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**CHIEF'S  
REPORT**

**Board of Fire Commissioners'**  
Meeting of  
**30 March 2022**

Please accept the following information. This report's focus is to provide the Board with an overview of Vashon Island Fire and Rescue, as well as point out noteworthy topics, since the Board's last regularly scheduled meeting.

**1. Personnel:**

- a. Please welcome Ms. Denise Paquette. She started March 16<sup>th</sup> as our new Administrative Assistant replacing Ms. Carin Bruce who unfortunately will be leaving us next month...
- b. Unfortunately, with the joy of a new employee, I sadly note losses.
  - i. After 18 years of service, I accepted, with heavy heart, Father Tryphon's resignation (17 Mar 22). We thank him for his years of service, often on the most difficult of calls, and we wish him well...
  - ii. Also, after 18 years of service to the District and the community Firefighter/EMT Everett retired on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February. We thank him and wish him well with his new efforts and adventures...
  - iii. Serving the District and community faithful from 1996 into 2012 Dispatcher & EMT Nancy Steel passed away last month after a battle with cancer. I am thankful for having been able to serve 'on the line' with her...
- c. Our search for an Assistant Chief of Operations is on-going with the first advertisement for the opening being issued on Monday February 28<sup>th</sup>. It is still my understanding that applications are being accepted until April 3<sup>rd</sup>...
- d. Also see additional notes under Board Committee Work: Staffing Committee...

**2. Operations:**

- a. With the noteworthy decline in COVID positive cases and in conjunction with King County Public Health's counsel and our sister agencies, we have suspended the masking requirements within the Stations (14 Mar 22). We have also suspended mandatory Point of Care COVID-19 Testing (POCCT). Appropriate COVID-19 dispatch precautions and PPE are still required while in service of the community...

**3. Dispatches:**

- a. As of shift change (07:30) this morning our total call volume for the year was at 322. This call volume would suggest a total for the year of only 1,013 well below the previous several years...

**4. Training:**

- a. March 2<sup>nd</sup> was the first quarterly District training of the year...
- b. I currently have nothing significant to report...

## 5. Apparatus:

- a. We are pleased to advise the Board that A06, our new aid car, was delivered (22 Mar 22) and is being prepared for service. Once A06 is ready to enter service A01, which has served the island for 20 years will be removed from a response role. The cost of the new car was \$239,037.28, \$10,962.72 under the \$250,000 allowance set aside for the purchase...
- b. As of this morning two of our apparatus are out of service...
  - i. A03 (A356) remains out of service and off island. Repairs to the engine's turbo continue to be delayed for the pandemic's negative impacts on the supply chain, however, we anticipate the car being back in service late next week...
  - ii. T03 (Tender 358) remains out of service for a water leak. We anticipate this truck returning to service later this week...
- c. I have been repeatedly told that the funding for a new boat and the new boat in and of itself is questionable. As the staff responsible for recommending its design features and capacities has yet to present them to the Administration, may I ask for the Board's position on a new vessel as well as what features it believes are desirable should they wish to advance the idea at all...

## 6. Facilities:

- a. Design discussions with the Architect of Record (AOR) are moving forward with regards to a final design direction of the expansion/renovation of the Duty Quarters of Station 55. I was in conference with the AOR as recently as the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Building Committee and responders have been presented with a package of the current design direction of the expansion for their review, consideration, and input...
- b. Also see noted below under Board Committee Work: Building Committee...

## 7. Financials:

- a. The State Auditor has completed their review of our 2018, 2019 & 2020 fiscal years. On March 14<sup>th</sup> we meet with the Auditor's Office for an Exit Interview/Meeting. In summary it was a very positive and 'clean' audit. There were three noteworthy points presented to the District, it is felt that in addressing these items and incorporating them into existing or new policy it will further strengthen the District's control over its financials. The three items were:
  - i. It was pointed out that our 2018 annual financial report to the State was grossly late and such deficiencies should not be allowed. We of course agree and have not made the same mistakes as made in 2018 over the last two years...
  - ii. It is recommended that the District establish an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) policy and that it be similar to the guidelines and requirements outlined in the BARS Manual (Section 3.8.11). We are already working on this new Article for inclusion into our District's policies...
  - iii. It was identified that our policy with regards to ambulance transport, billing, and adjustments was lacking, dated, and modifications need to be considered/made to implement greater controls and understandings over incomes, adjustments, and write-offs. We are also prepared to make such modifications and will address them over the next several months...
- b. The attached spreadsheets represent the end of February's balances for the 2022 fiscal year. Please accept the following summary representing the actual revenues, and expenses in relationship to the budget...
  - i. The balance of our Operational Funds/Account at the end of February was \$1,479,268.30...
  - ii. Revenues were only \$83,530.78 or 1.410% of those forecasted for the year...
  - iii. Expenses were however more aligned with targets at \$711,218.94 or 13.765% of the year's allowance...
- c. This following nine categories represent our total expenditures for last month:

