

BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Regular meeting of August 3, 2021.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Christenson called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Benton County Fire District No. 1 to order at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom video-conference. In attendance at this meeting were Commissioner Christenson, Commissioner Couch, Fire Chief/District Secretary Click, Deputy Chief LoParco, and Executive Director Paden-Lilly. Commissioner Jenkins was excused.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Maintenance department retirement/paramedic hire was added to old business and Station 160 emergency water outage was added to new business.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence received log and correspondence sent was reviewed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

Fund Transaction Details

Presented to the Board were 2021 transactions #1597 to #1637. The transactions total \$93,319.67. General Fund \$18,838.18; Hazmat Fund \$14,289.86; Fire Training Center Operations Fund \$1,396.05; TCRA Fund \$61.50, and Project Fund \$58,734.08. Commissioner Couch made a motion to approve the vouchers. Commissioner Christenson 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 attended the Hazmat Board meeting and changes to the Articles of Incorporation were approved and will be filed with the State. The new name of the group will be Southeast Washington Special Operations Group.

Fire Chief

Chief Click reported:

- An EMS Council meeting was held yesterday with an emphasis on House Bill 1310 and 1054. The new laws restrict police action at a scene when police have historically 'cleared' or 'secured' scenes, when necessary, prior to EMS providers entering to provide patient treatment. EMS providers will now have to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety. There was also a considerable

discussion with Medical Program Director Dr. Hodges regarding the current hospital system overload and what the responsibilities are of the three hospitals in the Tri-Cities while in divert status.

- He attended a Fire Defense Board meeting. A discussion was held regarding HB 1168; Concerning long-term forest health and the reduction of wildfire dangers and what the funding mechanisms will be.
- He has been working on the EMS Only volunteer policy and updating the Five Year Plan through 2025.
- A crew was assigned to the Spokane Mobilization and returned Sunday. Captain Henderson is assigned with an Incident Management Team to a fire in Oregon.

Battalion Chief(s)

Chief Click mentioned that Captain Copland is filling in for Battalion Chief Gutzmer while he is on vacation.

Training

Captain Nicholls reported the following:

- The next session of Recruit School begins on September 7; 22 members are enrolled.
- A National Fire Academy training course is scheduled for November 20 and 21 at the Fire Training Center. The course is titled Leadership in Supervision: Creating Environments for Professional Growth and will present supervisory members with the basic leadership skills and tools needed to perform effectively in the fire service environment.

Labor Representative

Lieutenant Chambers reported that the collective bargaining agreement proposal was approved by the labor representatives, and union members will now have an opportunity to vote on August 5, 6, and 7.

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Supervisor Schoenwald reported that regular maintenance continues with the water tenders. The fleet has been holding up well considering the lengthy heat wave we have been experiencing.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Bond Project

Chief Click and Deputy Chief LoParco met with the architect firm who reported the following:

- The flagpole was poured last week, and landscaping will start soon.
- The correct flooring has arrived and is being installed.
- Appliances and bathroom vanities need to be purchased for the facility.

COVID-19 Impacts

Deputy Chief LoParco reported that the District's facility mask and social distancing requirements remain the same. With the uptick in COVID-19 cases, he is reassembling the COVID taskforce, and he is recommending that mask be worn regardless of vaccination status.

Captain Eligibility List

Deputy Chief LoParco reported that after some research it was discovered that the testing program used for the written test required 70% in order to pass and District Policy requires a 75% to pass. After meeting with the Labor Group and it was determined that since the written test didn't meet District Policy that meant that none of the individuals passed the written test.

Staff is recommending rescinding the Captain Eligibility List. After a discussion, Commissioner Couch made a motion to rescind the Captain Eligibility List that was approved July 6, 2021. Commissioner Christenson seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Maintenance Department Retirement/Paramedic Hire

Since the current Firefighter/Paramedic Eligibility List has been exhausted, Chief Click is recommending that the current Firefighter/EMT Eligibility List be used, with a contingency timeframe for completing paramedic certification. After a discussion, the Board is in favor of moving forward with this process but would like to have conditional employment language with the paramedic certification stipulation in place before hiring from the Firefighter/EMT Eligibility List. Chief Click will work on the conditional employment language and present to the Board at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Station 160 Emergency Water Outage

The shared well for Station 160 and Washington State Patrol (WSP) collapsed and both facilities have been without water for two weeks. The WSP has brought in two 15,000 tanks to provide a temporary domestic water source for both facilities. Deputy Chief LoParco presented information regarding options available for having domestic water piped into Station 160 to address the emergency water outage. He has been working with WSP, City of Kennewick and Benton County about the possibility of tying into the current Ridgeline Water Project and will provide more information during the next meeting to move forward with the project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 5:03 p.m. Commissioner Christenson called a 15-minute executive session per RCW 42.30.110 to discuss real estate. The announced time of resumption into the open public meeting was 5:18 p.m. The actual time of resumption into the open public meeting was 5:18 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A special Board of Commissioner meeting will be held on August 12, 2021, via Zoom video-conference.
- The next regular Board of Commissioner meeting will be on August 17, 2021, via Zoom video-conference.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.