

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
January 11, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Skaggs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Commissioner Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner Russell T. Barstow, Commissioner Adam G. Rosenlund, Fire Chief Ryan Baskett and Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds

Deputy Chief Judd had an excused absence.

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

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Barstow moved to approve the Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 28, 2015, were approved as presented.

CORRESPONDENCE

Pierce Co. Fire Prevention Bureau Monthly Report for December and 2015 Annual Statistics

Chief Baskett informed the Board the Department responded to 6,331 calls in 2015 – a 6% increase over 2014.

FINANCIALS

Payables Checks #20280 through #20308 in the amount of \$24,282.95 and a Transfer (EFT) in the amount of \$204.97, for a total of \$24,487.92 were presented for approval.

Commissioner Barstow moved to accept the payables in the amount of \$24,487.92, after proper auditing. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief's Report

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

Lieutenant Casey Hill will be out on extended medical leave. Firefighter Brett Kanton is next up on the eligibility list and has been offered a temporary promotion per the current Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The Department has one new volunteer ready to attend the Buckley Academy. He must first complete a psychological review, medical exam and background check before joining the Department. Chief Baskett requested the Board approve a conditional offer of membership to volunteer Jonathan Ernst. He offered to provide Mr. Ernst's application packet for the Board to review prior to voting.

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to extend a conditional offer of membership to volunteer candidate Jonathan Ernst. Commissioner Barstow seconded the motion.

Chief Baskett gave Mr. Ernst's application packet to the Board for their review.

Commissioner Gustafson called the question. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Baskett stated staff will move ahead with the pre-screening process.

The six new Firefighter/Paramedics have completed their pre-employment screening and one candidate was not successful. Chief Baskett stated Chairman Gustafson gave his verbal approval to extend a conditional offer of employment to Damon Bullard, the next candidate on the hiring list. Chief Baskett requested the Board take official action on the conditional offer at this time.

Commissioner Barstow moved to extend a conditional offer of employment to Damon Bullard. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Baskett explained staff is working diligently to complete his pre-employment screening to allow him to start with the other candidates. If staff is unable to complete the entire process prior to the February 1st hire date and the start of the academy on February 8th, staff has a back-up plan in place. Central Pierce Fire & Rescue will allow him to attend their academy at the end of February, if necessary.

SS911. Chief Baskett informed the Board he is in the process of reviewing two contracts in regards to future dispatch services. He explained the first contract is with South Sound 911 and would replace the previous fire communications contract with West Pierce Fire & Rescue. He stated he sees no problems with the contract. He recommended Board approval of this agreement and to allow him to sign it on the District's behalf.

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve the agreement for fire dispatch services with South Sound 911 and authorize Chief Baskett to sign the agreement on behalf of the District. Commissioner Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Baskett explained the second contract is with the Combined Communication Network (CCN), a new partnership between Pierce County and Pierce Transit, allowing access the 700 radio system they own. He has concerns over long-term cost protection, liabilities and system guarantees. Chief Burgess from Gig Harbor sent the contract to Attorney Quinn for legal review and he has noted many of the same concerns. The Pierce County Chiefs Association has appointed a committee, of which Chief Baskett is a member, to negotiate with the CCN on behalf of the fire service. He recommended the

Board reject the contract as written at this time. He offered a copy of the contract to the Board for their review at their leisure. They agreed to reject the contract at this time.

WSRB Rerate / Station 92 Living Quarters. Chief Baskett reported to the Board that out of 1500 recruitment letters sent to property owners within five miles of Station 92, five people responded who are interested in volunteering. He has directed staff to begin the screening process to see if any will actually qualify. Chief Baskett stated he is disheartened that only five people responded.

State Audit. Chief Baskett stated he had nothing new to report.

Policy Review. Chief Baskett informed the Board staff has updated several policies which he provided to the Board for their two-week review. The policies are:

- A. OI 601 – Vehicle Operations Safety
- B. OI 603 – Vehicle Driving Authorization
- C. OI 423 – Chief Duty Officer
- D. OI 133 – Performance Management. Chief Baskett explained this is a complete rewrite of the Department employee evaluation system. When an issue arose last year, he put together a work group with help from consultant Paula Dillard. They rewrote the policy. Chief Baskett stated labor has indicated they would like to discuss a few issues in the policy. Chief Baskett said he plans to meet with them and will report back to the Board if any adjustments are made to the policy.

