



Planning Committee Meeting Minutes Stillaguamish Valley Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee

Snohomish County Fire Districts 19, 21, and 22

June 13, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
Fire Station 49, 12131 228th Street NE Arlington WA 98223

District 19 Fire Chief Keith Strotz opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with introductions of facilitator Jim Rankin.

Call to Order from each Fire District represented:

- A. Snohomish County FPD No. 19/Silvana- Chairperson Kevin Buhr called meeting to order.
- B. Snohomish County FPD No. 21/Arlington Rural – Chairperson Jim Strago called the meeting to order.
- C. Snohomish County FPD No. 22/Getchell – Chairperson Paul Taylor called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance was completed.

Housekeeping: Jim Rankin asked that electronic devices be turned off or set to vibrate.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Jim Rankin requested approval of the May 31, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Greig requested date amendment to reflect that the meeting was held on May 31, 2016. Commissioner Britton made a motion to approve as amended. Commissioner Bailey seconded and the motion was passed.

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Bailey moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Geiger seconded and the motion was passed.

The following Fire Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

- **Fire District 19:** Kevin Buhr, Ray Brown, Steve Geiger, and Keith Strotz.
- **Fire District 21:** Jim Strago, Dan Britton, Eric Nordstrom, Branden Bates, and Wendy Britton.
- **Fire District 22:** Paul Taylor, Chris Greig, Tim Bailey, Travis Hots, Ron Selia, Jeremy Stocker, and Deidre Korte.





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New Business:

Ground Rules:

Facilitator Jim Rankin provided planning session guidelines and reviewed meeting “Ground Rules”. Discussion regarding setting a time limit. Planning Committee agreed to limit the meeting to 1 ½ hours and take individual breaks as desired.

Plan Timeline:

Discussion regarding requirements and voter election dates; November 8, 2016 General Election and February 14, 2017 Special Election. Unanimous decision made for Planning Committee to prepare for February 14, 2017 Special Election.

Draft Plan Review Discussion and Confirmation:

Jim Rankin requested confirmation of sections needing discussion. Unanimous decision that no further discussion was needed for sections one and two.

Discussion regarding section three and need for additional information. Commissioner Britton requested an outline of pros and cons.

Activity and Operational Fund Transfer: Chief Hots provided additional information regarding voter approved Fire levy tax and delay of collection until 2018 for Regional Fire Authority; Districts will continue to collect at current rates for 2017. Commissioner Nordstrom clarified that the proposed \$1.40/\$1,000 AV (Assessed Value) would be determined at a future date and after review of Regional Fire Authority budget. Chief Hots provided 2018 Levy estimates at a rate of \$1.30/\$1,000 AV, \$1.40/\$1,000 AV, and \$1.50/\$1,000 AV.

Jim Rankin provided references pertaining to other funding options – e.g. Excess Levy and Lid Lift.

EMS Levy: Unanimous decision made for all Districts to retain their current EMS levy and transfer funds to Stillaguamish Valley Regional Fire Authority upon projected establishment in 2017.

Commissioner Buhr inquired about the number of governing bodies. Discussion regarding reduction in the number of Commissioners. Decision made to discuss further at a future date.

Revenues and Expenditures: Chief Hots provided summary of current and projected revenues and expenditures.





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Estimated Property Tax: Chief Hots provided overview of current cash and investment balances and levy funds. Conservative projections provided for 2017 and 2018. Discussion regarding levy limitations and 1 percent constitutional limit. Further discussion regarding new construction taxes and the erosion of existing levy rates.

Discussion regarding extremely low fire levy rate of \$0.59 for District 21, which continues to dwindle to approximately \$0.56 in 2017. Discussion regarding EMS rates being more comparable among Districts and assessed value rate differences between Fire and EMS.

Commissioner Nordstrom commented on hypothetical rate of \$1.40/\$1,000 AV for calculating 2018 projections if Regional Fire Authority is approved by voters. Chief Hots confirmed and noted EMS rates remain the same as they have not reached the statutory rate limit of \$0.50. Commissioner Nordstrom asked what Chief Hots assumption was for 2018 AV increase. Chief Hots advised his estimation is an increase of approximately 8% in AV for 2018. Commissioner Buhr noted that if the EMS rate goes down to \$0.40/\$1,000 AV estimation is that would be the lowest threshold possible. Chief Hots advised yes, if the EMS rate drops to \$0.40/\$1,000 AV we will need to go to the voters to request approval of \$0.50/\$1,000 AV.

Discussion regarding fire levy threshold of \$1.00/\$1,000 AV and average levy comparisons ranging from \$1.20/\$1,000 AV to \$1.50/\$1,000 AV.

Revenues: Review of revenues and discussion regarding state mobilization and transports. Chief Hots advised that he does not rely on state mobilization or transport revenues for daily or monthly operational expenses due to fluctuations. Chief Hots recommended that these revenues be allocated to Capital expenditures. Commissioner Buhr noted conservative estimations for 2017 and 2018. Commissioner Geiger inquired about best guess for 2016 and factoring in risk factor for 2017 when throttling back on projections for other revenues under RFA. Chief Hots noted consistencies in the past few years. Transports have been on a steady incline with more community members using the health care systems as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Discussion regarding transport revenues being more stable than state mobilization.

Budget Summaries: Discussion regarding expenditures and expenses. Commissioner Nordstrom asked if 2017 and 2018 estimates were based on \$1.40/\$1,000 AV; Chief Hots confirmed and advised that a detailed Regional Fire Authority budget is forthcoming.





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Discussion regarding need for detailed Regional Fire Authority operating budget with capital outlay and total expenditures; categorized to include staffing pay rates, contractual obligations, equipment, and facilities.

District Debt/Bonds: Decision made to postpone discussion for future date to allow staff time to gather data and provide specifics.

EMS Operations/Considerations: General discussion with acceptance that future discussion and action may be needed at some point in the future.

Community Outreach and Input: Discussion regarding talking points for staff, public, and press release. Commissioner Buhr noted the need to cultivate details and capture benefits in projected budget and expenses. In addition, to capturing examples of what other Regional Fire Authorities have experienced at a level that the general public can understand and provide reasons for transition. Further discussion regarding the need for consistent messaging and desire to extrapolate data from the Draft Plan to condense message for easy reading. Expressed need to allow sufficient time for dissemination of information.

Commissioner Bailey expressed desire to maintain individual Districts identity. Jim Rankin shared an example of East Side Fire and Rescue successfully maintaining individual Districts identity.

Commissioner Strago expressed need for talking points surrounding District 21 levy increase from \$0.59/\$1,000 AV to \$1.40/\$1,000 AV. Discussion regarding benefits of consistency in service levels across Regional Fire Authority.

Decision made to have staff work on generating talking points in the next couple of weeks and forward recommendations to Commissioners for review and feedback.

Campaign Write-up of Facts: Decision made to have staff work on in the next couple of weeks and forward to Commissioners for review and feedback.

Next Planning Committee Meeting Topics:

- Further Discussion on Budget
- Discussion: Chapter 3.4: Governance & Representation
- Governance Plan During RFA Transition Phase
- Proposed Governance Board for SVRFA
- Consider Public Input Dates
- Discussion on Other Sections (As Needed)





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Final Comments/Good of the Order:

The next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Friday July 29, 2016 at Station 49, 12131 228th Street NE Arlington, WA 98223.

Adjournment: Meeting Adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Recorder: Wendy Britton, District Secretary

