

JCFPD #4 COMMISSIONERS MEETING

SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ron Garrison at 7:00 pm. Those present were Commissioners Ken McEdwards and Meril Smith, Chief Bob Herbst, Secretary Peggy Ware, Esther Johnson, Ron Stephens, Christine Stephens, Sue Fresonke, Mike Hyde, Christina Ware, Don Coleman, Diane Coleman, Pam Fields, Nick Fields, Patrick Titterness, Ian McFall, Jacque Hartley, Wayne Schlaefli, Wanda Falcone, Marji Mueller, Donna Steinbruggee, Brandy Walker, Evelyn Cemper, Cindy Watz, Gene Watz, and Greg Smith.

Commissioner McEdwards made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2008 regular meeting as mailed. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The August 31, 2008 Financial Report was presented to the Commissioners by Secretary Peggy Ware.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to accept the August 31, 2008 Financial Report. Commissioner McEdwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vouchers of \$13,831.72 were presented to the Commissioners. Transfer of funds will be \$13,831.72 from the Investment Account into the Cash Account.

Commissioner McEdwards made a motion to pay the vouchers in the amount of \$13,831.72, and to transfer \$13,831.72 from the Investment Account into the Cash Account. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the September 5, 2008 payroll in the amount of \$8,922.36. Commissioner McEdwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The Chief's Report/Ambulance Report was presented by Chief Bob Herbst.

Commissioner McEdwards made a motion to accept the Chief's Report. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

There was no Volunteer Ambulance & Firefighters Association President Report.

The EMS Special Agency Fund Interlocal Agreement signature page was presented to the Commissioners.

Commissioner McEdwards made a motion to approve the EMS Special Agency Fund Interlocal Agreement. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Secretary Peggy Ware reported that in 2007 the WFCFA started a medical insurance dividend program. If a Fire District was a member of the medical insurance plan in 2007, and they were still participating members on March 31, 2008, they will receive a dividend. The dividend is based on all premiums paid for 2007. The employees pay all dependent premiums, so the District Secretary requested Commissioner approval to refund the dependent share of the dividend to the employee.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to refund the dependent share of the 2007 dividend to the employee. Commissioner McEdwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Commissioner McEdwards made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2008-4 Cancelling Outstanding Warrant #'s 15338, 25923 & 38903. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The 2008 Washington Fire Commissioners Association Conference is being held October 23-25, at the Doubletree Hotel SeaTac. Secretary Ware has applied for a complimentary conference registration through the educational grant program, and may be attending the conference.

Due to the failure of both the EMS Levy and the Fire Levy Lid Lift, the Fire Commissioners asked Chief Herbst to research possible ways to generate additional revenue and cut costs. Chief Herbst started his presentation with the current year budget and revenue status. The closure of Station 42 would generate an estimated cost savings of \$7,000.00, and Station 43 would generate an estimated cost savings of \$3,000.00. The estimated cost savings by selling the Command Rig is \$2,400.00, Aid 43 is \$6,500.00, the 1980 Mack Fire Truck is \$8,000.00, and the return of the Marine Unit to the State Parks would be \$1,000.00.

The major part of Fire District #4's current ISO rating is an 8 with tanker credit. By closing one or both of the substations, some property within the Fire District will no longer fall within the 5 road mile radius to maintain the ISO rating of an 8 with tanker credit. The rating would change to a 10, and could affect their home owner's insurance premiums. The 5 mile radius would extend south to MP 311.2 on Highway 101, all of the Black Point Peninsula, and MP 1.3 on the Duckabush Road. The Dosewallips Road and the downtown core will not be affected. The 5 mile radius would extend north to MP 301.5 on Highway 101, MP .34 on Whitney Point Road, MP 1.8 on Bee Mill Road, and the ending points on Galloway Road and Richardson Road have not been plotted yet. The Fire District has been divided into 2 Zones. The North Zone is all points from MP 310 Highway 101 North. The South Zone is all points from MP 310 South/Duckabush Road Highway 101 South. As of August 31, 2008, there have been 88 calls in the North Zone, and 47 calls in the South Zone.

Currently, we charge service fees for copies and ambulance transports. Possible implementation of new service fees would include: all EMS responses will generate a response fee of \$75.00 (if the patient is transported then they would be billed the appropriate transport fee, and if there is no transport then the patient would be billed a \$75.00 response fee), and a Fire response for “Illegal Burns”, “False Alarms”, “Unattended Fires”, and “Service Calls” (other than EMS related calls) will generate a response fee of \$50.00. A possible increase of existing service fees could be implemented with the following possibilities: increase document copy fees from .15 per page to .25 per page, attorney document requests at \$10.00, and an increase in the ambulance transport fees for non-residents. The ambulance transport fee for residents would remain at the current billing rate. In 2006 there were 90 EMS responses that did not require ambulance transport, in 2007 there were 96, and so far in 2008 there are 56. There are insurance riders on all the Fire Stations. We will be getting our revenue tax estimates from Jack Westerman on September 18. Commissioner Smith stated he would like time to look over all the information. Commissioner Garrison tabled the issue until the October regular commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Garrison asked for public comment.

