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REGULAR FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING

June 8, 2020

4:00 P.M.

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Commissioner Pearson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Kester led the Board and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

All Fire Commissioners, Chief Collins, Deputy Chief O'Brien, Deputy Chief Arold, Division Chief Schaffer, and Finance Director Golden attended by teleconference.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. May 2020 Financial Report

Finance Director Angela Golden presented the May 2020 financial reports that were included in the Board packet. In her report to the Board, the following items were highlighted:

- The reports show that we are 42% through the year.
- Revenues are currently at 39% as of May 31, as compared to 48.7% last year.
- Our property taxes are down 9.53%, or approximately \$4.1 million.
- Cash balance is down \$3.2 million.
- Expenses are at 38% through May, compared to 36.4% last year, with the main differences being capital and the Pension transfer.
- We spent \$1.8 million on capital this year and spent only \$211,000 last year at this point in time. The capital was mainly for the land for the new stations and the maintenance facility as well as payments toward the tiller.
- The Department has transferred \$600,000 to the Pension Fund as compared to \$400,000 at this point last year.
- Pension Fund revenue is at 48.5% as compared to 37% last year due to the Pension transfer.
- The Pension expenses are at 35%% compared to 32% last year due to increased medical costs.



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- The Medical Self-Insurance revenue was at 40.2% compared to 40% last year.
- Expenses for the Medical Self-Insurance Fund stand at 28.7% compared to 34% last year. Due to the pandemic, elective surgeries were delayed and are expected to increase in the future.

Brief discussion followed, and the Board thanked Finance Director Golden for her report.

2. May 2020 Response Totals

Division Chief Schaffer provided a summary of the May 2020 Response Totals that were included in the Board packet and highlighted the following items:

- Incidents are down by 197 calls from last year, during the pandemic time frame.
- Auto Aid calls received are higher than our Auto Aid calls provided.
- There is a fluctuation in our responses over this time last year, and this may be due to the pandemic.
- Structure fire and single fire responses increased in May.
- Brush fires also increased in May. Temperatures in the 90 degree range and some dry areas could have contributed to the increase.
- There were fewer tech rescue calls in May.
- May had 7 hazmat natural gas calls. This most likely due to the current ban on construction.

There were no questions from the Board, and Commissioner Pearson thanked Division Chief Schaffer for his report.

3. Finance Revenue Update

Finance Director Golden reported that the County did not release the numbers for the first week of June until about five minutes prior to the meeting, and she did not have the opportunity to update her spreadsheet. At the end of May, our collections are at 40.82% compared to 55.71% at the same point last year. Finance Director Golden said that the Treasurer's office did send out an email based on county wide collections, and they said that collections are still estimated to come in at 90%. For the year, countywide collections were at 53.44% compared to 47.55% a year ago. The County has posted our collections through June 6 with \$411,000 for the first week, but the spreadsheet was not updated due to time constraints.



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Discussion followed, and Finance Director Golden said that she would send out the updated information from the County to the Board later today. The Board thanked Finance Director Golden for her report.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Pearson stated the consent agenda consisted of items considered routine which are approved by a single motion. A Board member may add or remove any item from the consent agenda to be considered separately. No items were removed from the agenda.

Commissioner Pearson said that at the close of the summary of the consent agenda, he would ask each of the Board members to vote via a voice vote. He stated he would call their name and ask them to say “aye” or “nay” for approval of the agenda following the motion to approve and second the consent agenda.

Commissioner Pearson said that the consent agenda included the following items:

1. Approval of Minutes: May 26, 2020
2. Approval of Vouchers:
 - #259036-259043 in the amount of \$4,608.66
 - #259048-259075 in the amount of \$85,524.66
 - 19 EFT's in the amount of \$446,455.95
 - 13 EFT's in the amount of \$13,860.09
 - UHC wire transfer in the amount of \$28,784.82
3. Approval of Payroll:
 - May 2020 in the amount of \$1,220,716.50
4. Commissioner Meeting Approval- Webinar 1 with Attorney Brian Snure, Saturday, May 30, 2020 (9:00 a.m. – Noon) – Roles, Personnel, Duties, and Finances Class

Commissioner Burch motioned to approve the consent agenda, and Commissioner Guarisco seconded the motion. Commissioner Pearson polled the Board members for their votes. Commissioner Kester voted “aye.” Commissioner Guarisco voted “aye.” Commissioner Burch voted “aye.” Commissioner Anderson voted “aye.” Commissioner Pearson voted “aye.” Motion carried.