Grants. Chief Baskett informed the Board that staff is preparing to submit for an AFG grant for equipment to help protect our personnel from future back injuries. We are applying for six power gurney lifts to mount in the back of all of our transport units. Chief Baskett requested Board approval to submit the grant application and commit to covering 10% of the cost, or \$15,000-20,000, if awarded. Commissioner Rosenlund asked Chief Baskett what the time frame is to approve his request. Chief Baskett responded he needs a decision this week, because the grant application is due by Friday. Commissioner Rosenlund stated in theory, the lifts sound good; but he is not familiar with the technology used in these lifts. Commissioner Barstow asked Chief Baskett if the lifts are like those used in the bariatric units to lift the gurney into the rig. Chief Baskett responded affirmatively. Discussion concluded.

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve staff to submit the AFG grant application and to commit to the District's portion of 10% of the grant amount, if awarded. Commissioner Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bank Signing. Chief Baskett explained to the Board that with the recent change in the Department's legislative body, it is necessary to update the authorized signature card for our account at Key Bank. Staff has prepared a letter of authorization in the Board's signing folder for them to sign. In addition, the bank requires that each of the Board members stop by the Key Bank branch in Graham and sign the signature card as soon as possible.

Development Letters. Chief Baskett stated to the Board new developments are being built in our response area. With the assistance of legal counsel, staff has drafted two letters requesting negotiation of the impacts of these projects with the developers. This is the Department's only opportunity to address impacts and needs to occur during Pierce County's SEPA review. We are requesting to negotiate a reasonable mitigation

agreement, estimated at \$1,500 per unit. Chief Baskett referred the Board to the letters in their Board books.

Tacoma Power Agreement. Chief Baskett referred the Board to the renewal contract with Tacoma Public Utilities located in their Board books. He explained under this contract we provide fire protection services for their facilities located inside our District boundaries. He stated the contract is renewed on a five-year basis and includes a built-in inflation factor. He requested the Board approve the contract.

Commissioner Barstow moved the approval of the Fire Protection District Agreement with Tacoma Public Utilities. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

New MDCs Ordered. Chief Baskett informed the Board that staff has ordered the new MDCs for all response apparatus, as approved in the budget.

Medic Unit Replacement. Chief Baskett updated the Board on the status of the insurance claim for the medic unit involved in an accident in November. He reported the insurance company has determined it is a total loss. Chief Baskett recommended the insurance replacement funds be used to purchase another medic unit off of the current awarded bid, bringing the total to three new medic units. Commissioner Rosenlund requested clarification about the two medic units already ordered and asked if they had been delivered. Chief Baskett responded they are in the build process currently. One was ordered early fall 2015 and the second in late fall. He explained the purchase of a third medic unit would allow us to begin the process of eliminating the 2006 units from the fleet. Chief Baskett requested Board authorization to purchase a third medic unit based on the current bid and the insurance replacement cost.

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve the purchase of a third Medic Unit off of the current awarded bid utilizing the insurance replacement funds. Commissioner Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Engine Purchase. Chief Baskett explained we have the engine specifications completed, based on the 2010 specifications for the two engines purchased previously, and modified to include an enclosed pump panel as requested by the crews. He stated he budgeted \$450,000 for this year to purchase one new engine. The actual price will be close to \$550,000 including tax. The build-out on a new engine is 390 days and continuing to grow as fire departments are getting some funding back, so orders are starting to roll in. Also, the prices are starting to rise. Chief Baskett asked the Board to seriously consider purchasing two new engines. He believes we can purchase one outright and pay for in 2017 with the current Equipment Replacement Reserve (ERR) funds of \$450,000, plus another \$325,000 budgeted yearly. However, with two 1986 Sutphens pushing 30 years old, we are faced with increased maintenance costs, decreased dependability and safety concerns. Purchasing two engines would cost the District a total of approximately \$1,114,081.50.