Chief Herbst responded that Jim Watson was unable to attend the Commissioners meeting so Mr. Watson had asked to have a letter from him read during Public Comment. Commissioner Garrison asked Chief Herbst to read the letter.

The letter was read.

Don Coleman asked if he could get a copy of the packet containing information on cost savings and revenue generation. Also, he asked how the cost savings compare to the deficit.

Commissioner Garrison said the packet was available to the public upon request.

Chief Herbst said that currently there is not a deficit—we are in the black.

Wayne Schlaefli asked how much it would cost to keep Station 42 open, and he questioned the heating costs.

Chief Herbst gave a rough estimate of \$17,600.00. This includes the cost of electric, propane, building insurance, the costs involved in running a third ambulance, etc.

Chief Herbst reported that we are currently waiting for a proposal from Jefferson County to purchase Station 42 as part of a grant project for relocation of Station 42.

Mike Hyde asked the Chief to guess at a rough estimate of the District short fall.

Chief responded that he would be better able to answer that question after September 18 when we get our revenue estimates from the County Assessor.

Chief Herbst stated that the failure of the levies takes away the possibility of replacing the old vehicles that require more maintenance and repairs all the time.

A question was asked as to where we purchase our vehicle fuel.

The Fire vehicles are fueled at the Brinnon Store. The EMS vehicles/ambulances are usually fueled in the Port Townsend or Shelton area. The Brinnon Store does give us a discount of a few cents per gallon.

Mike Hyde suggested we drive the Fire vehicles outside of District, possibly to Eldon to get cheaper fuel.

Commissioner Garrison said that he did not think that Eldon sold diesel.

Chief Herbst said that the District had considered putting in an above ground diesel tank, but that with the failure of the levies we do not have the money.

Donna Steinbrugge how she would be affected if Station 42 was in fact closed. She lives at the end of the blacktop on Duckabush Road, and when she moved there she was only able to get homeowners insurance because there was a fire station within 5 road miles.

Chief Herbst said that we would still be responding to 911 calls, but that the response time would be 5 to 13 minutes longer because all emergency responses would come from Station 41 here in Brinnon. Chief Herbst stressed that no decisions would be made until next month.

Wayne Schaepli suggested that the Commissioners run a smaller measure.

Commissioner Garrison reminded the audience that even if the Commissioners decide to run the same levies again or run a different proposition and the ballot measures are approved we will not see any tax revenue until 2010. The first large amount of tax revenue would not be deposited until the end of April 2010.

Wayne Schaepli asked why the levies failed. Was it too much money?

Chief Herbst said that over 300 ballots were not returned, and that some people were concerned about the cost because of their parcel sizes. For 8 months before the August election the Fire Commissioners held public meetings and levy workshops. Most of the workshops were during the day so, when a citizen stated they couldn't attend because they work during the day, the Fire Commissioners scheduled the last levy workshop for an evening. Chief Herbst had a public levy presentation at the Community Center in July. There were only 4 community members in attendance along with 12 volunteer firefighters. Information flyers were mailed out by the Volunteer Firefighters Association. Very few people came in to the Fire Department to ask questions.

Cindy Watz and Wanda Falcone both said they did not know about the presentation at the Community Center or they would have attended.

Evelyn Cemper said that the presentation was advertised on the reader board.

Mike Hyde said his home owners insurance is with State Farm and his premium is not based on the ISO rating. They base their rates strictly on zip code. Also, he falls within the 5 mile radius so the closure of a fire station would not affect him. He stated that the majority of the population is in the south end of the Fire District as opposed to the north end of the Fire District and that should be taken into consideration. If you are only closing one fire station it should be Station 43/Bee Mill Station.

Wayne Schaepli asked about EMT's and why they are leaving. Why they are going to Quilcene?

Commissioner Garrison said that Chief Herbst is the main EMT. One lives out of district.

Mike Hyde asked about Mike Eastman.

Chief Herbst responded that Michael Eastman had never been a member of the Brinnon Fire Department. He chose to go and join the Quilcene Fire Department. He became an EMT through Quilcene.

A community member asked about Larry Clouser.

Chief Herbst said that Larry had left the Brinnon Fire Department and joined the Quilcene Department before he arrived here. Also, Larry has just recently taken a leave of absence from the Quilcene Fire Department because he does not have the time to commit to the department.

Don Coleman said that he left the department because he found it to difficult to work with the current chief. After first taking a one year leave of absence, he chose to resign from the Fire Department. He feels that a segment of the community has lost confidence with the Fire Department, and Don did not feel like his services were wanted or appreciated. He feels there are management and personnel issues that need to be dealt with. He thinks that people feel there is not fiscal responsibility. The commissioners should try to close the gap.

Commissioner Garrison responded that a volunteer is not here for a certain reason. They are here for the community. Whether you get along with someone or not, personalities should be left outside the door. Ron stated that he is not speaking for the other commissioners, but for himself. He has been here for 25 years, and as a volunteer you are here for the community.

Brandy Walker said that it is important to be appreciated, and that personalities do matter. Commissioner Garrison asked for any further discussion. He thanked everyone for attending.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner McEdwards seconded the motion. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Ware
District Secretary