

KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #2
Ellensburg, Washington

Minutes of: Commissioners' Board Meeting – Capital Facilities Plan Study Session
Meeting date: March 1, 2017
Meeting time: 1000 hours
Meeting place: 400 E. Mountain View, Station 29

Commissioners in Attendance: Pat Clerf, Neil O'Neill, Neal Houser, John Smith and Glenn Huffman.

Others in Attendance: Chief John Sinclair, Deputy Chief Rich Elliott, Financial Services Manager Amber Simon, Training Captain Joe Delvo, Shift Captain Melissa Isotalo, and several members of C shift. District Secretary Shannon Hill had an excused absence.

Call to Order: Commissioner Clerf called the meeting to Order at 1018 hours and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Overview of Current Issues:

Chief Sinclair provided a status update on the following items:

- **Station 29 Issues** –Chief Sinclair informed those present that there are several issues with Station 29. There are leaks in the roof, a Freon leak in the HVAC units, electrical board issues in the workout room, a leak in the pipes leading to the truck fill hydrant, hot/cold water issues in the showers, ill-fitting doors which allow cold air into the building, leaking duct work on the east end of the building, and ongoing electrical and lighting issues throughout the building. He further discussed the status of getting each of those issues resolved. Some of the problems are willingly being addressed by the contractor under the warranty while other issues are being disputed as problems caused by building maintenance practices.

It has been determined that there needs to be some form of destructive testing on the roof to determine the problem. Depending on what is found, either the architects or the contractor may have to pay for a new roof to be installed. The District is proceeding as if there is the potential for court action, so all communications with the contractor are being handled in writing through the architectural firm, TCA.

- **Merger with Districts 1 and 7** – Chief Sinclair discussed recent meetings that had been held with representatives of each of the districts involved in the potential merger. He shared that there appears to be support of the idea from the other Chiefs and various commissioners. If the merger moves forward, he estimates that it will be a three-year process.

There was further discussion regarding the potential for bringing in attorney Brian Snure to give a presentation regarding the legal aspects of approaching a merger. Representatives from all three districts would be invited to hear his presentation so that district officials approach the potential merger with the same understanding. Mr. Snure's fee would be \$1,500. Chief Sinclair will discuss a potential joint meeting with the other districts' representatives and see if he can set up a meeting at the end of March or beginning of April.

- **County Fire Marshal Services** – Chief Sinclair shared with those present that the Board of County Commissioners had requested a meeting to discuss the prospect of the District taking over the responsibilities for running the County Fire Marshal's office. He emphasized that they would have to fund the costs of personnel, vehicles, office space, etc. as the fire district would not assume the county's liability without the funding to support the program.

Deputy Chief Elliott shared that the County's Fire Marshal department has been unsettled for some time and the commissioners are working on ways to get it organized. In the interim they have contracted with the District to use the services of Captain Seemiller. DC Elliott indicated that it is a public safety concern that only eight inspections were completed by the County last year.

Chiefs Sinclair and Elliott were to meet with the Board of County Commissioners on the afternoon of March 1 and they would provide an update at the March 9 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting.

Capital Facilities Plan:

Financial Services Manager presented a slide show introducing those in attendance to the research done and the approach taken while preparing the current draft of the Capital Facilities Plan. She reviewed the current facilities owned by the District and the construction, renovations, or repairs needed at each of them.

Deputy Chief Elliott introduced his approach to determining a rotation and replacement plan for the current apparatus fleet. Every effort will be made to maximize the life of each apparatus by rotating vehicles with useful life remaining to stations where they will be used the least and putting newer apparatus in locations where they will be used the most.

FSM Simon then reviewed the list of major equipment purchases and indicated that more research needs to be completed to come up with a complete replacement plan for large ticket items such as ladders, stretchers, defibrillators, SCBA units, bunker gear, and computers.

After reviewing the types of major purchases to be made over the next several years, FSM Simon presented estimated cash flows. According to current estimates, the district will spend down its fund balance and have negative resources available in the Fiscal Year 2024. To avoid this situation, the district needs to adjust the spending plan, reevaluate purchasing practices, and/or obtain new revenue sources.

There was further discussion about the fact that the District needs to move forward with a Capital Facilities Plan as though the proposed three-district merger will not take place. If it does take place, then the development of an entirely new plan will be necessary.

FSM Simon also emphasized to the Board that personnel costs amount to 70 to 75 percent of the districts costs each year so it is vital for a Succession/Staffing plan to be developed. Such a plan would supplement the Capital Facilities Plan for budgeting and planning purposes. In addition, it will be beneficial to all parties to have a Succession plan in place during IAFF negotiation meetings.

After the formal presentation, the floor was opened to general discussion related to the planning process. The following topics were discussed:

- There is a student housing shortage in Ellensburg as Central Washington University continues to grow. New apartment buildings will increase the district's tax revenues.
- With the outsourcing of the billing to Systems Design, ambulance revenues are expected to increase.
- It was requested that FSM Simon prepare a report showing the trend of operating fund balances. This will help the commissioners determine what minimum balance should be maintained.
- It was also requested that an analysis of activity levels and apparatus use at the volunteer stations be created to help the commissioners understand the need for newer apparatus in those locations.
- There is the potential to not replace the existing ladder truck.

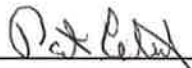
- Staff may need to look into the cost of buying used apparatus or obtaining surplus vehicles instead of buying new apparatus. It is possible that the increased maintenance costs will offset any difference in the purchase price.
- Staff needs to allocate more time to research grant opportunities.
- An EMS levy is always a possibility. There are two ways to approach such a levy:
 - Through the hospital district in which the fire district would receive tax revenues from all residents in the hospital district.
 - Through the district's property boundaries in which the district would receive increased tax revenues from only district residents.

Chief Sinclair indicated that he will be having monthly meetings with the interim hospital CEO and he can discuss the idea with her and bring an update to the Board of Fire Commissioners.

- There should be some benchmarking of staffing levels and staffing responses against similar sized communities. This will help the district to see how other similar sized entities cut responses and manage more services correctly.
- Another review of the ambulance rates needs to be undertaken. There could be the ability to increase the district's rates while staying with the Medicare/Medicaid guidelines.
- There is the potential for EMS funding reform at the state and federal levels.
- Increased staffing for the Community Paramedicine will depend on IAFF negotiations, SAFER grant funding, and funding from outside sources.
- Chief Sinclair indicated that the Chamber of Commerce had released new population and growth estimates earlier in the day. Staff will evaluate those and update the data in the draft of the Capital Facilities Plan.
- There is still the potential for merging the City of Kittitas into the district. This will have an effect on revenues, staffing levels, and apparatus placement.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner O'Neill to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Houser seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 1257 hours.



Board Chair



District Secretary

