



Snohomish County Fire District 21

www.FireDistrict21.com
12131- 228th St. NE, Arlington, WA 98223
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The Board of Commissioners monthly meeting was held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday June 8, 2016 at Station 49, 12131 228th Street NE Arlington, WA 98223.

Commissioner's in Attendance: Chairman Jim Strago, Commissioner Dan Britton, and Commissioner Eric Nordstrom

Additional Attendees Included: District Fire Chief Travis Hots, District Secretary Wendy Britton, Captain, Bono, Captain Kraski, Mr. Chase, Jeff Hamilton, Rick Isler, and John Jacobson

Meeting Called to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Strago

Special Guests and Presentations:

None

Public Comment:

None

Consent Agenda Items:

- **Agenda** – Approval of the Agenda.
- **Minutes** – Approval of meeting minutes.
- **Finance** – Approval of finance reports, accounts payable, and payroll.
- **Protecting District Assets** – VFIS Quarterly Meeting Schedule (8/23, 11/1).

Public Comment

Jeff Hamilton inquired about addressing an item on the agenda. Chairman Strago requested he submit his inquiry in writing to the Board of Commissioners for review and consideration.

Old Business:

- **City of Arlington** – Chairman Strago received a proposal from the City of Arlington's Mayor Barb Tolbert. He read the proposal and will provide copies for Commissioners to review. The proposal includes a request for response no later than close of business on June 10, 2016. In addition, it concludes with the following statement "If we are unable to resolve this at the policy maker level, we will need to move this to the legal arena".

Chairman Strago provided an over view of his discussion with the Mayor and her concerns regarding the need for the city to dip into their general fund to cover expenses for Oso and Darrington. Further discussion regarding the need for agreement with the City Council. Chairman Strago expressed discomfort with the request for District 21 to subsidize funding for the city by providing higher rates to

support Oso and Darrington. Chairman Strago also stated that as a representative of this tax district he was not comfortable with the request for our taxpayers to give funds to support Oso and Darrington. Further discussion by all Commissioners regarding District 21's inability to subsidize the City of Arlington for costs to provide services to Oso and Darrington.

Commissioner Nordstrom expressed concerns that the funds District 21 has paid to the city have been used to subsidize other service areas all along.

Commissioner Britton expressed concern with the city's acknowledgement of their need to dip into the general fund and the expectation that District 21 would subsidize the city for their service to Oso and Darrington. He stated that District 21 is not willing to dip into its general fund to subsidize other districts.

Chairman Strago stated that Mayor Tolbert expressed a desire to join a Regional Fire Authority. In addition, the City of Arlington desires annexation. Commissioner Nordstrom inquired about the Mayor wanting to join an RFA. Chairman Strago stated that Mayor Tolbert advised him that she wanted out of the fire business due to lack of funds.

Further discussion regarding legal counsel and negotiations.

Chief Hots expressed agreement that we should build an RFA to include the City of Arlington as well. However, he noted that we haven't been able to negotiate BLS transports and make things right and we've been negotiating with the city for the last 18 months with no headway; "Chief Stedman and Chief Cooper need to build trust". Discussion regarding lack of confidence that we could build a governance with the City of Arlington at this juncture. Chairman Strago expressed concerns with the lack of progress towards negotiations as well. Commissioner Nordstrom also expressed concerns regarding further negotiations, BLS license, ALS service, and overall lack of trust.

Chairman Strago reiterated the need to keep in mind what is best for our citizens. Commissioner Britton stated not only on this side of the District but the South side as well. "Furthermore, when Chief Stedman returned the engine, he stated that there would be a subnational increase in the cost of fire service; if we keep going in that direction we will be broke". Chairman Strago asked if we could survive on a 70% - 30% split? Commissioner Britton stated that we're willing to negotiate. "However, they need to meet halfway". Chief Hots expressed concerns with meeting budget. Discussion regarding inability to sustain 70% - 30% split.

Commissioner Nordstrom expressed concerns with the City of Arlington holding BLS license as a negotiating tool and stated that they could relinquish the transport license on its own without negotiations.

Discussion regarding desire to continue moving forward and put negotiations behind us. Chairman Strago stated that he had to try and give it a shot representing the Board of Commissioners and we've done our due diligence. "It appears that the city did this as a way to make an appearance to negotiate and used every excuse not to. Efforts appear to be futile and not worth the time spent. However, the District remains optimistic".

Discussion regarding city's request to cover ALS & BLS to South side of District. Commissioner Nordstrom stated that the City needs to release entire District for BLS.

Discussion regarding ALS coverage. Commissioner Strago stated that he wasn't sure if we can even agree to go 1 yr. "They may still be thinking of cutting us off from ALS 1/1/17. Originally we gave consideration to the city joining RFA; however, it appears that they are only concerned with the city and are not looking at others best interest and I'm not sure we could work with city based on lack of trust".

