VASHON ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

Date: 11/14/2017
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: 10020 SW Bank Rd, EOC Room

REGULAR MEETING

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

Guests: Susan Reimer, David Libao and Gary Cummings, Melinda Powers, Rick Wallace, Gary English, Andy Johnson, Josh Munger, Jojo Weller, John Simonds.

Amendments to Agenda
Commissioner McCullough asked that the Insurance presentation be moved forward on the agenda so the presenters can make an earlier ferry.

Approval of 10/24/17 Regular Meeting Minutes
Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

"I move we approve the minutes of 10/24/17."

MINUTES APPROVED, 5-0

Voucher Approval
Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

"I move that we approve the vouchers of 11.14.2017-1."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

New Business

Employee Insurance Program

- The District's insurance broker, Gary Cummings with his assistant Dave Libao, presented their annual review of our employee insurance package.
- At renewal, Gary Cummings' company (Cummings, Frasier & Associates) as the District's broker, gathers competitive quotes from other companies. The District has a rich benefit plan. No businesses with less than 50 employees offer this kind of coverage. All plans nationally trend with at least 10%-15% increases each year. With the Washington Fire Commissioners Health Care Plan (WFCA) they've had no

increase for five years and an 8% decrease for two of those years. For 2018, there is a 5% increase but it is still more than 30% less than any other insurance carriers.

- Dental, life and disability coverages will have the same benefits at same rates; the WFCA pool tracks actual claims (as a non-profit) so they are extremely competitive. Gary provided the Board with a description summary of all our different employee coverages.
- The vision plan he recommends staying with the WFCA. There are no increases or changes with vision coverage either.
- Life insurance: there is no benefit change or rate increase. One-half of the District's employees elect to buy more voluntary life at their expense.
- Short term disability covers up to six months out of work. Long term disability covers up to retirement age. There is a program that insures commissioners, volunteers, and Explorers. Life, disability and a possible pension for volunteers is provided through the Board for Volunteer Firefighters.
- Other insurance items: The District complies with the Affordable Care Act through the WFCA. Long Term Care insurance was looked at a few years ago and there was not enough interest to pursue it. Supplemental programs, like AFLAC which pays additional disability income could be offered. If the Board approves, Gary could conduct a survey to see if there is interest. Since it is entirely paid by the employees, there is no cost to the District besides the administrative costs for payroll deductions. Gary responded to a question from the Board stating only three people have to sign up to have it offered. VEBA accounts were looked at years ago, where people put away money for medical expenses in the future when they leave the District, but there wasn't enough interest. COBRA is offered.
- To summarize, the District offers extremely generous benefits compared with the business sector but most fire department have similar benefits. Gary recommends budgeting for 2019 for increases of 10-15% for medical; 5% for dental.

ACTION ITEMS: He recommends the Board approve all coverages as is together with voluntary benefits. The Board posed a question about benefits for part-time employees and was told by the chief that those benefits must be negotiated with the union before benefits are provided.

Motion by Commissioner McCullough:

"I move we approve Gary Cumming's presentation and renew the health and life insurance for 2018."

MOTION PASSES, 5-0

Chiefs' Report

A/C Larsen:

- Seven part-time candidates are on target to start the first week of December.
- At fire academy, all passed the written Firefighter 1 test and will be taking the Hazmat tests this week. The graduation is scheduled for December 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the theater.
- There are plans to start another academy in January with eight students; four from other districts. Interviews will be forthcoming at the end of the month to fill a firefighter spot left last month.
- Calls: 1,330 runs this year; we've been running about 60-70 calls light most of the year compared to last year. We were at 1,427 last year at this point. We've had 85 runs in the past three weeks and this past weekend, on Friday, within 45 minutes we had five calls; one with multiple patients and one ALS. The recent wind/rain storm resulted in 15 calls in 20 hours.

Chief Krimmert:

- One week contains fourteen 12-hour shifts. If filled with 2-3 volunteers, that's 28 positions. Last week we had six responders filling nine spots. We are actively recruiting volunteer, part-time paid and career employees.
- Chief Krimmert provided the Board as well as several copies for attendees of his tentative draft fleet replacement based on condition of the budget with life cycle replacement.
- For facilities we are holding ground. Today they finished the installation of apparatus exhaust in the Burton station and tomorrow will install in the shop. There will be Plymovents in every station except 57 and 59; they may tweak the arrangements in Station 55.
- The new draft of the budget is very aggressive. The chief removed the "No Levy" off column and left this year and next year's for comparison.
- Thanks to all the community members who voted and expressed trust and confidence in us.

