SOUTH KING FIRE
Special Meeting
December 3, 2025
Station 68

Commissioner Baruso called the meeting to order at 0845 hours with Commissioners Fuller, Gates Vadino and Burrus in attendance. Board Secretary Lauri Perry recording.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by HR Supervisor Sherese Gamble.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Gates had no comments.

Commissioner Vadino had no comments.

Commissioner Burrus had no comments.

Commissioner Fuller congratulated Commissioner Gates for receiving the keys to the City of Federal Way and last night's Federal Way City Council meeting.

Commissioner Baruso congratulated Commissioner Gates and family, very well deserved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Baruso turned the meeting over to Chief Smedley of ESCI Consulting. Today we will have the public interviews for the next Fire Chief for South King Fire. We will be starting with our first candidate at 9:00 am.

FIRE CHIEF CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS - RICHARD MCGUIRE

Chief Smedley welcomed Chief McGuire to the South King Fire Chief interview, this is a three-part process today. You will have 20 minutes to answer our prepared questions. The Commissioners introduced themselves, then we started the interview process.

Chief Smedley noted that concludes part one of the interview process. You will have 10 minutes to present the spot topic on what are three (3) current trends in the fire service. At 0920 hours

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Baruso reported that the Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g). To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140 (4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;

Joining the Board in Executive Session will be Assistant Chief Michaels, Executive Secretary Perry, HR Supervisor Gamble, Finance Manager Barrett, Local 2024 President Bastin, Chief Smedley and Richard McGuire. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session. At this time we will recess until 1020 hours.

At 1020 hours the special meeting reconvened.

FIRE CHIEF CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS – CHARLES BUTTERFIELD

Chief Smedley welcomed Chief Butterfield to the South King Fire Chief interview, this is a three-part process today. This portion of the interview will be 20 minutes, then it's a hard stop. The Commissioners introduced themselves, then we started the interview process.

Chief Smedley noted that concludes part one of the interview process. You will have 10 minutes to present the spot topic on what are three (3) current trends in the fire service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Baruso reported that the Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g). To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140 (4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;

Joining the Board in Executive Session will be Assistant Chief Michaels, Executive Secretary Perry, HR Supervisor Gamble, Finance Manager Barrett, Local 2024 President Bastin, Chief Smedley and Charles Butterfield. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session. At 1040 hours we recessed until 1250 hours.

At 1250 hours the special meeting reconvened.

FIRE CHIEF CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS – RYAN WOODEY

Chief Smedley welcomed Chief Woodey to the South King Fire Chief interview, this is a three-part process today. This portion of the interview will be 20 minutes, then it's a hard stop. The Commissioners introduced themselves, then we started the interview process.

Chief Smedley noted that concludes part one of the interview process. You will have 10 minutes to present the spot topic on what are three (3) current trends in the fire service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Baruso reported that the Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g). To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140 (4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take

final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;

Joining the Board in Executive Session will be Assistant Chief Michaels, Executive Secretary Perry, HR Supervisor Gamble, Finance Manager Barrett, Local 2024 President Bastin, Chief Smedley and Ryan Woodey. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session. At 1309 hours we recessed until 1430 hours.

At 1430 hours the special meeting reconvened.

FIRE CHIEF CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS – MARION WATKINS

Chief Smedley welcomed Chief Watkins to the South King Fire Chief interview, this is a three-part process today. This portion of the interview will be 20 minutes, consisting of six (6) questions. The Commissioners introduced themselves, then we started the interview process.

Chief Smedley noted that we are going to transition to the spot topic. What are three (3) current trends in the fire service. You will have ten (10) minutes for this portion of the interview.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Baruso reported that the Board will convene into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g). To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140 (4), discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;

Joining the Board in Executive Session will be Assistant Chief Michaels, Executive Secretary Perry, HR Supervisor Gamble, Finance Manager Barrett, Local 2024 President Bastin, Chief Smedley and Chief Watkins. Action may or may not be taken after Executive Session. At 1454 hours we recessed until 1605 hours.

At 1605 hours Executive Session was extended until 1705 hours.

At 1705 hours Executive Session was extended until 1735 hours.

At 1735 hours Executive Session was extended until 1800 hours.

At 1800 hours Executive Session was extended until 1845 hours.

At 1845 hours Executive Session was extended until 1900 hours.

At 1900 hours Executive Session was extended until 1930 hours

At 1930 hours Executive Session was extended until 1940 hours.

At 1940 hours Commissioner Baruso reported that the Special meeting has reconvened. It's important to clearly communicate how we arrived at this decision. So first we wanted to thank everyone out there, especially our South King Family. So, over the past year, we've shared perspectives about the organizational leadership qualities. You expect what you believe is needed for the future of this department. We heard you and your feedback directly shapes this entire process. To ensure transparency, objectivity, we contracted with ESCI to assess the department's leadership needs. The comprehensive report helps us identify our qualities which are essential for the next Fire Chief. With that foundation, we made a decision to conduct a national search; one that would prioritize the best interests of our community, the department and our members. So, the process looked like this, we attracted a number of highly qualified candidates from across the country. Through structured evaluations, leadership reviews, and alignment with the department needs. The Board narrowed the field to the top four candidates. The finalists were invited back to engage directly with you, our workforce, and our community. We provided multiple opportunities for feedback, including listening sessions, surveys and stakeholder interviews. The feedback from our firefighters, community members, county partners and commissioners all played a role in our final decision.

Commissioner Gates first of all thanked all of the candidates that applied for the fire Chief position and all of our employees for participating in the process. Commissioner Gates moved to extend a conditional offer of employment for the Fire Chief position to Ryan Woodey, subject to a background check, medical and psychological evaluation and successful negotiation of a personal services contract. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Burrus. Commissioner Baruso did a roll call vote:

Commissioner Burrus - aye
Commissioner Fuller - aye
Commissioner Gates - aye
Commissioner Vadino - aye
Commissioner Baruso - aye

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Baruso thanked everyone for their patience and having stayed on the meeting during the long process. We don't have any other business so the meeting adjourned at 1945 hours.

COMMISSIONER (CHAIR)

COMMISSIONER (VICE CHAIR)

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

BOARD SECRETARY