

Kitsap County Fire District #18
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
November 27, 2024
Poulsbo Fire Department
Poulsbo, WA

REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE:

David Ellingson	Commissioner	Jim Ingalls	Commissioner (EX)
Jeff Uberuaga	Commissioner	William Whiteley	Commissioner
Darryl Milton	Commissioner	Jim Gillard	Fire Chief
Shane Anderson	Deputy Chief (DC)	Jeff Russell	Deputy Chief (DC)
Amy Strzalka	Finance Director (FD)		

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

Approval of agenda:

Commissioner Ellingson moved to approve the 11/27/2024 agenda. Commissioner Uberuaga seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 11/27/2024 agenda. Passed.

Public Comment: None in attendance.

Executive Session: At 4:01 p.m. Chief Gillard requested a 30-minute executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140 relating to collective bargaining issues and negotiations 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. November 13, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Vouchers
 - c. Department Payroll (November)

Commissioner Ellingson moved to approve the 11/27/2024 Consent Agenda. Commissioner Whiteley seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 11/27/2024 Consent Agenda. Passed.

2. **Commissioner Payroll:** Commissioner Ellingson shared that there was a total of 18 meetings attended for the month of November totaling \$2,898.00.

Commissioner Ellingson moved to approve the November Commissioner Payroll in the amount of \$2,898.00. Commissioner Whiteley seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the November Commissioner Payroll in the amount of \$2,898.00. Passed.

3. **Joint Management Group Interlocal Agreement (ILA):** Chief Gillard discussed the joint management group ILA. There were some amendments made including financial commitments. Chief Gillard requested the board authorize the ILA.

Commissioner Uberuaga moved to authorize Chief Gillard to sign the updated Joint Management Group ILA as presented. Commissioner Ellingson seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to authorize Chief Gillard to sign the updated Joint Management Group ILA as presented. Passed

Discussion Items:

- 1. Station 76:** Chief Gillard provided an update on the Station 76 project, noting that the District is still collaborating with the project team. Delays are primarily due to stormwater redesign issues and adverse weather conditions. To move forward, the District is considering a phased approach, allowing construction to begin while the stormwater design is completed separately. They are also working with a contract attorney to explore additional options. Chief Gillard indicated that proceeding without the stormwater design could incur an extra cost of approximately \$40,000. Commissioner Milton inquired whether delaying the project until April would result in additional costs for the District. Chief Gillard responded that the exact financial impact is still being determined. Additionally, Commissioner Uberuaga mentioned that he had contacted local agencies, and they were not aware of any weather-related surcharges. The District is hopeful to receive more concrete financial details soon.
- 2. Policy 1040 Service Level Ideas:** Chief Gillard discussed with the board the 1040 Annual Service Level Policy, which serves as the guiding document for the board's decisions regarding the fire chief and District operations. One of the key changes includes adjusting the number of Full-Time Employees (FTEs) to 63, with one additional FTE funded through a grant. The organizational chart and station staffing levels will also see updates, with plans to expand beyond the usual staffing. Another area under review is the potential use of new analytic software to adjust service level goals. Chief Gillard raised concerns about the current average response time, which is based on brain death, but can vary depending on location. He proposed adjusting internal goals while developing a more realistic district-wide goal. He hopes to present these changes and adopt Policy 1040 in December.
- 3. Cardiac Monitor Purchase:** DC Russell discussed with the board the final steps in the process of purchasing four new heart monitors. The District has signed an Interlocal Agreement (ILA), a cooperative agreement with the company, Savvik. The District is planning to request approval for the purchase in December, which will total over \$260,000 for all four monitors. This purchase will also include a service plan. The LifePak system has been budgeted at \$364,000 for the upcoming year.

Informational Items:

- 1. St. Michaels Medical Center (SMMC):** Chief Gillard provided an update to the board on the current status of SMMC. Last Friday, the EMS task force met, and while there have been some improvements, the overall situation remains challenging, and it will take time to see significant impacts. Staffing has been increased, with approval to add 15 additional travel nurses in the Emergency Department (ED) starting in January. The new tower at SMMC is expected to come online soon, which will add more beds and help address the boarding issue. Additionally, a freestanding ED/urgent care center in Bremerton is set to open soon, aimed at addressing low-acuity cases and reducing wait times. A meeting with SMMC and the Poulsbo Mayor is scheduled to discuss a potential freestanding ED in Poulsbo. SMMC is also implementing a "soft divert" system in which the fire chief is notified of the status, and the fire district can then choose when to divert patients between Silverdale, Gig Harbor, and Tacoma as needed, based on the patient's condition. As a regional hospital, SMMC handles the most severe cases, with Port Townsend acting as a community access hospital for less critical patients, and the number of transfers to SMMC has been increasing. Mason County has faced similar challenges. Commissioner Milton also inquired about Kitsap Mental Health, and Chief Gillard explained that Kitsap Mental Health is fully funded through the Salish Behavioral Health Organization, which distributes funds throughout the county and the peninsula. However, there are barriers to the services they can provide, particularly for mental health patients who need to go to the emergency department.