Old Business

Budget for 2018

- The Chief plans for the Board to meet one more time with drafted budget. At the December 12th meeting the Board should approve the budget. He's honing in on specific numbers now.
- Staff is critical, next supporting equipment, then the fleet and facilities. The last page of the draft is the summary. This year's budget will be at a $400,000 deficit. Starting next year, there will be some $485,000 left in the bank.
- He plans to have a $4.6 million budget with income at $5.2 million. He plans to bank enough for operating costs between tax revenue payments. $312,000 in reserves: fleet reserves, equipment and facilities. He planned for $200,000 for deferred maintenance projects. He grouped monies and personnel all together in one area. The chief is considering how to expand the staffing and having dialog with the local (union). He plans to hire one full-time firefighter as a replacement and add one more, but he doesn't have details now.
- We have three part-time firefighters working now with eight more in the training process. Of the staffing, the biggest concern is getting more volunteers, however he budgeted only three-quarters of the amount for last year, because we have fewer volunteers.

ACTION ITEM: The chief asked for commissioners to meet with him and provide input (one or two at a time) to finalize these agreements.

- Next meeting will be the end of November.
- For apparatus the chief has an aggressive budget – over 35 years, buying one vehicle almost every year. He intends not stretching vehicles past their useful life. He doesn't plan to replace two of the engines but every nine years replace one of the remaining three; tenders every six years. The replacement schedule is focused on not using vehicles beyond their useful life instead of the price.
- A question from the Board asked if there was an increase in liability exposure, if vehicles are used past their useful life. Our apparatus work hard, so it is key to establish a regular replacement schedule. FEMA funding may be possible for engines and tenders. If we purchase urban interface engines – they are shorter, higher,

cheaper and better to use on our island's narrow driveways and roads with sharp turns.

- A question was asked by a citizen to a member of the Board regarding medical motorcycles. Are those a possibility? Seattle Fire Department looked at it, but did not do it; the county never considered it. In rural environments, it is critical to get equipment and people there. Motorcycles would be more of use for urban areas. Maybe if it was Hazmat situation it could be used to get people to entry points.

General Comments

- John Simonds provided several pages of written remarks to the Board. Following that, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the cause of the financial crisis of the District. Mr. Simonds maintained the ending of the paramedic program and the county funds that supported it were the cause. The Board members maintained it was not asking for tax increases and spending down the reserves. Mr. Simonds maintained his opinion and challenged the budget for not providing for the hire of more career firefighters, calling for the need of more "professionals." The Chief and Board support *all* firefighters including volunteers and part-time employees because they all train to the same level and do the same work. Mr. Simonds maintained we needed more full-time career firefighters and asked why we don't use a different schedule. The Chief explained that in order for his system to work, which included giving firefighters "Kelly Days" off, he needed a larger pool of employees to make that system work. Mr. Simonds was thanked for his comments, his participation and for attending the meeting.
- Secretary Wolf explained at the next meeting the 2018 Tax Levy Resolution will be presented and will need to be authorized at the 28 November 2017 meeting.
- Rick Wallace, chair of *Citizens United to Rebuild VIFR* explained the committee's services won the levy election 2-1. Three members were in attendance and he stated the citizens committee bonded and drew strength from each other. Their diversity with different personalities and skills was their strength. Melinda Powers, a great explainer and communicator was treasurer. Will North was succinct and skilled at crafting words. Barbara Cooper was experienced in finance and was their official record keeper. Gary English handled the budget and spent a great deal of time as a fact researcher. The fact that VIFR received the least amount of tax revenue of all King County Fire Districts came from his research. Ron Smothermon was completely passionate about the District. He handled logistics and production to get out the vote. Ron was seen standing in the snow on the street corner handing out fliers. Rick thanked the VIFR firefighters for their efforts. There were graphics people and movie professionals who offered their services pro bono.
- The final committee meeting was yesterday, and they asked themselves how could they help the District going forward. They talked to hundreds of people. It could be a big opportunity for VIFR because the levy brought community awareness that could be leveraged. Victory doesn't meet mandate. 1,615 voters said no, 3,051 didn't vote; 60% said no or didn't care. The committee's urgent recommendation is for the Board to say "Thank You" to the community.
- They listened to people and there is a need for the District to develop a strategic plan with goals and tactics. Many simply do not understand what VIFR does; being able to explain that we get five simultaneous calls within 45 minutes is the reason why we

won. Many don't trust the District's financial planning, so don't raise the tax levy up to 6% per year without listening to your citizens. The financial crisis was sudden and was met with disbelief. Because the finances are hard to understand by the public, there is confusion. There is some resistance due to a larger number of off island and paid staff to on-island volunteers.

