

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
January 22, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Portmann called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Attendance:

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

Absent: None

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Commissioner Gustafson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Regular Board Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2020

Financial Documentation:

General Fund:

Payables: Checks #27631 through #27707 =	\$83,755.31
Payables (Payroll): Checks #27616 through #27630 =	\$528,382.45
Payroll: Checks #27609 through #27615 =	\$14,292.00
Payroll Transfers (EFTs) =	<u>\$796,495.59</u>

TOTAL: \$1,422,925.35

Commissioner Rosenlund moved to approve the Consent Agenda in the amount of \$1,422,925.35 after proper audit. Commissioner Homan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief's Report

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

Our 2019 call volume of 7,323 represents a 5.23% increase over 2018. Commissioner Gustafson requested a breakdown by call type. Chief Dale stated staff would provide that information to the Board.

Brianna Baker, our new Community Outreach Officer, starts tomorrow.

We will be conducting live fire training at the house located across the street from Headquarters during the month of February. Superintendent Tom Siegel has offered this structure for us for training. We invited the Pierce County Skills Center's Fire Service Training Program members and 30 kids to train with our career members, but not on the live fire. This will be a great community event with media involvement. Brian Estes, one of the inventors of the fire training program, is here in the audience tonight.

A flyer for Myra's retirement celebration is attached.

The date of the joint Bates-Graham Fire Volunteer Recruit Academy graduation was changed from Tuesday, January 28th to Monday, January 27th at 6:00 p.m. at Graham Fire Headquarters Station.

Standing Committees

Committee Appointments – Commissioner Portmann announced the new committee appointments for 2020 as follows:

- Budget, Finance and Audit – Portmann / Blanchard-Reed
- Policy and Procedure – Rosenlund / Homan
- Mergers/Consolidations – Gustafson / Homan
- Joint Labor/Management – Portmann / Gustafson
- Strategic Leadership Plan – Rosenlund / Homan
- Legislative Affairs – Rosenlund / Blanchard-Reed

Budget, Finance and Audit – No report

Policy and Procedure – Commissioner Rosenlund stated now that Commissioner Homan is on the committee, they will meet soon to consider additional changes to Policy 214.

Mergers/Consolidations – No report

Joint Labor/Management – No report

Strategic Leadership Plan – No report

Legislative Affairs – Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated they have appointments set with five legislators for Legislative Day on January 28th.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

2020 Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Portmann stated he asked staff to research the length of the Board Meetings over the past year and the number of meetings per month that the Districts around us have, and report back. Based on the results, he would like to entertain the idea of going to a once-a-month Board meeting schedule, with Special Meetings scheduled as needed. The data shows the average meeting length in 2019 (not including Executive Session time) was 33 minutes; and West and East Pierce's Boards meet once a month.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed stated she is opposed to it. She feels more involved when they meet twice a month. She does a better job as a Commissioner when she is more engaged. She is concerned about attendance issues if there was only one meeting per month. They have

some big decisions coming up with the Fire Benefit Charge, and she prefers the long-standing tradition of two meetings per month. She also anticipates a difficulty for herself and others to be available for Special Meetings. Two meetings scheduled each month on set days is easier to plan around.

Commissioner Gustafson stated he agrees with Commissioner Blanchard-Reed. In addition, because the bills have to be paid on time, legally there must be two meetings. He recalled several years ago when there were hazard mitigation issues at one of the old fire station locations that the Board frequently addressed over a span of several meetings.

Commissioner Portmann stated he anticipated the concern about the financials and already asked staff who said they can legally process the bills if there is only one meeting per month.

Commissioner Rosenlund stated he does not feel strongly either way. He empathizes with Commissioner Blanchard-Reed and her concerns, and if, because of his work schedule he was to miss a meeting, it would then be two months between meetings. However, for efficiency, he likes the idea of one meeting per month.

Commissioner Homan stated while he is new to this Board, he has experience on other boards, and has no strong feeling either way. He thinks business can be taken care of at one meeting per month. If this were to occur, he would like to receive the meeting packet a least a couple of days in advance of the meeting for review. From a financial perspective, the District would save approximately \$7,400 on Commissioner reimbursements annually.

Commissioner Portmann asked staff if the meeting schedule decision needed to be finalized by the second meeting in February. District Secretary Barker responded affirmatively, adding that there would then be one meeting in March.

