

JCFPD #4 COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP

APRIL 9, 2008

The workshop was called to order by Chairman Ron Garrison at 10:01 am. Those present were Commissioner Ken McEdwards, Commissioner Meril Smith, Chief Bob Herbst, and Secretary Peggy Ware.

Community members in attendance were Dawn Audette, Jim Watson, Jacque Hartley, Larry Hartley, George Sickel, Ron Stephens, and Michael Eastman.

Commissioner Garrison stated that the purpose of the workshop is for discussion in regards to an EMS Levy and a Fire Levy Lid Lift. The workshop is for fact finding and information gathering only. No decisions will be made, and no action will be taken. All action will be taken at a regular Fire Commissioners meeting.

Chief Herbst stated that George Sickel had given him a list of questions and that the questions and answers had been posted on the website.

Chief Herbst presented the following information:

1. Cost estimate breakdown to complete Station 41 living quarters
2. Staffing to include spreadsheet for staff hiring; explanation of “sleepers”, “FIT program”, “resident program”, “points”, and “stipend”
3. President of the Volunteer Ambulance and Firefighters Association pooled the Volunteers and 7 out of 8 Volunteers would like to have FF/EMT’s, with one Volunteer preferring a FF/Paramedic
4. Hood Canal Bridge closure is scheduled for May 1, 2009

Commissioner Garrison stated that the Fire District has received numerous telephone calls from Paramedics and EMT’s asking when we will be hiring.

Chief Herbst emphasized that hiring dates are not set in stone.

Commissioner Garrison asked for public comment.

Jim Watson asked what is the central issue—levy choices?

Chief Herbst said the options are a Levy Lid Lift to raise the Fire Levy to \$1.00/\$1,000.00 of assessed valuation, an EMS Levy of up to \$.50/\$1,000.00 of assessed valuation, and raising the Fire Levy up to \$1.50/\$1,000.00 of assessed valuation. The Commissioners have to decide on the exact issue and the specifics of the Resolution.

Jim Watson asked exactly what the increase would be because the Bond will be paid off this year.

Chief Herbst said that he could look up the exact amount after the workshop. With the current levy rate and the Bond, tax payers are currently paying over \$1.00/\$1,000.00 of assessed valuation. He would estimate the increase might be \$.45/\$1,000.00 of assessed valuation.

Jim Watson asked if insurance rates would go down.

Chief Herbst said no. We have a small core of volunteers, and we have to meet ISO standards to retain our current rating.

Jim Watson asked what it would take to attain an ISO rating of 7.

Chief Herbst said that any change takes specified water capabilities, staffing, and your equipment has to meet age requirements. After meeting the staffing and equipment requirements, it takes a great deal of time, commitment, and practice to prepare for the testing.

George Sickel referenced his list of questions, asking for the number of actual fire calls. Chief Herbst said that approximately 14% of the fire calls actually required water flow.

George Sickel asked about the cost for a paramedic.

Chief Herbst stated the cost of an entry level paramedic at Port Ludlow, and the cost for the paramedic in Quilcene.

George Sickel asked about the timing of hiring FF/EMT's and the SAFER Grant.

Chief Herbst stated that the time frame for hiring is not set in stone, and that matching funds are required with the SAFER Grant and the Fire District does not have the excess funds that are necessary for this program.

Chief Herbst stated that many grants are changing from individual agencies to regional grants.

George Sickel said that the Commissioners should talk to Port Ludlow and Quilcene because they have been through this.

Commissioner Garrison said these issues have been discussed at the Jefferson County Fire Commissioners and Secretaries Association meetings.

Michael Eastman asked how many of our transports require a paramedic.

Chief Herbst responded that in 2007 a paramedic actually transported 37 patients.

Michael Eastman stated that we should hire a paramedic to share the emergency load with Quilcene.

George Sickel told the Commissioners that they should have Jim Watson tell them how to pass a levy.

Jacque Hartley stated that she would like to see the Commissioners exert as much energy on how we can get a paramedic as they do on why we can't get a paramedic.

The Union was discussed.

Jacque Hartley asked who the ILS techs are.

Chief Herbst verbally gave her the list of ILS techs. He stated that an ILS tech has to have at least 12 sticks per year, and has an evaluation of their skills.

Commissioner Garrison asked Jim Watson to meet with he and the Chief to discuss options.

George Sickel stressed the budget and taxes.

Jim Watson mentioned that there are members of the community that live in extreme poverty in relation to ambulance billing.

The next levy workshop will be held on May 7, 2008 at 7:00 pm at Brinnon Fire Department/Station 41.

The workshop ended at 11:50 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Ware
District Secretary