- The committee recommends the District build bridges of understanding and support with the community, and asks that the Board do it now. The Board could hold meetings at neighborhood stations or send one or two commissioners to host coffees. The District has partners in VashonBePrepared with upwards of 250 volunteers, including EOC and CERT. They connect to the District but the District doesn't connect with VashonBePrepared.
- Vicki de Monterey Richoux, President of the NERO organization built it from 65 to 214 units in a year. The District needs to meet with the NEROs, offer home safety checks, make appointments – they are a friend of the VIFR support group. Be in the media, tell important stories about what happens. The Beachcomber used to publish a Fire column; maybe that could be done again with current home/fire safety topics. Use Facebook, the website, provide a quarterly newspaper that is emailed.
- Rick suggested each commissioner could be a subject matter expert and work on that one area, like strategic plan modules. You could feature a Volunteer of the month on the website and in the Beachcomber like the student of the month. The writer could explain about five simultaneous calls and the difference between big city responses, island response times and where those times are coming from. Explain we're not the big city and we have these challenges.
- Gary English stated he worked with the Parks District for some time, but then realized while parks and the schools are important, life safety is "it." Define your mission which is more important. Today there is a general public distrust of government.
- Secretary Wolf asked when the new Commissioners would like to be sworn in: Could be December 26 or at the first meeting in January when Jojo will be there. Consensus was for the oaths to be administered to everyone in January. The first meeting is January 9th.
- The Board gave the committee a big "Thank You."

Having no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting will be on Tuesday, 11/28/17 at 6:30 p.m. at 10020 SW Bank Rd, Vashon, EOC Rm

Approved this 28 day of Nov., 2017.

Camille Staczek
Camille Staczek, Chair

Susan Wolf
Susan Wolf, Minute Taker

Assistant Chief's Report
for the
Fire Commissioners' Meeting
of
24 October 2017

As a brief overview of the District, focusing on highlights since the board's last regularly scheduled meeting, please accept the following information:

1. **Overarching Operational Topics**:
    a. The 7 candidates for PTP are advancing through the process with an anticipated start date of December.

2. **Overarching Training Topics**:
    a. Recruit Academy continues currently in week17 with 9 students. All students passed the written of the FF1 test and are taking their Hazardous Materials test this week. Graduation scheduled for December 9 at 1000 at the theatre.
    b. We are planning to start another Recruit Academy in January at this time there are 8 people signed up including 4 from another District.
    c. We are currently conducting interviews to place a 12th firefighter in the SCKFTC Academy in January

3. **Service/Call Volumes**:
    a. As of 07:30, shift change today, the District has responded to 1330 calls…
        i. Based on the averaging of last year's calls we should statistically be around 1404, 74 calls higher and in fact on this date last year we were at 1427.
    b. In the past 3 weeks since our last meeting we have had 85 calls for service, with this past weekend and beginning of this week being particularly busy. Friday saw a 45 minute period where we were dispatched to 5 EMS calls with one involving two patients and one being ALS. Yesterdays' weather event added to our normal volume totaled 15 calls.

4. **Miscellaneous/Noteworthy Topic(s)**: Nothing to report at this time

Conclusion of Report

Robert Larsen, Assistant Chief of Operations
Vashon Island Fire & Rescue
1 206 463 2405 (Office) Extension 302
1 206 940 2618 (Mobile)

Chief's Report
for the
Fire Commissioners' Meeting
of
14 November 2017

As a brief overview of the District, focusing on highlights since the board's last regularly scheduled meeting, please accept the following information:

1. **Staff/Personnel**:
    a. A week contains 14 twelve hour shift opportunities for volunteer FF/EMT's. Assume two or three firefighters and/or EMT's working each shift and we have 28 or 42 positions available every week. This week we have six responders filling nine of the 28 or 42 openings…
    b. At this time we are actively investigating and/or processing growing all three of our corps of staff (Volunteer, Part Time Paid & Career)…

2. **Fleet**:
    a. A preliminary/draft *Apparatus Replacement Schedule* has been established and was included within your packages. You may recall from a presentation earlier this year on 'the fleet' that the annual development of the budget should, as good practice, include an *Apparatus Replacement Schedule* so the state of the fleet can be assessed by the commissioners at least once annually. Your counsel on the draft schedule and the annual vehicle purchasing goals is appreciated…
    b. With and for the success of the recent levy effort it is our intent, with the approval of the 2018 budget, to immediate start investigations to replace an aid car immediately and additional vehicle thereafter…

3. **Facilities**:
    a. The installation of the vehicle exhaust system was scheduled to be completed in Station 56 (Burton) by today. The Maintenance Facility will be addressed next.

At this time Station 55 is getting some 'fine tuning' and with it these efforts will be completed…

i. For the efforts noted above only Station 57 & 59 are without such a system...

4. **Financials**:
   a. As it is our understanding that the levy proposal was successful; formal approval is pending. As such for tonight's budget discussions we have eliminated the budget option to advance without a levy win…

5. **Miscellaneous/Noteworthy Topic(s)**:
   a. I would ask that we as a District offer our thanks and appreciation to all of the community who advocated for, supported and voted in favor of the ballot proposal. Its success will prove tremendously beneficial to the island and we sincerely acknowledge the community's trust and confidence in us and our organization…

Conclusion of Report

Charles H. Krimmert, Fire Chief
Vashon Island Fire & Rescue
1 206 463 2405 (Office) Extension 301
1 206 300 0952 (Mobile)