i. <i>Administration-Business Support:</i>	\$73,942.06	or 15.977% of budget...
ii. <i>Personnel Costs-Wages &amp; Benefits:</i>	\$588,777.08	or 14.517% of budget...
iii. <i>Training Costs:</i>	\$2,950.54	or 1.864% of budget...
iv. <i>Equipment Costs:</i>	\$2,037.90	or 1.648% of budget...
v. <i>Supply Costs:</i>	\$4,395.71	or 15.069% of budget...
vi. <i>Uniforms &amp; Personal Protection Equipment:</i>	\$13,838.56	or 25.472% of budget...
vii. <i>Vehicle &amp; Fleet Costs:</i>	\$6,650.04	or 12.525% of budget...
viii. <i>Building &amp; Grounds Costs:</i>	\$16,331.05	or 7.836% of budget...
ix. <i>Disaster Preparation:</i>	\$2,296.00	or 10.679% of budget...

## 8. Contracts:

- a. Two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) creating modifications to the governing Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) have been prepared for the Board to consider, review, and, if it sees fit, approve for attachment to the CBA. Specifically:
  - i. **MOU 22-003 (Juneteenth):** We have been advised by the Local President & Secretary/Treasurer that the attached document is acceptable...
  - ii. **MOU 22-004 (VEBA):** The Local has presented the District a request regarding modification to their monthly contribution to this program as well as asked for the assignment of funds to the program for future retirements. We have been advised by the Local President & Secretary/Treasurer that the attached document is acceptable...
- b. Regarding the District's on-going efforts to establish its compliance with the RCW 52.30.020 requiring interlocal agreements for services only one agency continues to be problematic:
  - i. **King County Housing Authority:** This agency remains uninterested/defiant with regards to its legal compliance with the RCW. No progress has been made with this agency...
- c. **Washington State Ferries:** Communications with this agency continue to be drawn out. Our last communication with the Ferries was the payment of 2021's fees received on March 14<sup>th</sup>. We are continuing to discuss and review information to better understand the use of 2004 costs and the square footage on which the costs/fees are based. Our contract renewal remains a year pass due; however, the above action will address those costs, all be it at a much lower fee that we believe appropriate. We continue to work to secure an Agreement...
- d. **King County Public Health:** There is nothing to report on the renewal of the lease with Medic One for the paramedics...
- e. **Spirit/T-Mobile:** There is nothing to report on our current contract negotiations currently. Their agreement expires in May of this year...
- f. **VashonBePrepared:** No progress has been made in our mutual efforts to update this standing agreement...

## 9. Business Operations:

- a. We are continuing to participate in the Labor & Industries' (FIIRE) program to reduce time loss as well as related compensation/insurance coverage rates...
- b. With regards to the long-standing nest of the resident osprey (A protected species) atop of the communications tower:
  - i. We secured the necessary osprey nesting deterrents for atop the tower and a company to install them. They were installed Monday March 21st...
  - ii. In support of our Mission Statement, as the returning pair are being denied access to their former nest location, we have established an alternate nesting location:
    1. The expert recommended a new location for a new nest...
      - a. This alternate location is north of the tower and immediately south of Station 55's retention and storm water ponds...
    2. We secured a permit from the County...

