

**Kitsap County Fire District #18**  
**Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes**  
**September 11, 2024**  
**Poulsbo Fire Department**  
**Poulsbo, WA**

**REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:**

David Ellingson	Commissioner	Jim Ingalls	Commissioner
Jeff Uberuaga	Commissioner	William Whiteley	Commissioner
Darryl Milton	Commissioner	Jim Gillard	Fire Chief
Shane Anderson	Deputy Chief (DC)	Nichole Sawyers	Administrative Director (AD)
Jeff Russell	Deputy Chief (DC)	Wendy Luther	Finance Director (FD)
Trevor Holmberg	Staff	Julie Rogers	Staff

**Call to order:** Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Milton at 4:00 p.m.

**Approval of agenda:**

Commissioner Ingalls moved to approve the 09/11/2024 agenda. Commissioner Ellingson seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 09/11/2024 agenda. Passed.

**Public Comment:** None in attendance.

**Executive Session:** At 4:01 p.m. Chief Gillard requested a 5-minute executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the performance of a public employee to be conducted at the end of the regular meeting.

**Action Items:**

1. **Consent Agenda:** All matters listed within the Consent Agenda have been distributed to each member of the Commission for reading and study, are considered routine, and will be enacted by one motion of the Commission with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by a Commission Member or by citizen request.
  - a. August 28, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
  - b. Vouchers

Commissioner Ellingson moved to approve the 09/11/2024 Consent Agenda. Commissioner Whiteley seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 09/11/2024 Consent Agenda. Passed.

**Discussion Items:**

1. **Community Assistance, Referral, and Education Service (CARES) Presentation:** Community Support Specialist (CSS) Julie Rogers provided an update on the current status of the CARES program. She also shared details about her professional background. CSS Rogers expressed gratitude to the board for their support for CARES, a program that services 72,000 people in Kitsap County, collaborating with other fire districts in the area. She discussed collaborating with Firefighter (FF) Sytsma, staffing for Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue, South Kitsap Fire & Rescue, and Poulsbo Fire Department and presented a matrix outlining the CARES program's performance from January 2024 through June 2024, which included referrals and services provided. Additionally, CSS Rogers highlighted the financial support the District received from various grants and mentioned a feasibility study conducted by the University of Washington. This study aimed to determine whether the fire district could potentially evolve into a behavioral health agency in the future, thus ensuring greater program sustainability.
2. **Station 76:** Chief Gillard discussed the upcoming hearing examiner meeting on 9/17/24 to discuss progress on the Station 76 Project. There is a waiting period for public comments. The District is prepared to discuss how the district is ready to minimize environmental impact on Johnson Creek and noise reduction planning. The District will also discuss the importance of moving forward with the upcoming bad weather. If the hearing examiner allows the District to proceed, property grading could begin. The Hill Association will be reducing staff to one person to save on expenses. The District is working on ordering items for the interior of the station.

Commissioner Uberuaga asked if funds are available for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE). Chief Gillard stated that the budget has been approved for FFE, and there is no specific process, but for large purchases, the board will be made aware.

- 3. 2025 Budget Process:** Chief Gillard is working on the small and large capital plans for 2025. The plan includes the purchase of heart monitors for \$200-300K to replace the current monitors, as well as the purchase of a new medic unit and new traffic warning signs to place on Hwy 3. FD Luther commented that there was a meeting with DC Anderson and Battalion Chief Gillanders working on the budget. FD Luther hopes to have the first review of the proposed budget in early October. The District is working on getting accurate budgeting versus a more conservative approach. The life expectancy of heart monitors is seven years, which has passed. This does not mean they stop working, but servicing becomes more difficult as technology changes.

#### **Informational Items:**

- 1. St. Michaels Medical Center (SMMC):** SMMC is still facing challenges with extended wait times and does not have updated metrics at this time. There are issues with delays in care, and efforts are underway to increase staffing. Chief Gillard mentioned discussions with directors from local urgent cares. Many services have been withdrawn from urgent care facilities leading people to go to emergency departments for lab work and some imaging. There have been positive discussions with Olympic Ambulance regarding the services they provide. There has been a significant amount of collaboration. The advanced provider program for mobile integrated health support, CARES, is still moving forward and is currently seeking applicants.
- 2. Staffing/Hiring:** AD Sawyers discussed the current hiring and staffing. Currently, the Finance Director interviews will be held on 9/12/2024, and the District will be interviewing nine professionals. It is forecasted the final interviews will be conducted sometime next week. Victoria Effray has accepted a position with the Poulsbo Fire Department; she has successfully passed all pre-employment testing and will be starting with the department on 9/23/2024 as the new Community Support Specialist II. We have also offered a job to an experienced FF/EMT who has started the pre-employment processing with hopes to have a start date in mid to late October. Chief Gillard is still working on filling the CARES firefighter position. If the District does not find a volunteer, the District may be looking at filling a temporary second social worker.
- 3. Facilities:** Chief Gillard stated the Station 72 restroom remodel has been completed, and the District was able to save over \$20,000 with Facility Manager Pickard completing a majority of the work. The District is working on a comprehensive list for the 2026 capital bond request and beginning research on the potential cost. Chief Gillard wants to ensure that a detailed plan will be available for where those funds would go when speaking with the Strategic Advisory Board. Commissioner Milton asked about the property for Station 72. Chief Gillard stated he is still researching the options for either replacing it with a new location or remodeling but would like to have more metrics in the future. If we move, we need to find a place with better access and will need water and sewer. Commissioner Milton also asked if Chief Gillard has heard any more information on the growth for Port Gamble. Chief Gillard stated that it will be considered, but he has not received more specific information. There is more focus on the trails and injuries in the trail system. Commissioner Milton stated that it would be good to look at the property now instead of waiting. Commissioner Ingalls commented on rebuilding Station 72; a big driving factor would be a drainage system and if the property is even large enough to support it. DC Anderson stated that the new software (Darkhorse) should be available in six to eight weeks which can be used to determine future locations for fire stations based on data. Chief Gillard provided a legislative update; there has been some progress with insurance and the Washington State Rating Bureau (WSRB). A committee is being put together to evaluate the WSRB rating schedule.
- 4. Apparatus:** Chief Gillard commented that the fire chief from Conconully inquired about the engine and expressed interest in potentially acquiring it if we were considering disposing of it. The District has arranged for a third-party evaluation to determine its fair market price. We are also considering replacing the small marine vessel due to its age. This will be addressed in the capital bond to acquire a vessel better suited for cold weather conditions. Commissioner Milton suggested exploring a partnership with North Kitsap Fire & Rescue, to which Chief Gillard commented that the tides are a concern. Commissioner Milton also inquired about the status of the