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ADMINISTRATION REMARKS:

None.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS:

Commissioner Anderson had no comments.

Commissioner Burch expressed his appreciation of the reports of the recent fires and other information that was communicated. He complimented the report last week that was sent by Captain Hedebeck and thanked Chief Collins for his communications as well.

Commissioner Guarisco commented that he had no personal remarks, but he asked if there was an update on the new facilities and the new recruit academy.

Chief Collins said that he would answer the questions from Commissioner Guarisco, and he reported that the new recruits were scheduled for physical examination the last week of June, but that is contingent on the occupational medicine provider being able to provide the physicals. As of today, Chief Collins said that they are still not doing full physicals. As Spokane moves to phase three, whenever that occurs, they anticipate being able to provide full physicals. We are holding appointments for the group, as physicals are their last piece of the hiring process, other than formal letters of job offers, following the completion of the physicals. Chief Collins said that we are still on course for an August 1 recruit academy start date.

In terms of Station 11, he said that we closed on the property and now own the property. The next phase was to start the design and engineering process with the architect and contractors, and we put that on hold because of the current financial situation. We had budgeted about \$1 million to start that project this year. Due to the uncertainty in the finances, we put that on hold until we have a better idea, towards the end of the year, what our finances are going to look like. Chief Collins said that we are actually at a good point to take a break, because we had closed on the property and not started the engineering part yet, so we are able to bring the process to a stop at a point where we didn't interrupt work that was occurring. Commissioner Anderson asked a question at this point regarding the design build process on the new station. Chief Collins asked Deputy Chief O'Brien to address the process.

Deputy Chief O'Brien commented that we had state approval to go through the progressive design build process. We were working with our project managers, OAC, and we had a submittal of qualifications process that we had started prior to the pandemic with five



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different applicants. Each of the applicants is a partnership between a construction company and architect, and they submit their qualifications. DC O'Brien commented that Finance Director Golden and DC Arold met and went through the process with OAC and added those qualifications that were submitted. That is where we stopped the process, and we have not selected a construction company or architect at this point in time.

Deputy Chief O'Brien said that the next step would be to narrow it down to three out of the five applicants and then conduct interviews when we resume the process. After one is selected, they would start providing drawings to SVFD. He also commented that we could start the construction process, dirt work, and so on while they are working on the drawings. DC O'Brien added that we will start with the maintenance facility.

Brief discussion followed, and Commissioner Anderson asked if we had to check the soil and have it tested. DC O'Brien said that there are two phases, and we completed phase one, which includes checking to determine that the location is not an ancient burial site and the ground doesn't contain hazardous materials.

Commissioner Guarisco and Commissioner Anderson thanked Chief Collins and Deputy Chief O'Brien for their information.

Commissioner Kester thanked the Chief and Captain Hedebeck for their reports last week.

Commissioner Pearson commented about the WFCA seminar presented by attorney Brian Snure last Saturday for the WFCA. He said that the seminar was interesting and informative, and not as formal as some others, and that the seminar was well done. The seminar was done via video conferencing so the Commissioners that signed up for the webinar did not have to go anywhere to attend. Commissioner Pearson added that this was the first webinar that Attorney Snure had presented, and despite a few video glitches, he did a great job. He thanked everyone that attended and found it to be well worth the time and energy to attend, and it allowed everyone to attend remotely and not have to travel.

Commissioner Pearson also thanked the Chief for being very proactive in advising the Board updates regarding what is occurring in the Department. Working in conjunction with our Finance Director, Chief Collins is doing a great job keeping us posted regarding our financial information, and following up with the County.

In closing his remarks, through these virtual meetings, Commissioner Pearson added that we have eliminated our public comment, but he encouraged anyone watching with comments or thoughts they would like to share with the Commissioners to contact him



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through his email at pearsonm@spokanevalleyfire.com or contact his personal cell number at (509) 994-8371, and he will pass the information on to all members of the Board.

Commissioner Pearson acknowledged Commissioner Burch who added that he had watched last week's Liberty Lake meeting and liked what they had on their agenda. The agenda had links to allow the viewer to make a public comment and provided several ways to do so.

