

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
October 9, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**Attendance:**

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

Absent: Commissioner Russell T. Barstow and Deputy Chief Oscar Espinosa

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 Blanchard-Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2017

Approval of Financial Documentation:

Payables: Checks #23370 through #23411 =	\$45,316.89
Transfer (EFT) =	<u>\$1,669.92</u>

**TOTAL: \$46,986.81**

**Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve the Consent Agenda in the amount of \$46,986.81 after proper audit. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Pierce Co. Fire Prevention Bureau Monthly Report for September 2017

**GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**Fire Chief's Report**

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

The All Bethel Community Day event took place on Saturday at Graham-Kapowsin High School. The report he received from our members in attendance is it was not as well attended as was anticipated; nevertheless, our members and PPEO Merdian-Drake were constantly busy. Deputy Chief Judd played the bagpipes along with one other person. Many tri-fold pamphlets for the levy lid lift were passed out.

There was a significant brush fire in our District on Friday. We had approximately 30 fire companies from around the area and as far away as Key Peninsula. The incident was well-managed. He reported there were no injuries. Some homes were threatened and several

evacuated, but no damage sustained by any structures. This was a significant incident with a very favorable outcome. He will be sending out a letter thanking each of the participating Departments who sent apparatus and resources to the incident.

That same night was the Department Annual Awards Banquet. The feedback he has received is that everyone seemed to enjoy it and are looking forward to the next banquet. Commissioner Portmann acknowledged the banquet committee for a job well done and Assistant Chief Steve Richards for bringing much welcomed levity to the event as the Master of Ceremonies. Chief Dale stated he was glad to see everyone come together and enjoy the evening.

Assistant Chief Job Descriptions. Chief Dale recalled for the Board the Three Assistant Chief Job Descriptions provided to them for their two-week review at the last Board meeting. He requested the Board approve these tonight.

**Commissioner Portmann moved the approval of the three Assistant Chief Job Descriptions as presented at the September 25, 2017 Regular Board Meeting. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

Fire Chief/Board Relationship. Chief Dale reminded the Board that at the last meeting he initiated a discussion with them regarding the Fire Chief/Board Relationship as relates to managing personnel, FTE's, within the allotted budget. They had agreed to continue the discussion during tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Rosenlund reported the committee met. He handed out copies of the policy with the recommended changes. He explained the first revision is on page two, left side column under "The Board shall," where they defined "key staff positions," and specified when the board can participate in interviews. The second revision appears on page two, right side column under "The Chief shall" where they added "Has authority to fill open positions, promotions and new hires from established board approved lists." Commissioner Rosenlund stated the policy committee puts forth the recommendation to the Board for a do pass.

Discussion ensued regarding when Board members would participate in interviews. Commissioner Gustafson reiterated that the Board has always had a commissioner involved in hiring. Chief Dale stated he would not have a problem if a commissioner was present during interviews occasionally; he is more interested in the issue of managing the hiring and terminations within FTE allotment. All of the lists he is hiring from have been approved already by the Board. Commissioner Rosenlund stated there is an important distinction between operational and policy matters. The Board should remove itself from operational decisions as much as possible. Commissioner Portmann suggested the committee strike the wording from "Board members can participate" on down, if the intent is to define "key staff." Commissioner Rosenlund asked if they should vote on this now, or revisit it at another meeting. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she is in favor of the idea of this paragraph, but it goes into too much detail and asked if it should be a separate bullet point. Commissioner Portmann concurred. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated the format is inconsistent. Commissioner Rosenlund asked if she likes the concept, but thinks it needs wordsmithing, and she responded affirmatively.

**Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve Operating Instruction 109 – Board and Chief Relations, as revised, minus the section beginning "Board members can participate . . ." to the end of the statement, ". . . by the board of fire commissioners." Commissioner Portmann seconded the motion.**

Discussion was held on the motion. Commissioner Portmann stated he still wants the Board to be apprised of terminations. Commissioner Gustafson responded they have to be. The Board is the only one who can hire and fire. The Chief makes recommendations, but the Board does the firing. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed responded the Commissioner's Handbook does not state that.

Commissioner Rosenlund addressed Board Chair Gustafson and stated that as a point of order the current discussion is outside the topic of the motion, and requested Commissioner Gustafson call the question.

**Commissioner Gustafson called the question. Motion carried unanimously.**

Chief Dale stated to the Board whichever way they prefer regarding Board involvement on interview panels, he will serve at the pleasure of the Board. He asked if they would be revisiting this topic again. Commissioner Rosenlund responded the policy committee will meet and asked if the other Board members had any input regarding this issue before the committee meets. Commissioner Portmann suggested using the word "may" instead of "should" regarding board participation in interviews. Commissioner Rosenlund stated he feels strongly about use of word "should" instead of "may." This protects the Chief's authority they have delegated and protects against a future commissioner overextending their influence. Commissioner Portmann expressed the use of the word "may" is more nimble and versatile for the current and future Boards, and would not require a modification of the policy if their philosophy changed. Discussion ensued among the Board members.

Chief Dale requested the Board let him know when they determine a standard so he has clear direction so as not to compromise the Chief/Board relationship. Commissioner Rosenlund stated he would take this back to the committee. Commissioner Portmann stated he does not care if it is in the policy or not, but would like to give the Chief direction tonight.

**Commissioner Portmann moved to allow the Fire Chief to conduct interviews without a Board member in attendance, at his discretion. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed seconded the motion.**

Discussion was held on the motion. Discussion concluded.

**Commissioner Gustafson called the question. Motion carried unanimously.**

Chief Dale stated he appreciated the discussion and the Board did meet the intent he originally brought up to them.

#### **Standing Committees**

Budget, Finance and Audit – No report  
Policy and Procedure – Report already given.  
Mergers/Consolidations – No report  
Joint Labor/Management – No report  
Strategic Leadership Plan – No report  
Legislative Affairs – No report

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed requested one of the final tri-fold pamphlets for the levy lid lift. Chief Dale stated staff made a couple of revisions based on suggestions from the president of a homeowners association through the Labor group.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed read a Facebook post from a friend who lives near the location of the brush fire thanking the responders for their quick and effective response.

Commissioner Rosenlund stated he had the opportunity to witness some of Graham's finest. Yet again they demonstrated incredible professionalism, fluidity in strategy and tactics in preventing a very large fire from causing damage. The response was well handled at all levels that he observed. He thanked the responders. Chief Dale state he would pass this on.

Commissioner Portmann inquired if the policy committee needs to return to the financial policy. Commissioners Rosenlund and Blanchard-Reed responded affirmatively. Deputy Chief Judd added that the draft is currently being reviewed. Commissioner Gustafson asked staff if the prior financial policies were still on the books. Deputy Chief Judd responded they were, but the intent here was to establish for the Fire Chief a level at which he did not have to come back to the Board either re-appropriating money to a certain level or finding savings and spending it somewhere else; basically, money within the budget and outside the budget to a certain level.

Commissioner Gustafson shared a story about a large fire that occurred prior to the fire department being established.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**With no further business to come before the Board, the Regular Board Meeting of October 9, 2017, was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**

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Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner

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Anthony D. Judd, District Secretary