

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
September 25, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Commissioner Gina Blanchard-Reed, Commissioner Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner Adam G. Rosenlund (by phone), Commissioner Ryan Portmann, Fire Chief Pat Dale, Deputy Chief Oscar Espinosa, District Secretary Brenda Barker and Board Secretary Jodi Reynolds

Absent: Commissioner Russell T. Barstow had an excused absence.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed the audience.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Portmann moved to add an item to New Business to discuss moving GEMT funds to the Reserve Fund and to approve the Agenda as modified. Commissioner Gustafson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2019

Approval of Financial Documentation:

General Fund:

Payables: Checks #26950 through #27023 =	\$89,054.84
Payables (Payroll): Checks #27030 through #27046 =	\$605,539.93
Payroll: Checks #27024 through #27029 =	\$11,406.37
Payroll Transfers (EFTs) =	<u>\$830,210.81</u>
TOTAL:	<u>\$1,536,211.95</u>

Commissioner Portmann moved to approve the Consent Agenda in the amount of \$1,536,211.95 after proper audit. Commissioner Gustafson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief's Report

Chief Dale welcomed the Board and audience members and reported on the following:

The quarterly newsletter was mailed out last week. Deputy Chief Espinosa handed out copies to the Board and audience. Chief Dale added that this is a Strategic Plan action item.

The Open House is Saturday, October 5th from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at Station 91.

We are hosting the Pierce County Fire Commissioners Association monthly meeting here tomorrow, September 26th at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners Blanchard-Reed and Portmann stated they plan to attend.

Standing Committees

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2020 Budget – Initial Budget Presentation

Chief Dale and Deputy Chief Espinosa handed out the following documents related to the presentation:

- Agenda
- Talking Points – Strategic Direction
- 2020 Budget – Initial Presentation to the Board of Fire Commissioners

Chief Dale reviewed the Agenda and proceeded to the 2020 Budget Initial Presentation – Board Budget Goals. He then covered the Strategic Direction document before deferring to District Secretary Barker to continue with the Initial Budget Presentation. Under Fleet, Assistant Chief Richards presented the Apparatus Replacement Plan.

Commissioner Gustafson stated when he recently attended the NAEFO Conference, a Chief suggested adding a second Public Comment period for asking questions during meetings, after the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed responded that she will consider this.

Chief Dale concluded the Initial Budget Presentation and explained the budget would be developed over the next two months. He is confident they will present a balanced budget.

Discussion took place regarding the budget presentation.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she would allow public comments regarding the budget presentation at this time.

Citizen Robert Benum requested the Board reconsider allowing the public to ask questions during the presentation.

Mr. Benum stated he received the quarterly newsletter. It is the perfect avenue to get the message out. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed responded that he can expand on that during the regular Public Comment period.

NEW BUSINESS

GEMT – Moving Funds to the Reserve Fund

Chief Dale informed the Board the Department recently received the GEMT retro pay for 2017. Although staff already put the payment into the Reserve Fund, past practice is to have a motion to do that. Commissioner Portmann asked where GEMT is located in the 2020 Budget projections. District Secretary Barker responded it is part of the \$2.3 million in the Transports line. GEMT is \$900,000.

Commissioner Portmann moved to transfer the GEMT retro payment received for 2017 to the Reserve Fund. Commissioner Rosenlund seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Citizen Robert Benum asked how much the District has in reserve in the General Fund. District Secretary Barker responded \$3 million. He asked about the 2020 Revenue Projections page of the presentation which shows "Fire Levy up \$926,000." District Secretary Barker replied it is the increase over last year based on assessed valuation.

Citizen Brian Estes commented he works for Central Pierce Fire & Rescue and lives at the end of 224th. He stated he wanted to echo what the Chief said about culture and public perception. He recalled recently he came upon a two-car, high speed accident. Several people stopped to help. He called it in to 911, and the Station 96 Medic Unit and Engine responded with full staff. They were very professional, uniformed, and consistent, and they did a great job. His perception and that of the others present was very positive. As an employee of Central Pierce Fire, they are proud, but every interaction he has had with Graham Fire personnel both personally and professionally has been top-notch.

Citizen Carolyn Benum said she agreed with what Mr. Estes said. She asked what the District does with the old vehicles that are replaced, and if they are traded in. Assistant Chief Richards explained there are multiple options including surplus, sealed bid sale, and auction. She then asked about the 2020 Revenue Projections and New Construction and if it is separated out by commercial and residential, and about the impact fees coming from the builders. Chief Dale responded the District gets very little from impact fees. Our funding comes primarily from our Fire Levy, EMS Levy and Excess Levy. District Secretary Barker stated we get a certain amount from our assessed valuation, 9.1%. It is not broken down between commercial and residential. Chief Dale clarified we get some mitigation fees from development at Lipoma Firs. District Secretary Barker added these fees may be spent on Station 91 only.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed requested for the next budget overview or meeting, staff provide an explanation of ways the District receives taxes, for everybody's knowledge, just five minutes in length.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gustafson said there is an error with "Assessed Valuations up 9.1%." Last year it was \$18,088,000 and has gone up \$1 million, but it should be up \$1.7 million. District Secretary Barker responded it is "at" 9.1%, not "up" 9.1%. Commissioner Gustafson responded that the numbers do not add up. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed addressed Commissioner Gustafson and requested if he has identified a specific error, he present it to District Secretary Barker.

Commissioner Portmann stated he appreciates staff's work on the budget presentation and Assistant Chief Richards' work on the Apparatus Replacement Plan. He agrees with Commissioner Gustafson about having a second Public Comment period at the beginning of the meeting. He requested the committee members revisit the policy.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she will discuss this matter with the other Commissioner on the Policy Committee. She is concerned about questions being asked and it becoming a dialogue, when this is really a Board meeting. If there is a way it could be done as to be helpful for everybody, she would welcome that discussion. Commissioner Portmann said there a two

different issues here: 1) interjecting into conversations; and 2) having an opportunity at the beginning of the meeting to provide a general statement about something on the Agenda. He suggested having the additional public comment period after the Approval/Modification of the Agenda and prior to the Consent Agenda. She responded this is a separate issue from questions during a presentation, and how the Board can accommodate for questions without numerous interjections during a presentation. Their meetings must follow a certain procedure.

Commissioner Portmann stated he wished to recognize the regional hazmat exercise this week that Graham Fire put on. It is nice to see an agency our size being a lead for that team. He recognizes the effort and work required to do this type of exercise. Thank you to all who participated.

Commissioner Rosenlund commented with regards to questioning and answering during the meeting. This was the first time the Board has heard this budget presentation, and there will be two, three or four more discussions during meetings before it is finalized. The Board and the citizens will have time to study the information. He suggested adding a specific time period, 20 minutes or so, to a future meeting for questions and answers regarding the budget. He agrees with Commissioner Blanchard-Reed that during the initial budget presentation, we need to allow it to flow, rather than having interruptions. Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she agreed, and they would discuss how to work that into a future meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the Regular Board Meeting of September 25, 2019, was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Gina Blanchard-Reed, Commissioner

Brenda L.B. Barker, District Secretary