Commissioner Portmann asked the Board if there was a motion at this time. Commissioner Rosenlund suggested this item be tabled and placed on the Agenda for further discussion at the next meeting. Commissioner Portmann concurred and asked staff to add it as Unfinished Business on the next Agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Citizen Robert Benum asked Commissioner Portmann what his preference was regarding the number of meetings. He responded he favored holding one meeting per month and calling Special Meetings as needed. Because of the amount of time spent by staff preparing for meetings and the brief time staff and the Board actually spend in the meetings, it makes sense to do one meeting. Mr. Benum responded that from the public's perspective, the Board would be setting itself up for criticism by decreasing the number of meetings to one per month. This would be a mistake.

Citizen Carolyn Benum commented that she has been telling acquaintances the meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, and she knows they will start showing up. She likes having two meetings and would not want to wait an entire month between meetings.

Commissioner Homan stated he was interested to know the amount of staff time required to prepare for each meeting. He surmised the work would be reduced considerably if the number of meetings decreased from two to one. District Secretary Barker explained staff would still be paying bills twice a month, but the Board would only be signing off on them once. There are two resolutions drafted for this proposed change: One addresses the meeting dates; and the other

addresses the ability for the Fire Chief and District Secretary to process the first set of payables each month, with the Board signing off on them later. As far as staff members' time spent preparing for meetings, we will need some time to compile that information.

Commissioner Blanchard-Reed asked if staff could estimate in 2019 if there had only been 12 monthly meetings, how many Special Meetings would have been necessary. District Secretary Barker responded there likely would have been some for budget and elections.

Mrs. Benum asked if the public can attend the house burn exercise. Chief Dale responded affirmatively.

Mr. Benum asked what Chief Dale's opinion was about the number of meetings. Commissioner Portmann responded that staff favors having one meeting per month.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Portmann stated he wanted to thank Chief Dale or whomever reached out to the Pierce Co. Skills Center to invite them to participate in training. This is a potential pipeline for us for future Resident Volunteers or Volunteers. He would like to see us expand that partnership. Chief Dale responded he would pass the thanks on to the Training Division.

Commissioner Rosenlund stated he concurred with Commissioner Portmann's remarks. His son went through the program last year and gained so much from it including aspects of leadership and perspective on life. He would like us to find ways to involve them more to help them as well as help our organization.

Commissioner Rosenlund thanked staff for all work they do to prepare for meetings.

Commissioner Homan stated he agreed. He appreciated District Secretary Barker and Board Secretary Reynolds setting time aside to meet with him this week to work on policies.

Commissioner Gustafson reminded the Board there is a Pierce County Fire Commissioners Association (PCFCA) meeting tomorrow night at Gig Harbor Fire. These meetings occur once a month, with the exception of October and December. Other meetings for Board members to attend include the Graham Fire Association and Safety Committee meetings. Historically, the Fire Chief and a Board member have attended the Association meetings. By attending the outside meetings they can learn from other Districts. There are guest speakers at the PCFCA meetings, and you can get a lot out of those meetings. He offered that if anyone needs a ride to Gig Harbor, they can ride with him.

Commissioner Portmann stated that tomorrow night's PCFCA meeting is important. They will be discussing South Sound 911 and the inclusion of the Pierce County Sheriff as a new position on the Board. He encouraged his fellow Board members to attend and give input.

Commissioner Portmann added that the February 27th PCFCA meeting will be held at Graham Fire Headquarters. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. (Dinner is served at 6:30 p.m.). Since we are hosting, let's have a good turnout by our Board.

Commissioner Homan inquired if a guest speaker was selected for the February 27th meeting. Commissioner Gustafson responded that the Association's Vice President is responsible for scheduling speakers for the meetings.

Commissioner Gustafson reminded his fellow Board members to mark out the dates in their calendars for the 2020 Washington Fire Commissioners Association (WFCA) Annual Conference October 21–24 in Spokane.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Portmann announced a 20-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g) to evaluate qualifications of public employees or review their performance, with no business to follow.

Commissioner Portmann announced a 10-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g) to evaluate qualifications of public employees or review their performance, with no business to follow.

The Executive Session was announced as beginning at 7:20 p.m.

At 7:50 p.m., the Executive Session was extended 10 minutes.

At 8:00 p.m., the Executive Session was extended another 10 minutes.

The Executive Session was announced as ending at 8:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the Regular Board Meeting of January 22, 2020, was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Ryan Portmann, Commissioner

Brenda L.B. Barker, District Secretary