aerial apparatus, to which Chief Gillard replied that the final cost has not been received yet, but the purchase process is moving forward, although it may take one to two years to complete.

- 5. Policy 6020 Outside Training (Continuation from 8/28/2024 Regular Meeting):** This discussion is a follow-up to the regular meeting on 8/28/2024, which discussed education reimbursement and the motion below. Commissioner Ellingson wants to specify 5.5.3.1 putting more emphasis on defining a passing grade. The proposal is to consider a satisfactory grade as a minimum of a "C." Chief Gillard mentioned that a discussion with the bargaining unit would be necessary before implementation. Commissioner Ellingson pointed out that we should not be using public funds for a non-satisfactory grade. DC Anderson mentioned that the education reimbursement program has enabled many people to graduate with higher education and appreciates the Board's approval of the reimbursement. This policy will be reviewed and added to the next regular meeting.

Commissioner Ellingson moved to adopt a policy that education reimbursement will only be paid to employees who have passed the course with a grade of "C" or above. Commissioner Ingalls seconded. Discussion: Commissioner Ingalls asked if the bargaining unit would need to be involved prior to establishing a policy. Chief Gillard stated a policy has been created and will be ready for review at the next meeting. Commissioner Ellingson stated that it would be okay to add an option for tuition advancement at the Fire Chief's discretion. DC Anderson stated the policy would cover all concerns and has language regarding a passing grade per the policy of the institution the employee attends as not all institutions use letter grading systems. DC Anderson also thanked the board for the consideration for the advancement of tuition funds.

Commissioner Milton moved to postpone this motion to next meeting pending the review of the district policy. Commissioner Ellingson seconded. Motion was carried with a 4 to 1 vote to postpone this motion to next meeting pending the review of the District policy. Passed.

Commissioner Ellingson moved to withdraw motion previously stated. Commissioner Ingalls seconded. Motion will be struck.

#### **Commissioner and Staff Comments:**

**Commissioner Ingalls:** Is there a 2025 budget request for a drone program? Chief Gillard stated it was requested in 2024, still under review.

**Commissioner Ellingson:** Commented the September 11, 2001 made a significant impact on the fire service and our country. Would like to request the board take a moment of silence at the end of this meeting. Also commented that the Comprehensive Plan in Bainbridge Island has a proposal to add over 5,000 new housing developments, but curious how they may affect the District in the future.

**DC Russell:** Commented on the great work our crews do. There were many firefighters who worked Kid's Day over the weekend and commented that there are upcoming department Open Houses in the next few weeks; looking forward to welcoming the folks. Dates have been posted.

FF Holmberg: thanked the board for supporting the restroom updates.

CSS Rogers: Thanks for the opportunity to speak on CARES and serving the fire department.

**Chief Gillard:** Commented that the CARES program came up at a meeting and that he received very positive feedback information on a job well done. A round table meeting was held regarding the future of a North Mason CARES program that would focus on medical. The meeting was well done and was shocked they had over 190 RSVPs on the program which was well attended and neat to see that we are not the only ones interested in supporting the efforts of CARES.

**Commissioner Milton:** Received positive comments on the CARES program.

The board took a moment of silence.

**Public Comment:** No public present.

**Executive Session:** At 5:49 p.m., Commissioner Milton called a 5-minute executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the performance of a public employee set to run until 5:54 p.m. At 5:54 p.m., Commissioner Milton closed the executive session and reopened the regular meeting. There was no action taken.

**Good of the order:**

Next Regular Meeting Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 16:00

Kitsap County Fire Commissioners Meeting, Tuesday, September 24, 2024 via Zoom

Washington Fire Commissioner Association Conference, Wednesday-Saturday, October 23-26, 2024

**Adjourn:** The regular meeting was adjourned by common consent at 5:55 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

Nichole Sawyers, Administrative Director