

## JCFPD #4 COMMISSIONERS MEETING

FEBRUARY 8, 2005

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ron Garrison at 7:00 pm. Commissioners Ken McEdwards and Meril Smith, and Secretary Peggy Ware were in attendance. The following audience members signed in: Don Coleman, Evelyn Cemper, Jacque Hartley, Ron Copeland, Kate Marsh, Yolanda Smith, Clair N. Pittman, Anne Pittman, Marissa Suarez, Larry Hartley, Bill Linden, Patrick Lundemo, Diana Grau, and Thomas P. Barelli. The following people were also in attendance, Marji Mueller, Bob Herbst, Katie Brostrom, George Sickel, and Jim Wadkins. There were approximately 20 total audience members.

Meril made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2005 regular meeting as mailed. Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meril made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 24 special meeting and the January 25, 2005 continuance of special meeting. Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meril made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2005 special meeting. Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meril made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2005 special meeting. Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The January 31, 2005 Financial Report was presented to the Commissioners by Secretary Peggy Ware. Ken made a motion to accept the January 31, 2005 Financial Report. Meril seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Budget Report was completed January 31, 2005. The total budget with FEMA Grant money is \$312,300.00, expenditures year to date \$278,098.25, leaving an ending balance of \$34,201.75.

Vouchers of \$5,590.62 were presented to the Commissioners. The transferal of funds is \$9,000.00 from the Investment Account into the Cash Account to meet current expenses. Ken made a motion to approve payment of the vouchers and the transferal of funds. Meril seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Ken made a motion to approve the February 4, 2005 payroll in the amount of \$10,225.22. Meril seconded the motion. Motion passed.

There is no Chief's Report/Ambulance Report.

Commissioner Ken McEdwards met with Kevin Berry, of Rubensteins (they put in the carpet and linoleum). Mr. Berry would like to run some tests to see what is causing the flooring to bubble.

There is no report on the Brinnon Lane Easement.

A letter from Chief Bob Wilson was read. The letter is canceling the joint services agreement (medic in exchange for training officer) between Districts 2 & 4. The letter states that once our new administration is in place we can see what services the two districts might be able to share.

A possibility is sharing their paramedic.

Jim Wadkins asked the Fire Commissioners to pay him for 36 hours of excess vacation that was dropped to correct the accrued vacation so that it would coincide with the contract language. Mr. Wadkins stated that he had never received any information about his vacation hours, and that he would have used the hours if he would have known that there was an excess. He said that he didn't even know where Peggy kept track of it at. Mr. Sickel brought up the fact that the commissioners had paid out \$19,000.00 to Mel Herod for accrued vacation in 2002.

The commissioners said that was a different situation, and that is why there is specific contract language now.

There was considerable audience input.

Commissioner Garrison asked Peggy if she had anything to say.

Peggy stated that she had talked to Mr. Wadkins about the possibility of losing vacation. Mr. Wadkins told her that the contract meant that he could have 2 years or 6 weeks of vacation on the books at one time, so he wouldn't lose any. Peggy said that she had indeed given Mr. Wadkins his vacation and sick hours at different times, they had looked at the notebook where it is logged together, and that Peggy had showed Mr. Wadkins where the notebook was kept so that he could look at his hours anytime. Peggy said that she was told to check the contract in regard to vacation and sick time in preparation for Mr. Wadkins separation from the district. After consulting with the attorney in regard to contract language, the vacation hours were corrected to coincide with the contract.

Commissioner Smith said that if the commissioners paid Mr. Wadkins for the 36 excess vacation hours it would set precedence, and what would keep another employee from making the same claim.

Meril made a motion not to pay Mr. Wadkins for the 36 excess vacation hours.

Ken stated that he could not second the motion.

After consideration, Ron seconded the motion. Ron called for a verbal vote. The motion was made by Meril and seconded by Ron not to pay Jim Wadkins for the 36 excess vacation hours. Ron and Meril voted yes not to pay for the 36 excess vacation hours.

Ken voted nay. Motion passed.

Jacque Hartley read a letter to the commissioners stating her disappointment in the commissioners for their decision in the hiring of the new fire chief. She feels that the commissioners only support the volunteers when it suits them. She no longer supports the commissioners of Jefferson County Fire District #4.

