

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
November 19, 2014**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Skaggs called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Commissioner Robert E. Skaggs, Commissioner Gerald W. Gustafson, Fire Chief Ryan Baskett, Deputy Chief Tony Judd and Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds.

Excused: Commissioner Russell T. Barstow

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chief Baskett requested a five-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 to adopt a position for collective bargaining with no business to follow, a ten-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 to adopt a position for collective bargaining with no business to follow, and a five-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate the qualifications of a public employee with no business to follow, for a total of 20 minutes.

Commissioner Skaggs announced a five-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 to adopt a position for collective bargaining with no business to follow, a ten-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 to adopt a position for collective bargaining with no business to follow, and a five-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate the qualifications of a public employee with no business to follow, for a total of 20 minutes. Executive Session was announced as beginning at 6:07 p.m.

An announcement was made at 6:27 p.m. to extend the Executive Session another 20 minutes.

Commissioner Skaggs reconvened the Special Board Meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Commissioner Skaggs recessed the meeting at 6:48 p.m. to await the availability of the public meeting room.

Commissioner Skaggs reconvened the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Revised 2015 Budget Review with M&O Levy. Chief Baskett delivered a revised Budget Message to the Board. He stated he has allocated the M&O Levy funds exactly as he told citizens he would: to build a higher level of service. In the revised budget, he has put an aggressive hiring plan in place to get the 16 additional responders hired, trained,

and out on the street as quickly as possible in order to open fire stations. With the remaining funds, we plan to front load one-time expenditures so that when the new service level is in place, we will have the recommended two-months operating costs in the reserve account, and adequate funds in our cash carry-over. He stated this philosophy will create more opportunity to decrease the amount needed from the M&O levy in the future to maintain the new service level.

Chief Baskett then directed the Board to the 2015 Tax Revenue Statement and explained there were no changes from the previous statement until the M&O Levy amount, a total of \$2.75 million, collected at a rate of \$0.54 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, bringing the 2015 Total Taxes for Expense Fund to \$12,620,723. With no change in the Non-Tax Revenue figures, the 2015 Projected Revenue is \$14,514,578. The Change in Dedicated Cash Carry Over has been increased to \$850,000 to support the hiring of 16 additional personnel to maintain the new service level. The 2015 Total Projected Expenditures is \$13,343,837. Chief Baskett stated he would address the difference of \$320,741 in more detail shortly and will recommend the Board move it into their reserve fund; however, the Board may decide not to take that money. Chief Baskett noted the rate for the bond for construction of the stations decreased for 2015 by \$0.055 per \$1,000 assessed valuation.

Chief Baskett then referred to the M&O Levy Funding sheet. He explained this list includes all of the line items which increased with the inclusion of the M&O Levy funds. He proceeded to address each line item and provided a brief explanation of each. Commissioner Gustafson requested Chief Baskett elaborate on the Volunteer Hiring line item and asked what kind of volunteers they would be, come from home or residents. Chief Baskett explained he had not determined that yet and was waiting for a recommendation from the Volunteer Program Committee. Discussion ensued between Commissioner Gustafson and Chief Baskett on this topic. Commissioner Skaggs recommended staff add this topic to the agenda for a future Board meeting so program details could be discussed. Chief Baskett agreed. Chief Baskett continued reviewing each line item and concluded by stating the total comes to \$2,429,259, total revenue is \$2,750,000, resulting in a difference of \$320,741, which he recommends the Board transfer into their Reserve Account.

Chief Baskett continued on to the revised 2015 Reserve Fund Breakdown. He explained it now includes Transfer from Expense in the amount of \$100,000, bringing the Revenue Total to \$2,162,451.48. The Reserve Commitments include a 2018 2 months average Operating Costs amount of \$2,300,000 and an increase in Retirement Fund bringing it to \$201,335.19. The total Uncommitted Reserve is (\$338,883.71). He explained the Board can decide to frontload the 2018 Commitment today and move the \$320,741 over, decreasing the deficit. Commissioner Skaggs stated he felt this would be wise to do. Commissioner Gustafson stated he was torn because on the one hand, he would like to give this money back to the taxpayers, but on the other hand, he was not confident in the stability of the economy. Chief Baskett reiterated his recommendation to frontload the Reserve Account. Commissioner Gustafson stated if he agrees to that, the money could not be touched. It must be reserved. Conversation ensued between the Board and staff. Commissioner Gustafson stated he would agree to this, but wanted to revisit the subject during the year to see where we are at. Chief Baskett assured him they would.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to direct staff to place the \$320,741.00 into the Reserve Fund. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Baskett responded staff would make the necessary revision to the final budget for approval at the next Board meeting.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to approve the M&O Levy Funding expenditures for 2015 as presented. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Deputy Chief Judd explained to the Board their budget books contain the revised budget as well as revised justifications sheets with all of the changes highlighted in yellow.

Chief Baskett continued by reviewing his hiring plan with the Board. He stated it lays out how they will get 16 new people on the street and open all stations. He said we have offered jobs to four people on the SAFER Grant and upon certification of the M&O Levy he is requesting to hire two more immediately in order to have them enrolled in training by the first of the year and out on the street by March 1st, for a total of six firefighter/paramedic positions. In addition, he requested to backfill a long-term disability firefighter/paramedic position on December 1st. He continued by outlining the remainder of the plan as follows: Increase minimum staffing to 11 on January 1st and open Station 96 when staffing is available; promote a temporary Training Division position to assist with bringing these new people on and backfill with a temporary hire; advertise for four firefighter positions immediately in order to run a testing process early 2015 for hire in April, with criteria they must be FFI/FF2/HazMat Ops/EMT trained; run an in-house academy in May and have them ready to go June 1st. This will bring the new hire count to 10. Depending on when they are assigned to shift, we will increase minimum staffing to 13 and open Station 96 fulltime as promised to the citizens. We will begin a hiring process for six career firefighter/paramedic positions in September 2015. Chief Baskett asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. They did not.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to approve the Hiring Plan as written. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Baskett requested approval to make conditional offers employment to two additional firefighter/paramedics once the M&O Levy election results are certified.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to approve staff to make conditional offers of employment to two additional firefighter/paramedics once the M&O Levy election results are certified. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the Special Board Meeting of November 19, 2014, was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Robert E. Skaggs, Commissioner

Anthony D. Judd, District Secretary