

BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular meeting of May 4, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Christenson called the virtual regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Benton County Fire District No. 1 to order at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom video-conference. In attendance at this meeting were Commissioner Christenson, Commissioner Couch, Commissioner Jenkins, Fire Chief/District Secretary Click, Deputy Chief LoParco, and Executive Director Paden-Lilly.

The Oath of Office was administered to Commissioner Couch.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Seasonal employees and Commissioner emails and computers was added to old business.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received log and correspondence sent was reviewed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Christenson made a motion to approve the April 20, 2021, minutes as submitted. Commissioner Jenkins seconded the motion and the motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Fund Transaction Details

Presented to the Board were 2021 transactions #863 to #904. The transactions total \$272,018.62. General Fund \$28,402.91; Fire Training Center Operations Fund \$2,547.40; SCBA Fund \$1,252.80; Joint Agency Fund \$161.89 and Bond Project Fund \$239,653.62. Commissioner Jenkins made a motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Couch seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The voucher registers are attached to these minutes and constitute a part thereof.

Budget Expenditure Reports

The budget expenditure reports were reviewed.

REPORTS

Commissioners

Commissioner Christenson reported:

- He intends on attending all three upcoming WFCA Spring Webinars.
- HBI 168; DNR Wildfire Response and Forest Health Funding passed unanimously by the Legislature. He will investigate further to see what opportunities might be available to the Fire District.
- Benton and Franklin Counties are in danger of falling from Phase 3 to Phase 2 of the "Healthy Washington - Roadmap to Recovery" plan. He emphasized the importance of all members being vaccinated for COVID-19.

Commissioner Couch reported:

- He appreciated Chief Click and Deputy Chief LoParco providing him with a tour of the Fire District and showing him around to all the fire station locations.

Fire Chief

Chief Click reported:

- The new ladder truck was placed in service on April 30. He thanked everyone who helped make this happen ahead of schedule!
- Crews assisted Richland Fire with the Delta Fire last week, Wednesday through Friday.
- He attended a Benton County Emergency Services (BCES) Board meeting last Thursday.
- He was assigned as the Incident Commander for a week at the Mass Vaccine Site. It was interesting working with the National Guard and the local Department of Health (DOH) District. He will be assigned to the site again the week of May 10.
- He, Captain Bibe and Captain Nicholls attended the memorial service for DNR Southeast Region Fire and Forest Health District Manager Chad James who passed away suddenly on April 7.
- He and Deputy Chief LoParco met with the Labor Counsel to update him on the status of labor negotiations.
- The Vaccine Site is scheduled to close on May 29. The DOH is looking into a mobile distribution process.
- The District is preparing for wildland fire season.

Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief LoParco reported:

- He is working on the seasonal employee hiring process.
- The breathing air compressor is experiencing issues and he is working on it with Captain Bibe.

Training

Captain Nicholls reported:

- He has completed the training report materials requested by the WSRB and they have been sent off.
- The burn tower manufacturer representative was on site last week. The burn tower has been out of service for a year due to COVID restrictions. The first floor of the burn tower passed inspection, and the representative will be sending recommendations for issues related to the second floor.
- He attended a Tri-Tech CBC Advisory Committee meeting. There may be a daytime fire academy option at CBC during the 2022-2023 school year. This will be a good opportunity for individuals that are unable to attend the Fire District's academy.
- He will be assigned to the Vaccination Site the week of May 17.

Labor Representative

Captain Bibe reported that the labor group did not hold their special meeting last week due to the Delta Fire. It has been rescheduled for this Thursday.

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Supervisor Schoenwald reported that the Maintenance Department has gotten the ladder truck placed in service and will continue working on regular maintenance.

Other

Chief Click mentioned that Maintenance Supervisor Schoenwald's mother passed away last week, and everyone expresses their condolences.

OLD BUSINESS

Apparatus and Facility Bond Project

The Station 170 construction project continues. He approved a change order to address the issue with the land grade between the apparatus structure and the living quarters, stipulating that there has been no resolution in disputing liability. The District's Legal Counsel continues to review the dispute. Notification was also received that the water storage tank for the fire protection system will not arrive until October, due to a shortage of supplies associated with the ice storm in Texas. It should not slow down the project, but it will not arrive as stated in the project outline.

COVID-19 Impacts

Deputy Chief LoParco reported that the District continues COVID-19 business as usual. A discussion was held on how to collect accurate data regarding members who have or have not been vaccinated. Commissioner Christenson feels the District should offer incentives to encourage members to get vaccinated. The FDA does not mandate COVID-19 vaccines that are under an Emergency Use Authorization and Washington State has not implemented a vaccine mandate for employers.

NEW BUSINESS

New Member Applications

A Support Service Volunteer application for Thomas Gregory was presented to the Board for review. Commissioner Christenson made a motion to approve the New Member Application and Commissioner Couch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Seasonal Employees

Deputy Chief LoParco presented the Eligibility List for hiring seasonal wildland firefighters. The staff is recommending Station 110 firefighter Kayte Salter and Station 130 firefighter Jeff Varzende for this year's seasonal wildland employment.

Commissioner Couch made a motion to approve the Seasonal Eligibility List. Commissioner Christenson seconded the motion and the motion passed with all Commissioners in favor.

Commissioner Email and Computers

Commissioner Couch is interested having a District email address and a computer device issued to him to preserve the electronic communications that are public records. After a discussion, Commissioner Couch made a motion that the Board of Commissioners be provided a tablet device with necessary accessories and a District email address to be exclusively used for District business. Upon further discussion, John Christenson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

District resident Scott Carpenter inquired about revenue received for ambulance transports and whether the District was making a profit considering all startup costs.

After a discussion, Commissioner Couch requested that Mr. Carpenter state clearly his records request and the staff would provide him that information. There were no further comments from Mr. Carpenter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next Board of Commissioner meeting will be on May 18, 2021.
- The next Hazmat Board meeting will be on May 19, 2021.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.