Ron Copeland stated that he feels that the commissioners have showed the community a lot of care and respect, and that the commissioners have bent over backwards to accommodate the community during the hiring process. All three commissioners have been voted in by the public to represent the community. The Chief and Laurie are both good applicants.

Commissioner Garrison said that he gives a great deal of thought and consideration to what the volunteers think and want. He does not take his position lightly, and he definitely did not take their request lightly.

Don Coleman said that he stuck his head in the sand, but that he needs to be convinced that the commissioner's decision is in the best interest of the community. Don had a question about the fact that the job description states that the chief should have five years of command fire service. Don was concerned about the EMT continuing education. Don said that he will continue to support the fire department, and he will be more informed in the future.

Commissioner Garrison said that his decision was based on the applicants' qualifications/training and their time in service. The situation between Laurie Wolford and Quilcene was not really a factor.

Bob Herbst said that he has done OTEP training before and that he in fact does all the training at Olympic Ambulance where he works. He has a call in to the medical program director, Dr. Smith-Poling, to see if he will be able to conduct OTEP training. He will make sure that his EMT's get the training they need to stay current.

Larry Hartley said that he thinks the commissioners made a poor choice. The volunteers were happy with Laurie Wolford's training. It's hard to share training, and there is the issue of a paramedic.

Bill Linden said that he was at Laurie Wolford's interview on a Tuesday night, and then the newspaper had articles the next day. He felt that the community should not micromanage.

Larry Hartley pointed out all the community members in attendance.

Ron Copeland wanted to address Don Coleman's comments. Ron said that he had never had the opportunity to work with Ron Garrison, but many times he had responded to emergency calls with both Meril and Ken. They would be out there in the middle of the night making serious decisions, and if they are capable of making snap decisions under those circumstances he thinks they are certainly capable of selecting a fire chief.

Jacque Hartley said that her feelings had nothing to do with being a volunteer and that she will continue to serve the community.

George Sickel asked Bob Herbst when he would be starting.

Bob Herbst responded that his last day at Olympic Ambulance would be the 16<sup>th</sup> of February. The 17<sup>th</sup> will be Bob's first day. He hopes to be moved down to Brinnon by the beginning of the summer. He will be discussing the contract with the commissioners tonight. He would like to be given the opportunity to show what he can do.

George Sickel said that the volunteers and the department have attempted to get FEMA Grants. We were awarded a FEMA Grant two years ago. George pointed out that grant training is being conducted now and that we shouldn't lose the opportunity to apply for a grant. The deadline is in March.

Bob Herbst responded that he is aware of the FEMA Grant and that he has already been working on the information. Also, he realizes the concern about having a paramedic in

South County. Bob knows Quilcene's paramedic, and he has a good working relationship with Mason County Medic One. Bob pointed out that he really didn't have any authority until the contract is signed.

Katie Brostrom asked how long the contract is for.

Commissioner Garrison said that it would probably be a 6 month probationary contract. Tom Barelli stated that Laurie Wolford has done a very good job as our training officer, and that she is currently a member of our department with ILS certification. Tom wondered about the possibility of the district giving financial support if Laurie went to paramedic school in the future.

Commissioner Garrison said that it could be discussed in the future.

At 7:50 pm, Commissioners Ron Garrison, Ken McEdwards and Meril Smith, and Bob Herbst retired into executive session to discuss the chief's contract. The executive session will end at 8:15 pm. Ron did not think any action would be taken after the executive session.

Commissioner Garrison recalled the meeting to order at 8:15 pm. The audience was still in attendance.

Commissioner Garrison said that the contract would probably be for 6 months, and that based on Bob Herbst's qualifications and years in fire service he would recommend that the salary be set at \$35,000.00. Ron asked Meril and Ken if they had any comments. Commissioners McEdwards and Smith both said that they thought that sounded okay. George Sickel questioned what starting salary was advertised because he thought that it was advertised at approximately \$28,000.00 to \$33,000.00. Peggy Ware said that it was advertised at \$30,000.00 to \$35,000.00 per year.

Commissioner Garrison called for a special meeting to set the salary and approve the contract. There will be a special meeting on Tuesday, February 15, 2005, at 7:00 pm, at Brinnon Fire Station #41 to set the chief's salary and approve the fire chief contract.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ken seconded the motion. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Ware  
District Secretary