3. We secured a contractor to supply and install the pole needed...
4. We constructed a nesting platform and a new 'starter nest' to support the osprey in relocating to this new location...
- iii. But for a bit of a mess regarding the drilling spoils, the above work was also completed on Monday the 21<sup>st</sup>. The osprey are anticipated to return any day...
- iv. Another/New downside to these efforts is that the rear or north tarmac will no longer be an acceptable landing zone by Airlift Northwest for the annual Open House event...
- c. In addition to the osprey nest situation, the crew atop the tower also rectified an interference problem with Voice of Vashon's equipment that was created when AT&T installed new equipment and updated their systems on our tower...
- d. In address of both the above topic, though we have not finalized discussions with AT&T, via their third-party project contractor, cost sharing for the expenses of the above operations is under consideration and we have made positive progress on the matter...

## 10. Board Committee Work

- a. In support of the Board's establishment of Board committees, this category addresses the Administration's engagement with these Committees. At this time the Board has the following working committees:
  - i. **Building Committee** (*Commissioners King & Simonds*): I have yet to meet with this committee formally, digitally or in person, on any facility topics.
    1. A Commissioner of the committee has asked that we confirm that the procurement of architectural and engineering services for the project currently underway followed RCW 39.80.
      - a. Unfortunately, the member of the Administration that organized and completed the procurement process is no longer with the District, however, the appropriate advertisements have been identified as was the Statement of Qualifications provided by the firm we negotiated, and entered contract with.
      - b. Information has been assembled for the committee members; physical files generally representing highlights and communications between the District and the Architect of Record on the expansion/renovation of Station 55's Living Quarters have been assembled for the committee members and are in their mailboxes in the hall outside the Administration's offices...
    2. As the above package was being assembled and considering that we are approaching the end of the Pre-Design Phase the architect has provided a 'pencils down' package of where we are on the project for the committee's review and consideration. Such is included within the binder prepared for the commissioners...
  - ii. **Staffing Committee** (*Commissioners King & Staczek*): I understand that the committee has organized meeting with staff across the District, in support of these efforts; the committee met with me (08 Mar 22) and we discussed our staffing and services generally, as foundational information for the committee's moving forward with various staffing issues in a logical manner...
    1. Perhaps this topic (Introduced last month) is appropriate to note here for this committee to consider and present to the Board: In address of RCW 52.33 the District can classify itself as either a 'substantially volunteer' or a 'substantially career' fire district. We have to date worked under the position that we were a 'substantially volunteer' organization. The District's legal counsel has acknowledged that we could make an argument for either case, however, Mr. Quinn believes the appropriate course of action is to consider Vashon Fire a 'substantially career' District. How the Board would like to proceed with regrades to this designation has not been defined...
    2. I am unaware of any progress on Commissioner Staczek's letter (20 Jan 22).

3. Nor am I aware of any matrixes and/or data points that are being or are going to be assembled to support current and future staffing levels...

**11. Community Engagement:**

- a. Last night I attended the All-Taxing Districts Meeting with Parks and the Health Care Districts in attendance. We generally discussed each of the District's current topics of interest and plans as we as various elements of the 2023 taxing cycle...
- b. PulsePoint is in the final stages of testing, and it is our anticipation that Vashon will go live next month...
- c. Vashon Island Fire and Rescue's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary (24 Mar 42) thank you card/mailer was printed and provided to the post office for distribution last week. My thanks to the Board for its support of this mailing...
- d. During the installation of the new osprey nest representatives from Voice of Vashon, the Land Trust and the island's Audubon Society were all on hand to support and observe the installation of the new pole. Further I believe it is being well received on the island and the District is being thanked for honoring the protect the environment portion of our mission statement...
- e. I represented VARSA and the District at a public service meeting of the 7<sup>th</sup> sponsored by VARSA called *Anxiety, Stress & Our Kids*. The meeting was well attended...
- f. As activity and direct engagement/efforts in address of the pandemic ratch down I am in less communicate with members and teams of *VashonBePrepared* and the various organizational teams it supports. The teams are still diligently working and focused on the data and precautions; however, we are hopeful of a 'standing down' in the near future...

**12. Strategic Planning:**

- a. I currently have nothing significant to report, however, a copy of our various efforts to improve and update the various SOG's & SOP's of our "User's Manual" has been attached for your consideration...

**13. Miscellaneous:**

- a. I currently have nothing additional to present, represent, or discuss with the Board...

Conclusion of Report



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