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REGULAR FIRE COMMISSIONER MEETING

via Videoconference

October 11, 2021 4:00 P.M.

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

ROLL CALL:

Fire Commissioners Anderson, Asmus, Burch, and Kester were in attendance. Fire Chief Bryan Collins, Deputy Chief Soto, Division Chief of EMS Michael Charter, and Finance Director Angela Golden represented Administration. Chairman Burch called for a motion to approve an excused absence for Commissioner Guarisco. It was so moved by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Asmus. Motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. September 2021 Financial Report

Finance Director Golden reported:

- General Fund Revenues are at 63 percent compared to 56 percent this time last year. In 2020 property tax collections were down approximately one percent, so the department budgeted two percent for 2021. To date, property tax revenue collection has been normal. Expenditures are at 65 percent compared to 67 percent this time last year.
- Maintenance and Operations expenses are still within budget but a bit higher than in 2020 when the department implemented a spending freeze due to the uncertain property tax collections.
- Pension Fund Revenues are at 58 percent compared to 50 percent in 2020 due to the General Fund operating transfer. Expenditures are at 55 percent compared 64 percent in 2020; the medical claims are down, and that could be due to reduced claims or the timing of reimbursement requests.



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- Medical Fund Revenues are at 78 percent compared to 73 percent in 2020 due to prescription rebates and insurance recovery. Premera notifies the department each week when the stop-loss threshold is reached, and the transaction is recorded immediately to the revenue as opposed to United Healthcare, the department's former health insurer, who would notify the department yearly. Expenditures are at 75 percent compared to 61 percent in 2020. Claims are higher than this time last year, however, claims were down in 2020 due to the pandemic and the availability of services. The difference also reflects stop-loss reimbursements; United Healthcare netted those which would result in the expenditures to report lower.

2. September 2021 Response Totals

On behalf of Deputy Chief Arold, Division Chief Michael Charter reported:

- Total responses for the month of September are 1,960 making for a total of 16,660 responses to date which accounts for a 21.76 percent response increase compared to this time last year.
- Mutual Aid from SVFD equates to approximately 40 percent responses to District 8, one third to City of Spokane, one quarter District 9, and the other surrounding districts and unserved areas make up the rest.
- Mutual Aid to SVFD equates to approximately 60 percent from District 8, one third from City of Spokane, and eight percent from District 9.
- The busiest response areas for September were Station 8, Station 7, and Station 1.
- The most significant area of change was in EMS with a 10 percent increase in Alpha/Bravo responses and a 36.5 percent increase in ALS responses.
- September had the fourth highest total responses this year but had the highest responses in any month of the four previous years. There is a down-trend in the last three months but an up-trend in the last four years.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commissioner Burch repeated the regular instructions for public comment: *"Please see our website www.spokanevalleyfire.com to sign up prior to the meeting to make a public comment; all comments must be received in writing by 2 p.m. prior to the start of this meeting."*

Commissioner Burch stated one comment was received. He read a comment from citizen Paul Binkoski who wrote *"My public comment is, with Schaeffer firing several dozen Spokane City Firefighters and District 8 considering removing a Paramedic will these actions have an adverse effect on the service that SVFD provides to its taxpayers? I am asking due to the fact that in 2015 Collins joined with the surrounding Fire Districts and the City of Spokane in an agreement to provide automatic mutual aid sometimes referred to as borderless dispatching. Thank you."*



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Commissioner Burch acknowledged the comment and stated Commissioner Anderson would respond to Mr. Binkoski.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Burch explained that the Consent Agenda consisted of items considered routine, which may be approved by a single motion. A Board member may remove any item from the Consent Agenda to be considered separately. No items were removed from the agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes: September 27, 2021
2. Approval of Vouchers:
 - 6 Vouchers in the amount of \$3,728.96
 - 19 EFTs in the amount of \$550,821.43
 - Premera Wire Transfer of \$47,864.34 and \$3,427.85
3. Approval of September Payroll in the amount of \$1,549,316.25
4. Meeting Approvals:
 - Medal of Valor Ceremony for Firefighter Jesse Middleton
 - Kramer Parkway Overpass Groundbreaking Ceremony
5. Travel Approval: None.