Chief Baskett distributed to the Board a breakdown showing the total cost for each proposed engine and the funding available, and three payment options. He described the first payment option as "Pay outright with Prepayment," in which we would prepay the two chassis, leaving \$334,853.50 above the committed ERR fund to be paid off in 2017. The second is a "3-year Lease-Purchase" option, in which we expend our entire ERR fund each year through 2019. The third option is a "3-year Lease Purchase with

Prepayment” option in which we prepay for the two chassis and carry a three-year lease on the balance, making payments of roughly \$232,827.53 in 2017, 2018, and 2019, leaving a little in our ERR fund each year. He explained that he confirmed with our legal counsel that if we do a lease purchase we do not have to go out for bid, in the state of Washington. In payment option one, we would have to go out for bid. Snohomish 1 Fire went out for bid in April 2015 and True North Emergency Equipment won the bid. True North is the same company that built our last two engines. He reviewed their bid package and determined our engine spec was less than 10% different, so we can get our vehicle on that bid. He consulted with the state auditor who said that would be fine. We could enter into an Inter-Local Agreement (ILA) with Snohomish Fire 1 and purchase our two new engines from True North.

Chief Baskett recommended the Board commit to purchasing two new engines from True North, using an ILA with Snohomish 1, use our ERR funds available to prepay the chassis and commit to the remainder of the cost in the 2017 budget.

Commissioner Rosenlund confirmed with Chief Baskett he is recommending payment option 1, and Chief Baskett responded affirmatively. He added there would be a price break of approximately \$5,000 on the second engine with this option. Chief Baskett requested questions from the Board.

Commissioner Gustafson cautioned that if we buy two engines at the same time, down the road we will have to replace them at the same time, and the money may not be there. He stated we always want to buy them two years apart. We can order them at the same time using the same spec, but get them two years apart. If we order one now, we should have it in February 2017. Also, there will be ambulances and other equipment to replace in the future, and it will put a real burden on budgets.

Chief Baskett responded we purchased four fire engines and a ladder truck in 1986, two engines in 1998, another engine in 2006, two in 2010, and he is now recommending we purchase another two in 2016, which we will not receive until 2017. He said we are starting to spread the purchases out. We are struggling to keep our equipment on the road and we need to move forward and purchase the two new engines to replace the 1986 units.

Commissioner Gustafson asked Chief Baskett about a complete lease option. He requested staff look into this option and report back to the Board. Chief Baskett said he would do so, but he had a concern with a lease in that if the economy took a downturn, we would still have the lease payment. He said he would prefer to purchase the equipment and pay for them while we have the M&O money. He said he would still look into the lease option as requested by Commissioner Gustafson.

Chief Baskett asked the Board if they were comfortable with purchasing off of an ILA with Snohomish 1. They responded affirmatively.

Commissioner Rosenlund said he had heard about other departments going to a lease type program, but is hesitant to go to one for the reasons Chief Baskett stated. However, he said he would be curious to see the numbers for the lease option for comparison purposes. Chief Baskett said he would look into a lease option.

Commissioner Barstow moved to table the decision to purchase two new engines for two weeks pending information from staff on the lease option. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

None

GOOD OF THE ORDER/PUBLIC INPUT

Chief Baskett informed the Board that Graham supporter and great friend to the fire service, Pierce County Fair Manager Betty Backstrom has been diagnosed with a very serious illness and is hospitalized. She is a pillar in the community and very supportive of the fire department.

Chief Baskett reported to the Board that Fire Chief Bob Vellias of South Pierce Fire & Rescue announced his retirement at the recent Pierce County Fire Chiefs meeting. He will be retiring effective April 1, 2016.

Chief Baskett presented a framed "Oath of Office" certificate to Commissioner Rosenlund. He explained that due to time constraints prior to the December 28th Board Meeting at which he was sworn in as fire commissioner, the framed certificate was not presented to him until now.

Commissioner Rosenlund informed the Board, staff and the audience that scouts from Troop 680 were in the audience. He invited the scouts to ask questions of the Board members, staff or firefighters at the conclusion of the meeting. Several of the scouts proceeded to ask questions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the Regular Board Meeting of January 11, 2016, was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner

Anthony D. Judd, District Secretary