

KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #2
Ellensburg, Washington

Minutes of: Commissioners' Board Meeting, Special Session
Meeting date: January 25th, 2022
Meeting time: 1800 hours
Meeting place: 400 E. Mountain View, Station 29

The special meeting was publicized according to the requirements of Chapter 188, Laws of 2012. Each Board member was sent a written notice via e-mail; the Daily Record was notified via an e-mail, a notice was posted on KVFR's website and the notice of special meeting was posted in the front window at 400 E. Mountain View all on January 20th, 2022.

Commissioners in Attendance: Neal Houser, Ross Ogan and Neil O'Neill. Commissioner Pettit and Clerf had excused absences.

Others in Attendance: Chief John Sinclair, District 7 Secretary Eryn Micallef, Fire District 7 Commissioners- Commissioner Cernick, Commissioner Dickinson, Commissioner Zipperer, ASM Sydney McBride and numerous firefighters and community members.

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Ogan called the meeting to Order at 1801 hours and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

3. Joint Meeting to Discuss Consolidation, RFA Efforts:

Chief Sinclair started the discussion about consolidation efforts and covered the history between the City of Ellensburg annexing into Fire District 2. At the time of annexation, other fire agencies were not interested in merging. The City of Kittitas came back later and asked to be annexed into KVFR to become the agency we have today. Chief continued the discussion and spoke about the following items:

- In 2019, Fire District 7 approached Fire District 2 for Fire Chief services. An interlocal agreement for Fire Chief services was signed along with intention from both boards to continue to explore consolidation efforts.
- On October 7th, a special meeting was held, and Attorney Brian Snure spoke about the different options: RFA's, mergers and contract for services to both boards.
 - RFA tax bases need to be equal to occur. Currently, FD 2 is authorized at \$1.50, FD 7 renewed their level at \$1.00. In the Upper County there are two EMS agencies that provide EMS services with an EMS levy. The agencies that originally join a RFA set the rules and regulations for that RFA.
 - Direct Merger would also require the tax rates to be the same. The District 7 board has thought that this wouldn't be equitable for tax payers that would get different levels of service.

- Contract for services would not require the tax rates to be the same. Chief Sinclair thinks this model would make the most sense.

Commissioner Zipperer shared his experience with annexations through his career in Mason County. In his experience a consultant group doing a study on the consolidation would allow for the community to see numbers and figures.

Commissioner Houser shared his experience with an RFA while working in Kent. He was a firefighter at the time of the RFA and he found the process smooth and the Unions were all involved.

Chief Sinclair spoke about possibly making another round to see if any agencies are wanting to consolidate services once the consultant has evaluated the situation. At this point, only FD2 and FD7 are interested in consolidating services. Chief Sinclair recommended that the boards look at other agencies contracts and move forward in the process for a contract for services.

Discussion occurred between the two boards about the following:

- If someone wanted to join a contract for services, later down the road another agency could. Growth in the future may drive an agency to want to join.
- The Citizens in the upper county are paying for a lot more overhead by having multiple agencies. The lower valley has more consolidation of services between the City of Ellensburg, City of Kittitas and Fire District 2. While the population is growing there are lots of second homes being built in Upper Kittitas County.
- The commissioners want to retain the individuality and history of each agency but also work under the same combined services.
- Fire agencies on the western side of the state have much more experiences with consolidation of services. Chief Sinclair has contacts at Clallam Valley Fire & Rescue, where they had a similar situation to FD2 and FD7, that would allow the commissioners, labor groups and firefighters to tour and learn about their process to consolidate.

After discussion it was unanimously determined between the two boards that that the next step will be to bring in a consultant firm to evaluate if consolidated services will benefit both agencies.

5. Adjournment

Commissioner O'Neill made a motion 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 adjourned at 1853 hours.



Board Chair


District Secretary

