SOUTH KING FIRE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS MEETING
September 24, 2024
Station 68 and Virtual Meeting
5:00 PM
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting on August 27, 2024
4. Commissioners Comments
5. Public Comments – Please state your name and address for the record (please limit comments to 3 minutes or less)
6. Commissioner Committee Reports
7. Administrative Team Report
8. September Budget
9. Approval of Vouchers
10. The Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (c) To consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of decreased price. However, final action selling or leasing public property shall be taken in a meeting open to the public; Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session
11. The Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1 (i). To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session.
12. Good of the Order
13. Adjournment

We will respect each other and their opinion, and we will hold each member accountable to confront inappropriate behavior, or behavior that does not add value.

The Board of Fire Commissioners may add items and take action on items not listed on the agenda.

SOUTH KING FIRE
August 27, 2024
Station 68 and Virtual

Commissioner Baruso called the regular meeting to order at 1700 hours with Commissioners Vadino, Gates and Burrus in attendance. Commissioner Fuller was on his way. Board Secretary Lauri Perry recording.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Burrus.

To listen to the full meeting, please visit our website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Baruso asked for a Motion and second to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from July 25, 2024, and the Special Meeting Minutes from August 12, 2024, and August 21, 2024. Commissioner Burrus made a Motion to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gates. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Burrus had no comments.

Commissioner Vadino had no comments.

Commissioner Gates had no comments.

Commissioner Baruso thanked everyone that worked on the SBC, now that it has validated and been approved. Your hard work and assistance is very much appreciated.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ed Rickert Driver Engineer at Station 64 thanked the Board for meeting with Representatives of the organized workforce at South King Fire last week. To hear his full comments, please listen to the recording of the meeting.

At 1703 hours Commissioner Fuller arrived.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Vadino reported that the Policy and Procedure committee met and the proposed Station Visit policy is in your packet. At last month's meeting there was a question on who would schedule the visits, so the committee met and we have updated the policy that they will be scheduled via the Chief and/or their designee. Commissioner Burrus continued to have a few questions such as when the visit will be confirmed, how far in advance can the visits be scheduled? It is noted that they have to be scheduled 7 days in advance. Commissioner Burrus asked Eric Quinn our Legal Counsel, what are we protecting ourselves against with this policy? And please give an example. Eric Quinn provided an example that occurred in a different department. A Commissioner developed a rapport with firefighters and made commitments to hire additional staff, without consulting with the

Chief or other Commissioners. This resulted in months and months of grievances and picketing and disparagement of management and the entire Board of Commissioners. All because one Commissioner went off on their own and made a commitment. This resulted in another question by Commissioner Burrus. Why is it that we have waited until 2024 to have this policy? Eric Quinn noted that he tends to answer legal questions or policy questions when he is asked the question. He doesn't typically come before the Board telling them that there are policies that you should have. He addresses the issues as they arise, and he was asked the question by a Commissioner in 2024.

Commissioner Burrus added that he sees the Station Visits as a check and balance. They are a way to find out if what we're being told is the whole story. It's part of their job to provide checks and balances. If all we do is get information from one or two people, we are not doing our job.

Commissioner Gates added that he disagrees with station visits based on the email dated February 1st that Chief talked to almost all of the Zone 3 chiefs and no other agency presently allows Commissioners to conduct station visits; plus, the fact that our Legal Counsel says we can legally do it, doesn't mean that we should. Commissioner Gates added that he understands that a few of our Commissioners really think this is the way to go, but he has a hard time believing that our Attorney and the Zone 3 Fire Chiefs are wrong in their thinking.

A question was raised about the days and hours for station visits, which are the "working hours" that are listed in the firefighters CBA.

After discussion, the Station Visit Policy was sent back to the Policy and Procedure for one more review.

For the full discussion and comments on Station Visits, please watch the full meeting, available on our website.

Creation of Culture Engagement Committee – there was discussion about Director Stevens and HR making a presentation at the last Board meeting. Commissioner Baruso added that they are looking for some input, some insight, and some oversight from the Commissioners. To give them that oversight, we need to establish a committee. The language that is being presented for the creation of the committee is just to say, you know we are here for you, and we can help you. What do you need? It's not to meet with them all the time, its more to kind of like maybe help them get to where they want to go. They can also ask us for input.

