

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
December 21, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Gustafson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Commissioner Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner Russell T. Barstow, Commissioner Adam G. Rosenlund, Commissioner Gina Blanchard-Reed, Commissioner Ryan Portmann, Fire Chief Pat Dale, Deputy Chief Tony Judd, Deputy Chief Oscar Espinosa and Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds

Commissioner Gustafson led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed the audience.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Portmann moved to approve the Agenda as written. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Oath of Office – Commissioner Gerald Gustafson

District Secretary Tony Judd administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Gerald Gustafson and presented him with a framed certificate.

Employee Recognition – Lieutenant Michael Ray

Deputy Chief Espinosa led the presentation. He asked Lieutenant Ray to come forward. He began by providing some background on the large brush fire incident and Lieutenant Ray's role. He then read into the record the following from the Letter of Recognition to Lieutenant Michael Ray:

Dear Lieutenant Ray,

On behalf of Graham Fire & Rescue, I take great pleasure in recognizing you for the superior performance of your duties while serving on the large brush fire on October 6, 2017. Your exceptional leadership and composure on the battle field were crucial to a successful outcome and have earned you my deep respect and sincere gratitude.

During this highly aggressive, challenging and constantly evolving brush fire, your highly effective assessment and execution of critical fire ground tactics contributed to a positive outcome. Your supportive, action- and solution-oriented leadership style were clearly evident and appreciated.

Michael, please accept my sincere and heartfelt thanks. Your exceptional professionalism, initiative, and dedication to duty reflect great credit upon yourself and our organization. Without dedicated personnel such as yourself, the ultimate mission with which we are charged would not be possible. Thank you.

The Board members each congratulated Lieutenant Ray and some audience members took pictures.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 11, 2017

Approval of Financial Documentation:

Payables: Checks #23715 through #23780 =	\$122,747.06
Payables (Payroll): Checks #23699 through #23714 =	\$476,677.68
Payroll: Checks #23688 through #23698 =	\$13,826.45
Payroll Transfers (EFTs) =	<u>\$615,063.17</u>
TOTAL:	<u>\$1,228,314.36</u>

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve the Consent Agenda in the amount of \$1,228,314.36 after proper audit. Commissioner Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Notice of Final Official Ballot Title

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief's Report

Fire Chief Dale greeted the Board and audience members and then reported on the following:

The Station 91 Firehouse Santa event was very well attended. An estimated 400 people attended and 200 pictures were taken with Santa.

The Santa runs took place on the nights of December 14th, 15th, and 18th. Firefighter Jason Brown took charge of these events as incident commander and did a fantastic job. Firefighter Brown reported they visited an estimated 2,000 homes. The convoy included a fire engine, brush truck and an average of 15 members each night. Donations collected for the South Hill Food Bank totaled approximately 500 pounds of non-perishable food items and monetary donations totaling \$350. Firefighter Brown plans to go to Winco to request a match of that dollar amount or at least a partial match.

The feedback we have received on social media as a result of these events has been fantastic.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Budget, Finance and Audit – No report

Policy and Procedure – No report. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed requested staff print out the Board's policies and make a copy for each Commissioner. Deputy Chief Judd responded the copies would be available at the next meeting.

Mergers/Consolidations – No report

Joint Labor/Management – No report

Strategic Leadership Plan – No report

Legislative Affairs – Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she has contacted all of the Legislators and requested appointments for Legislative Day, January 25th. She has scheduled one appointment so far. She plans to meet with all nine that our District touches. Deputy Chief Judd asked which of the Board members plan to attend, and Commissioners Gustafson, Rosenlund and Blanchard-Reed responded affirmatively. Deputy Chief Judd confirmed three Commissioners and the Fire Chief will attend and stated staff would register them.

Commissioner Portmann requested a list of the bills they, as a Board, should be supporting.

Deputy Chief Judd explained the Chiefs and Commissioners Associations as well as the State

Council of Firefighters will each have a list, and he can gather the documents for the Board to review at the second meeting in January.

NEW BUSINESS

Bid Awards – Gear Washers and Gear Dryers

Fire Chief Dale informed the Board that staff wished to pull the bid awards for gear washers and gear dryers at this time and would place these on the January 8, 2018 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

Fire Chief Dale stated there will be a first reading of the following three resolutions:

Resolution No. 892 – Sole Source U.S. Digital Designs

Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds read Resolution No. 892 – Sole Source U.S. Digital Designs, into the record.

Resolution No. 893 – Sole Source Physio-Control, Inc.

Deputy Chief/District Secretary Tony Judd read Resolution No. 893 – Sole Source Physio-Control, Inc., into the record.

Resolution No. 894 – Surplus IT Equipment

Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds read Resolution No. 894 – Surplus IT Equipment, into the record.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she wanted to revisit an inquiry made at the last meeting by Luke Wahl of IAFF Local 726. He had asked if the M&O levy does not pass, which station or stations would be browned out. She then addressed this question to Chief Dale because she felt he did not have a chance to answer previously and the Board had presented information that was conflicting with what had been presented before. She requested the opportunity for Chief Dale to respond to the question originally posed by Mr. Wahl regarding what the consequences would be for our District if the M&O does not pass.