Lengthy discussion regarding litigations. Expressed desire by all to avoid litigations. Commissioner Britton commented that with litigation everyone loses. "I don't see any other option, I vote we reject the offer. I'm in it for the long run for the people on both sides of our District". Commissioner Nordstrom agrees; however, "the tough thing is if we reject the offer we have to come up with plan B". Chief Hots stated that it makes sense for us to all come together, but we won't get there if we're hard lined backwards vs forwards. "Chief Stedman sent Chief Cooper to talk with Paul Ellis and he said they didn't think they were that far off. A couple days later we received notification in a memo of understanding to continue at the current rate. Negotiation through legal correspondence with the City Attorney is not how I like to do business, but that's how they chose to negotiate. We thought that with RFA talks we would've seen good will from Arlington to be flexible and fair; instead they paid a high rate for a report that told them we should give them even more money. Others within region that sell and receive service advised us of the need to correct and obtain a lower rate. Study should've shown were paying more than our fair share and the need to make it right, as we continue to provide back up and community service to the city at no charge".

Commissioner Britton stated that he had the opportunity to meet with Brian Snure and a litigation attorney and asked them if in their opinion what we are asking for is considered unreasonable. They advised absolutely not when looking at industry comparisons and reassured us that we're being reasonable. Chief Hots stated that the attorney advised us to keep being reasonable. They advised that they were comfortable with our path for negotiations and with Chairman Strago's efforts to attempt negotiations again.

Commissioner Britton expressed desire to have the city continue to provide ALS. "We work well with them and I don't think the City Council really knows what's going on and wonder if they're being told the truth of what's going on with our service and negotiations". Commissioner Nordstrom suggested meeting with City Council and legal council to try and negotiate further. Commissioner Strago stated that he didn't know what more we can do at the local level, as they have their numbers and we have ours, which don't line up.

Chief Hots asked if there was discussion regarding obtaining reimbursement for us covering their station. Chairman Strago stated no, that the only concern is with covering outlying districts; Silvana, Oso, and Darrington fall short and so they got the good rate. The city is looking for us to cover the backbone. Chief Hots noted that districts are dipping into general funds to subsidize expenses. Commissioner Britton shared example of recent structure fire in Oso. "The City of Marysville provided coverage without any expectation for payment. Everett recently had a major fire and if we were available we would've gone to Everett to help out without expecting to be paid. Chief Hots advised that District 22 provides 10 mutual aid for every 1 call the city provides. The city is getting all this mutual aid funding, but does not compensate others for the mutual aid they receive.

Commissioner Nordstrom stated that he feels the proposal is absolutely unacceptable. "I'm not comfortable discussing further without going into executive session with legal counsel at this point. However, we need to address the city with a response". Chairman Strago stated that he would respond by advising the city that we're not comfortable with the proposal and that we're scheduling a special meeting with legal counsel. He will also contact Brian Snure.

- **BLS Transports** – Pending negotiations with the City of Arlington.
- **South-Side Station** – Chief Hots continues to search for viable property; Inventory is low.
- **Stillaguamish Valley Regional Fire Authority** – Next meeting June 13, 2016. Discussion regarding public comments and next workshop. Chief Hots will check with attorney to verify legalities. Brian Snure is not available to attend June RFA meeting; Retired Chief Jim Rankin will facilitate.

New Business:

- No New Business

District Secretary Reports:

- **WA State Auditor's Office** - Pending reschedule.

Chief Reports:

- **Updates Included:**
 - 324 calls to-date; busy weekend - Water Rescue.
 - Citizen reported receiving \$100 annual insurance rating discount.
 - Purchased lawn equipment – Duty Crew will take care of grounds.
 - Pulse Pont – Smart phone application used with GPS to assist the community with CPR in public areas (Not private residence). Fire service technology used to improve cardiac save rates and increase survivability.
 - Firefighter Skoog obtained his EMT Certification and Firefighter Jankowski completed his EMT course.
 - State Fire Chief's Association – Approved rate schedule for firefighters and equipment deployment in state mobilization.
 - Finishing red card class Saturday.
 - Chief Stocker and Captain Kraski are completing their final hours of hovercraft pilot training.
 - Chief Hots is participating in Cascadia Rising simulation.
 - CPR in progress call – Patient neurologically intact. Our Duty Crew responded immediately and we were able to resuscitate the patient to where they may be able to come visit our crew in the near future.

Executive Session:

None

Cash TB Summary:

- **Cash Account** – \$538,071
- **Investment account** – \$691,930

Approval of Monthly Payroll:

- **Monthly Payroll/Reimbursement** - \$23,369

Approval of Current Monthly Bills:

- **Bills Submitted** – \$12,058
Warrant No.
1910623 – 1910640

Meeting Schedule:

The next monthly Commissioner Meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday August 10, 2016 at Station 49; 12131 228th Street NE Arlington, WA 98223.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:46 p.m.

Recorder: Wendy Britton, District Secretary

Board of Commissioners Mission Statement
Snohomish County Fire Protection District No. 21

"We aspire to serve our community with professionalism, honesty and integrity by building a firm foundation that provides safety and security for all"