Commissioner Vadino made moved to approve the Culture and Engagement Committee. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gates. Motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION 654 – AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY

Chief Van Valkenburg read Resolution 654 into record. Commissioner Gates moved approval of Resolution 654. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Vadino. Motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM REPORT

Chief Van Valkenburg noted that all of the Commissioners should have received their Staff Reports. He added that the Audit has been completed, we had a clean audit and a job well done by Executive Director Ganem, Finance Supervisor Barret and the rest of the Finance team.

We also had a nice story about MIH, it's great that they are up and running and making a difference in our community. Tomorrow evening, we have our first Cadet Program meeting. This will be a parent orientation of the Cadet Program or the Explorer Program. Chief Van Valkenburg asked if the Commissioner had any questions.
Ganem
Commissioner Fuller added that this report shows the progress that people are making and the progress that people have made. Chief Van Valkenburg added that we have been contacted by the Washington State Rating and Survey Bureau (WSRB), it's time for a rerate. We will be slightly intention as to who will work on this process as some of us have gone through the process and some have not. We will contact them to see if we can schedule their visit in May 2025.

Chief Van Valkenburg gave a 2024 Staffing presentation. Chief began noting that the Operations overtime is currently over budget. He is going to talk a little about the contributing factors and some of the things the district has done to help mitigate where we are at. Some of the contributing factors are:

- Protected Leave - Includes FMLA, Military Leave and Disability Leave – 24 weeks of FMLA leave are afforded to them for a variety of reasons. When people are on leave it often ends up resulting in overtime. This leave is totally appropriate, and we value the fact that we have this benefit, but it does put some pressure on staffing because that staff member is not here for an extended period of time.
- Sick Leave – We have people calling in sick when they aren't sick. This has been a problem for multiple of years. An example would be someone that calls in sick repeatedly on debit days, this is a pattern.
- We staff above 29 and there are a number of reasons for that
    - If we staff above 29 it generally creates overtime
    - We backfill for training demands.
    - We backfill for instructors that we have to pay.
    - We have to pay overtime for those individuals when they are off duty to attend classes
    - The tenure of our department is very young
- Our firefighters are getting worn down because they are working more shifts to cover for the vacancies.
    - These vacancies create fatigue, and this fatigue can lead to another vacancy, an injury and low morale.
- To address operational staffing, the district has progressively increased budgeted Firefighter staffing levels by 16 positions or plus four per shift.
    - 2020 – 130 Frontline Firefighters
    - 2024 – 146 Frontline Firefighters
- Operational overtime has also doubled in the same period.
- Annual staffing and overtime increases equates to a multimillion-dollar investment in operational staffing to provide the best services to the communities we serve.

For the full presentation on operational staffing, please watch the full meeting, available on our website.

AUGUST BUDGET

Executive Director Ganem noted that we are eight (8) months into the year. Last month we were .50% over budget due to processing retro pay, based on approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA). The Administrative Team has reviewed each divisional budget and put an emphasis on making sure we are sticking to our budget as much as possible. For August, our usual target is 66.67% and we are currently at 66.57% so we are .10% under budget for the year.

Finance Supervisor Kelsey Barrett read into the record the list of expenditures for the month of August.

Mid-Month Utility Warrants (#119543-119558) totaling	$42,945.70
Accounts Payable Warrants (#119559-119643) totaling	$1,348,707.76
Payroll Direct Deposit Document for 235 indiv. DD004868-005103 totaling	$1,635,276.60
Payroll Electronic Federal Tax Payment totaling	$349,343.73
Medical Claims as of August 20, 2024	$298,519.39
TOTAL approval	$3,674,793.18

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Vadino made a Motion to approve the August vouchers. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Burrus. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 1804 hours the Board convened into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 91) (i). To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session.

Joining the Board in Executive Session will be the Executive Secretary Perry and Legal Counsel.

At this time, we will recess for 2 minutes to get everyone transferred into Executive Session. We anticipate Executive Session lasting for 30 minutes. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session. At the end of Executive Session, we will take a 2 minutes recess to get everyone transferred back over to the Regular Meeting.

At 1836 hours Executive Session was extended 10 minutes.

At 1846 hours Executive Session ended and the transition back to the Regular Meeting.

At 1848 hours the Regular Meeting reconvened. Commissioner Baruso announced that we are out of Executive Session. Commissioner Vadino moved that the Board conduct a Performance Appraisal of Chief Van Valkenburg at the discretion and/or direction and supervision of our District Legal Counsel. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Burrus. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 1849 hours.

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COMMISSIONER (CHAIR)

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COMMISSIONER (VICE CHAIR)

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COMMISSIONER

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COMMISSIONER

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COMMISSIONER

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BOARD SECRETARY

DRAFT