Fire Chief Dale stated that in anticipation of this question, staff ran a 2019 budget without the passage of the M&O. He explained they made the following assumptions:

- 6% increase in assessed valuations
- \$100 million increase in new construction
- EMS Levy at 101% of 2018
- 3% CPI increase
- 5% medical/dental increase
- 10% L&I increase
- 69 floor personnel
- \$100,000 increase in transport revenue
- Facility routine maintenance and emergency repairs only

Two major areas to be considered include an itemized list of cuts and FTE (full time employee) cuts. Going into 2019 there would be a \$2 million deficit. The following line item cuts would be considered to reach \$2 million:

- Contingency Fund
- Fleet Reserve Fund
- Equipment Replacement Fund
- All Overtime including Suppression, EMS, Training and Pub Ed
- No Quarterly newsletter

- All Training, to include all Suppression and EMS, in-state and out-of-state
- No Landscape materials
- No Capital Facilities repair and maintenance
- No Purchase of New Utility Vehicle
- Compromise ILA with Orting Fire
- Would not backfill positions for Deputy Chief of Operations, Battalion Chief of Training, and one Firefighter position (due to resignation)

Even with all of these cuts we would still be \$85,000 short of the \$2 million-plus deficit. The other policy decision option would be to cut FTE Firefighter positions. To equal \$2 million would require cutting approximately 14 Firefighters. Either option would result in an intermittent reduction in staffing levels. We would have days when we would not meet minimum staffing levels, resulting in the temporary closure of fire stations causing an increase in response times, and as identified previously, the elimination of all operational and safety training. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed thanked Fire Chief Dale for his response.

Commissioner Portmann thanked everyone involved for their impressive outreach efforts during the holiday season and for representing Graham Fire in such a positive way.

Commissioner Portmann announced he had a statement to read to the Board as follows:

Mr. Chair and fellow Board Members,

I have become aware that there is information circulating in the community regarding the upcoming Maintenance and Operations Levy that is patently false. Specifically, I am talking about information related to the number of firefighters expected to be hired by levy dollars. The passage of the Maintenance and Operations Levy will result in firefighters being hired. However, the numbers of firefighters hired on levy dollars will be significantly less than the 30 that is currently circulating in the community. As you recall, we, the Board, voted 4-1 to approve a levy amount that would address the significant growth that our community is facing and resulting increase in calls for service. The dollar amount levied is squarely aimed at reducing or eliminating cross staffing and would potentially provide a third firefighter on the ladder truck. To achieve these objectives 18 firefighters not the 30 as has been purported by some in the community would need to be hired. 18 firefighters that I believe will contribute significantly to saving lives and reducing property loss in our community.

Next, I want to address the notion that the District can choose not to provide mutual aid to our neighboring fire districts. While this statement might be factually accurate, such action by the District would undoubtedly come at a significant cost to our citizens. Mutual means two or more parties. Therefore, if we accept aid from one party the expectation in return is that we provide aid. To put it bluntly, if we fail to provide aid to our neighboring fire districts in their time of need our neighboring fire districts won't provide (aid) to our citizens in their time of need. Furthermore, the giving and accepting of mutual aid was never meant to be perfectly balanced at any given time. One only need to look at our own budget crisis in 2013-2014 to find a period where we received more aid than we provided. What would have happened if our surrounding fire districts would have cut off aid in our time of need? Who would have responded to my mom, your dad, your friend or your neighbor?

In closing, it is extremely disconcerting to me that inaccurate information has made its way to the community. False statements about the number of firefighters being hired on levy dollars and the Board having the ability to adopt draconian mutual aid policy do not serve our citizens well. Therefore, as a Board, I would like us to consider making unified public statements regarding these two issues. A statement that indicates we do not intend to hire 30 firefighters as proposed by some and one that highlights the impacts of modifying our mutual aid policies.

Commissioner Portmann stated he would like the Board members to mull this over until the next meeting to consider how they will respond to these situations as they arise in the community, and if it is appropriate for the Board to provide a unified statement regarding what they believe the levy dollars will actually leverage for us.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Luke Wahl, IAFF Local 726 thanked the Department and Board of Commissioners for their support of community events and outreach to help families in need during the holidays including the delivery of 25 food baskets prior to Thanksgiving and the delivery of Christmas gifts to three families. The Santa runs were a big hit and our personnel received many thank you's.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chief Dale requested a 30-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 (4) (b) to plan or adopt strategy/position for collective bargaining, with possible business to follow.

Commissioner Gustafson announced a 30-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.140 (4) (b) to plan or adopt strategy/position for collective bargaining, with possible business to follow.

Commissioner Gustafson announced a recess at 4:34 p.m.

The Executive Session was announced as beginning at 4:36 p.m.

An announcement was made at 5:06 p.m. to extend the Executive Session 30 minutes.

An announcement was made at 5:36 p.m. to extend the Executive Session five minutes.

The Executive Session was announced as ending at 5:41 p.m.

Commissioner Gustafson reconvened the Special Board Meeting at 5:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the Special Board Meeting of December 21, 2017, was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner

Anthony D. Judd, District Secretary