



**Thurston County Fire Protection District 8
SPECIAL Board of Fire Commissioners' Workshop
May 17, 2024**

MINUTES of the SPECIAL Board workshop held May 17, 2024, at the South Bay Station 8-1. Commissioners Kilpatrick, Long, Bivens, Zvirzdys and Hunter, as well as Chief VanCamp, Assistant Chief LeMay, Secretary Stumpf and Battalion Chief Hall were in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am.

The purpose of the meeting is to address some topics that were brought up by Commissioner Hunter. Topics to include: Review the Volunteer IR&R Plan; discuss fee-based BLS transport Services; discuss a possible third-party assessment of the district and discuss a potential RFA.

Commissioner Hunter expressed gratitude to the Chief and the Board for organizing the event. He clarified that while he doesn't intend to make drastic changes, he would like to explore potential options as part of due diligence.

Historical Overview - Using a Power Point presentation, Chief VanCamp provided a historical overview of previous District Master Planning, beginning with 1978 through the current day. He explained the "Emergency Services Integration Plan – 2014" that was used as the tool to merge Districts 7 and 8 in 2014. Further, he reviewed Master Planning Phases I, II and III. Some highlights of these phases:

- Phase I – Two-station model and PDP process created.
- Phase II – Facilities and deployment updated; sold surplus properties and purchased property on 63rd Avenue.
- Phase III - Apparatus and equipment updated; changes to EMS/EMT; wildland urban interface changes.

Reallocation of funding from volunteer program to career staffing program – Continuing with the PPP, Chief VanCamp gave a historical perspective of the volunteer program and the changes over time. Cost comparison between career and volunteers was discussed. \$169,119 per career FTE, \$10,352 per volunteer, resulting in the 2023 average cost of one career FTE equals the average total cost of 16 volunteer FTEs. Current volunteer numbers are low; however, they account for 2.4 FTE on nights and weekends for coverage.

Following the presentation, he recommended the district continue with the current volunteer program as part of the 2024-2028 five-year Master Plan.

Commissioner Hunter shared a suggestion that the district allocates a portion of the volunteer budget to be set-aside to build up funds for a future career FTE. A discussion ensued. The Board agreed that further examination of financial implications would occur after the results of the ballot issue were known.

BLS Ambulance Service - Continuing with the PPP, Chief VanCamp provided a historical overview of *Basic Life Support* (BLS) ambulance services in both Districts 7 and 8. The presentation included staffing statistics and EMS costs. Key points regarding ambulance impacts were highlighted, such as staffing limitations, potential increased call times if we were to handle transports, additional billing service costs, higher insurance premiums, and the impacts on private ambulance businesses. A comprehensive cost-benefit analysis estimated a 40.5% rate of cost recovery.

Following the presentation, Chief VanCamp recommended that the district continue to maintain BLS transport capabilities for emergency backup services. This decision is influenced by the current inconsistency in round-the-clock staffing at our two stations.

Commissioner Hunter added comments that since our current staffing isn't sufficient, he suggests we revisit this topic in the future.

Third Party Assessment – Chief VanCamp explained the concept of a third-party assessment. He also provided a historical context, highlighting previous contracted assessments conducted by the district over the years. Notably, he emphasized the importance of establishing a clear “need” based on agreed goals and desired outcomes to justify such an assessment.

His recommendation is that the Board discuss specific concerns that may require a third-party assessment. The next steps would involve defining the scope of work for the assessment. Once this scope is determined, a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis could be conducted. Based on the findings, the district can then proceed to engage a qualified consultant for the project.

Regional Fire Authority Chief VanCamp presented the legal definition of a Regional Fire Authority (RFA), delving into the various factors and options associated with its creation. He emphasized the importance of the RFA governing board and the comprehensive “plan” that guides the entire process. During the discussion, the benefits and impacts of establishing an RFA were thoroughly reviewed.

Chief VanCamp’s recommendation is for the Board to discuss the benefits and impacts. Additionally, assessing the potential interest of adjoining districts in participating in this lengthy RFA process is crucial.

Closure: The Board provided positive feedback for the informative presentation. No decisions were made. Further discussion on these topics could be made in the future following the results of the ballot measure. They requested copies of the slides.

Adjourn: The Board announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2024, beginning at 5:30 pm and will be held at the South Bay Station 8-1. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:33 pm.

ATTEST:

Douglas Kilpatrick, as Chair for TCFPD 8

Daniel Bivens as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Gloria Zvirzdys, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Jake Hunter, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Pamela Long, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Heidi Stumpf, District Secretary for TCFPD