Commissioner Burch called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. It was so moved by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Kester. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATION REMARKS:

1. Vaccine Mandate Update

Fire Chief Collins briefed the Board on the history of the Mandatory Vaccination Proclamation, that it affected personnel providing emergency medical services, and reminded them of the two goals of the mission (1) following the law and (2) employee retention. He reported to date 88 percent of SVFD response personnel are or will be fully vaccinated by the October 18 deadline, and the remaining 12 percent have approved medical or religious exemptions. Deputy Chiefs Arold and Soto are assigned to develop a staffing model that supports the department's accommodation considerations.



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SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Commissioner Anderson represented the following committees:

Washington Fire Commissioners Association (WFCA): At the WFCA's annual budget meeting, the approximately \$600,000 budget was approved and sent to WFCA Board of Directors for approval. The budget has a 5 percent deficit compared to the 2021 budget and includes a cost-of-living adjustment review for employees; the Seattle-Everett area is reporting a 5.2 percent Consumer Price Index increase.

Facilities: Commissioner Anderson met with Deputy Chief Soto regarding the hiring of a Mechanic that is scheduled to start January 1, 2022. All facility projects have been completed or are in process and scheduled for completion by year end.

Apparatus: High-rise hose packs are being installed on all engines.

Civil Service: One application for the vacant Civil Service position was received and Commissioner Anderson recommends moving forward with an interview.

Commissioner Asmus represented the Selection Committee:

The Selection Committee met with the Western Fire Chiefs Association team that will be assisting the department with the recruitment of the next Fire Chief. They established timelines and are conducting interviews with stakeholders for this process. He thanked all Commissioners for completing the Selection Committee Survey; their input will be valuable for the team in the selection of SVFD's next Fire Chief.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS:

Commissioner Kester thanked Administration for their hard work on the vaccination mandate/accommodation project.

Commissioner Asmus thanked Fire Chief Collins and Union leadership for working together through a difficult circumstance with the vaccine mandate/accommodation project and stated he was pleased to hear of the positive outcome.

Commissioner Anderson agreed with Commissioners Kester and Asmus regarding the vaccine mandate/accommodation project. He also commented that the Medal of Valor Ceremony for Firefighter Jesse Middleton was a wonderful event and a reflection of the dedication of our personnel. He stated that he is so proud of SVFD personnel and especially proud of Jesse for



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his courage. He thanked Fire Chief Collins and Deputy Chief Soto for taking the opportunity to recognize Firefighter Middleton.

Commissioner Burch thanked Commissioners Anderson and Kester for attending the ceremony on his behalf as he unexpectedly became ill. He also agreed with the vaccine mandate/accommodation project comments and thanked those involved. Additionally, he thanked all City Council members and Mayors who issued proclamations for Fire Prevention Week, and to the SVFD Prevention Division and any other staff that were involved in Fire Prevention Week: very well done.

ADVANCED AGENDA:

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Commissioner Burch announced that the next regular meeting will occur Monday, October 25, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. (virtual meeting). Please visit www.spokanevalleyfire.com to sign up prior to the meeting in order to make a public comment; all comments must be received in writing by 2:00 p.m. prior to the start of the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Personnel – Collective Bargaining – per RCW 42.30.140 (4)(b) states “That portion of a meeting during which the governing body is planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or grievance or mediation proceedings, or reviewing the proposals made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress.”



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2. Evaluating Qualifications or Performance of a Public Employee or Official - per RCW 42.30.110(g) "To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee.

Commissioner Burch read RCW Personnel – Collective Bargaining and RCW Evaluating Qualifications or Performance of a Public Employee or Official stating the approximate time of the Executive Session would be 20 minutes and the Board may take action after the Executive Session.

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 4:24 p.m. All Board members and Chief Collins attended the Executive Session.

At 4:44 p.m., it was announced the Executive Session was extended an additional 5 minutes.

At 4:49 p.m., it was announced the Executive Session was extended an additional 2 minutes.

At 4:52 p.m., Commissioner Burch called the meeting back into public session.

Commissioner Burch motioned to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Spokane Valley Fire Department and IAFF Local 3701 for the duration of 2022 through 2024. It was seconded by Commissioner Anderson. With no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Burch called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was so moved by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Kester. The motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Burch adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Patrick Burch
Patrick Burch (Oct 26, 2021 13:09 PDT)

Patrick Burch
Chair
Board of Fire Commissioners
PB/ncc