we have nine FF/EMTs filling four shifts; so that would mean hiring three FF/EMTs, and VIFR would have $407,000 to do that.
- Ron Smothermon also asked how much it cost for a firefighter. The answer was that it is $95,000 a year (including benefits) for a new FF/EMT.
- Joe Ulatoski asked if other public meetings about the proposal would be held. He asked if the Board was going to address very specific impacts for or to us, especially financially and analyze the proposal. The Chair answered that this is the first they've seen the proposal so they would "chew" on it, offer at least one more public meeting, after the Board reviews the proposal. The Chair also advised that this process has been worked on for two years.
- Jojo Weller asked how city medics would be trained to the uniqueness of Vashon Island, such as not being within 10-15 minutes of a hospital. The question also noted that Vashon medics spend a great deal more time with patients. She asked about the skill level from the city medics and if they were prepared for having to deliver patient care longer during transports. Chief Keller replied that Enumclaw has a small hospital but no critical care and it's about one hour to Seattle. He personally volunteered at Enumclaw and has experience there, so he understands our issues. There will be some learning involved but city medics are experienced and will be paired with the VIFR medics for three months. They have the skill level there. KCM1 medics used to back up Stan and Kathy here years ago. It was noted that Vashon hired more experienced medics to be more comfortable with them working here.
- Andy Johnson commented that he worked 16 years with KCM1 before being hired with VIFR four years ago. He stated it took about a year for him to get comfortable. Vashon medics can mentor someone else. Enumclaw is very much like us and KCM1 paramedics are experienced.
- It was commented that in the proposal it mentions using Airlift NW more. B/C Brownell answered that in time-based situations, VIFR already uses them quite a bit for MIs, serious strokes, etc. He used to work in rural Duvall and Carnation, which are quite a ways out there. It took about year to determine who, how, and when (to transport via Airlift NW).
- James Cottrell asked if there are metrics to track performance of our paramedics and patient outcomes alongside KCM1 medics. Chief Hebert answered that one indicator, for instance, is intubations. KCM1 does about 1000 year, or on average 13.7 per medic per year. The VIFR average is 2-4 per year. Each paramedic needs to do a certain amount so only 2-3 of the KCM1 medics are sent to the Operating Rooms to get tubes. Forty-five years ago, one paramedic was on every truck and now there are a reduced number of vehicles with two medics. ALS skills had degraded but by working fewer vehicles but with two medics only answering ALS calls, the KCM1 medics gained more skills.
- What is more common, is having medics out ill or injured and having a larger pool to reassign more medics rather than working longer hours. Cardiac arrests are the numbers we would use, but here the numbers are small. The difference between 50-75% might be one person. So it is difficult to quantify.

- B/C Brownell has not seen a slippage of skills, but commented he has to look globally and long range.
- _____ from the King County Office of Labor Relations is from Vashon and his parents live here.

Approval of 9/13/16 Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Turner:

"I move we approve the minutes of 09/13/16."

Correction: Line 51, Chief Larsen was a participant. The Chair attended as an observer. Commissioners are not participants.

MINUTES APPROVED as amended, 5-0

Voucher Approval

Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

"I move that we approve the referenced vouchers as detailed in Administrative Memorandum 09.27.2016-1."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

August Financial Report

- 67% of the year has passed; revenues are at 61% and expenses at 66.5% so we are right on.

Motion by Commissioner Turner:

"I move to accept the August Financial Report."

MOTION PASSED, 5-0

Chief's Report

Assistant Chief Larsen:

- For the month of August we had 119 runs.
- Chief Larsen is working on the budget for 2017.
- Saturday is our Annual Open House at Station 55 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

New Business

WFCA 2016 Conference

- The conference is October 27-29 in Yakima. The Chair would like to go. Commissioner Schran-Brown did not receive a brochure and would like to think about it.

Motion by Commissioner Turner:

"I move that we let Candy go."

MOTION PASSES 5-0

ACTION ITEM: Susan Wolf to provide Commissioner Schran-Brown with a conference brochure.

Resolution 16-352 Claims Agent

- Secretary Wolf explained that the executive for accepting claims against the District must be formally named and filed with the county auditor.

Motion by Commissioner Turner:

"I move to approve."

MOTION PASSES 5-0

Resolution 16-353 Public Records Officer

- Secretary Wolf explained that because of the retirement of Chief Lipe, a new Public Records Officer had to be formally identified. That person needs the proper training and at present, she was the one who has had numerous classes and been handling public requests.

Motion by Commissioner Schran-Brown:

"I move to approve."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

Resolution 16-354 Surplusing Items

- In April of this year the Board made a motion to surplus the former chief's old vehicle, however, no resolution had been made. We are now also getting rid of the old SCBA compressor.

Motion by Commissioner Turner:

"I so move."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

Resolution 16-355 Closing Bank Account

- The District had opened an account to deposit donations for the construction of our 9/11 Memorial. The memorial has now been completed and there is no longer any need for the account.

Motion by Commissioner Schran-Brown:

"I so move."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

Old Business

Q/A Committee

- Commissioners Staczek and Schran-Brown received other information from Secretary Wolf and they should have it finalized shortly.

Strategic Plan Update

- Chair McCullough spoke to three active members. One has done all the footwork with the public. One member has done interviews; two are traveling so she reached them with a phone call or email and asked for a review of what they're doing. They suggested they have a public meeting with the commissioners, review what they are

doing and finish it. The three she spoke to were Alice Larson, Rick Wallace and Craig Harmeling. Alicia is no longer involved and Barb Cooper was taking minutes.

TABLED

General Comments

- The Chair expressed total confidence in our medics. She works with the medics in town and stated the transition is not a personal thing; it's what's best for the District.
- She thanked the public members for coming.
- Chief Lipe had a proposal that did not split medics (during transporting patients), but they had to get everyone to buy in to make it work here.
- It will use the same money with medics rotating through here. It has been brought up for several years. No one is saying our medics' skills are not good or that they don't have compassion. Their lead, their doctor and the head of KCM1 say this is what needs to be done, so we have to look at that. It's our job to do our best.
- Commissioner Schran-Brown commented that the key issue for her was not allowing the medics to split up during transport. This proposal answers 100% of her questions. This has been a two year process.
- Commissioner Staczek noted this arrangement will result in less overtime, but because of having more people to pull from, our medics will not have to work more than 36 hours in a row. Even a normal work week is 48 hours here. The Board and KCM1 are trying to provide the best ALS care.
- The Chair stated that this will also result in less "burn out" where now some of our medics have had to work three to five or even six shifts in a row. She then invited the public to contact commissioners with questions and concerns.

For the Good of the Order

A comment was that having a large pool can work out.

Best wishes were offered to Ben Davidson for a speedy recovery.

Documents Signed

At 7:48 p.m. the public meeting was closed and moved into Executive Session.

The reason for the Executive Session was twofold:

a. The session being held falls outside the scope of the Public Meeting Act as it has to do with collective bargaining planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining.
b. **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.

At 8:18 p.m. the Executive Session ended and at 8:20 p.m. the meeting was adjourned. No decision was made.

236 *The next **Regular Meeting** will be on 10/11/16 at 6:30 p.m. at 10020 SW Bank Rd, Vashon, EOC Room*

Approved this 11 day of Oct., 2016.

Candy McCullough, Chair

Susan Wolf, District Secretary