Commissioner Guarisco commented that ease of navigation would be great so they can get to the home page on the website. He suggested a banner on the homepage that would be seen right away, to make it easier for the public to join in the meeting.

Commissioner Pearson thanked members of the Board for their comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Job Description Revision – Deputy Chief

Chief Collins reported that the Board packet included the original version and the revised version of the Deputy Chief's job description. Chief Collins said that the current job description was last updated in 2013. As mentioned in his staff report, he said that we are currently going through a process with a third party to put together a hiring list for the Deputy Chief position. That process brought attention to the need for a job description review by Staff and himself. The Chief and the Deputy Chiefs reviewed the job description, updating it to make it current in the responsibilities, balancing the workload and bringing it current to the organization today rather than seven years ago. Chief Collins said that he would recommend that the Board approve the change to the Deputy Chief's job description so that we can get the update to the third party and move forward with the hiring process.

Commissioner Burch motioned to approve the revised job description for Deputy Chief.

Commissioner Kester asked to make a comment before a motion to second, to be able to ask some questions of the Chief. Commissioner Pearson commented that per Robert's Rules of Order, we have a motion, then a second, then discuss prior to voting on the motion.



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Commissioner Guarisco seconded the motion, and Commissioner Pearson called for discussion.

Commissioner Kester stated that he was aware that the Deputy Chiefs are not part of a union, but he asked Chief Collins if this job description change would impact both Local 3701 and Local 876 because of the delegation of authorities to new duties that are going to be given to the Battalion Chiefs as well as the Captains if they are moved up to the Battalion Chief positions. The Captains could be impacted by this new job description. Commissioner Kester asked if that was correct or not.

Chief Collins said that is not correct. The Captains report to the Operations Chief just like they currently do now. There's no role change or any change to the suppression Battalion Chiefs reporting structure job or anything else. In terms of the job duties, there are no new job duties. We are just rearranging who they report to. We haven't redefined jobs of anybody in 3701 and 876 in terms of work. The work is the same.

Brief discussion followed. Commissioner Kester thanked the Chief for the information.

Commissioner Pearson commented to Chief Collins that we went from 2013 to 2020 with the current Deputy Chief Job description, and he appreciates the updated language in the job description revision. He said that it seems more participatory, and that some of the terms were more focused on the Strategic Plan than the 2013 version. Commissioner Pearson said that as he went through the job description document line by line, he was impressed that it was brought up to date to reflect current duties and responsibilities. He added that he appreciated the work done on the updated job description, and he appreciated the time Chief and Staff spent to make it current and bring it up to date.

Commissioner Guarisco commented that in the future it would be nice to be able to compare the two documents side by side with the language that was changed in a draft change type of format. He added that he was able to go back and forth to where changes were made. It just may have been easier to compare the updated version to the old version using one change format copy.

Chief Collins noted that we typically would do that; however, the past changed version of this one was accepted, and then the old version vanished after it was accepted. Chief Collins said that in the future these will be presented in change format.

Commissioner Kester thanked Chief Collins for clarifying the questions he had asked.



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Commissioner Pearson said that Commissioner Burch moved to approve the revision to the job description for Deputy Chief, and Commissioner Guarisco had seconded the motion. He called for a voice vote from members of the Board.

Commissioner Anderson voted "aye." Commissioner Burch voted "aye." Commissioner Guarisco voted "aye." Commissioner Kester voted "aye." Commissioner Pearson voted "aye." Motion carried.

Commissioner Pearson said that we will work on the recommendations from the Commissioner Comments section of this meeting in reference to how we can enhance our presentation to the public. In particular, access to viewing the meeting from the website and looking at how the public can participate in making a public comment by getting their comments presented to the Board either in writing, on the screen, or other methods.

Chief Collins commented that we are in the process of reworking the website so that on the opening pages there is a banner that allows easy access to the virtual meeting. We have a work ticket into the web developer, and we are just awaiting their availability to make that change on our website.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Commissioner Pearson announced that the next meeting would be held via teleconference June 22, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Pearson acknowledged Commissioner Guarisco.

Commissioner Guarisco moved to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Burch seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted "aye" when polled to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Pearson adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.


Michael Pearson (Jun 26, 2020 14:28 PDT)

Mike Pearson
Chairman
Board of Fire Commissioners

MP/djc