- 2. Staffing/Hiring:** AD Sawyers provided a brief update on the current hiring status. The District conducted interviews for the firefighter/paramedic position last week, and a job offer was extended. However, the individual declined the offer this week due to financial constraints related to relocating to Washington. The District plans to reopen the hiring process in the new year to recruit lateral firefighter/paramedics. Currently, no employees are out on injury, but one employee is on light duty.

The discussion also touched on the possibility of offering stipends or incentives to assist with moving expenses when hiring new employees. Other departments offer sign-on bonuses of up to \$15,000, and it was suggested that offering similar incentives could help attract candidates to the District, particularly to Poulsbo. Commissioner Milton asked if any guarantee could be tied to the District for those who accept such offers. Commissioner Uberuaga expressed concerns about incentivizing people to join the District, while Captain Vay highlighted the importance of considering potential morale issues. He suggested that further discussion could determine if such incentives could be both effective and sustainable.

Commissioner Ellingson noted that moving costs could become expensive and emphasized that whatever approach is taken should be fair. However, he indicated he was not interested in pursuing this idea at the moment. Chief Gillard concluded that while the topic should remain on the radar, there was no immediate need to make a decision.
- 3. Facilities:** Chief Gillard shared that he needs to collaborate with Scott Pickard, the Facility Manager (FM), to develop a priority list. Additionally, he and the Deputy Chief will meet with FM Pickard to review and discuss the priorities. Commissioner Milton inquired about the status of a potential Station 72 remodel using the new analytic system. Chief Gillard responded that Station 72 is located in the right area, but the main challenge lies in the rough location for pulling out, with access to Highway 3 being particularly difficult. Commissioner Uberuaga asked how many acres the station would require, and Chief Gillard stated that at least five acres would be needed, especially until water and sewer services become available. Commissioner Milton also raised the question of whether the District should explore the possibility of merging with North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKFR). Chief Gillard acknowledged that this is a possibility to consider for the future.
- 4. Apparatus:** DC Russell stated the District is still waiting on a radiator for Engine 111 from Cummins. The District took delivery of the new F150 command vehicle, but it will be awhile until it is ready for service. The District is awaiting a bill for the E-One ladder truck.
- 5. Policy 7070 Respiratory Protection Program:** Chief Gillard presented the board with a draft policy, stating that this update is necessary to ensure we are following state and federal requirements. He will request the Board adopt the policy at the next meeting.
- 6. Financial Report (October):** FD Strzalka is adjusting well. FD Strzalka stated the levy resolution and budget was sent to the county. She is still working on the Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) report. Last month there was nothing out of the ordinary. There was a large deposit in October from GEMT. There was a cashout due to an employee leaving.
- 7. Overtime Report (October):** DC Anderson stated that the overtime amount was approximately \$42,463.00 with the District receiving a reimbursement of \$17,000.00. The District is at 67% of the annual overtime budget.
- 8. Operations Report (October):** DC Anderson stated the District responded to 359 calls in the month of October compared to 359 calls in 2023. There were 19 CARES contacts. DC Russell said this time of year there tends to be an increase in traffic collisions due to the weather conditions. The District provided mutual aid a total of 30 times and received mutual aid on 50 occasions.

Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Commissioner Ellingson: Commented that the annual commissioner brunch will be on 12/14/24. He also commented that there was a fire commissioner from another district caught smuggling drugs in a prison, who is also an attorney.

Commissioner Uberuaga: Wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Chief Gillard: Took a moment to recognize the crews who will be on duty this upcoming holiday and how appreciative he is for the work they are doing.

Public Comment: No public present.

Good of the order:

Next Regular Meeting **Wednesday, December 11, 2024 at 16:00**

Annual Holiday Commissioner Brunch, **Saturday, December 14, 2024 at 11:00 Located at the Clearwater Resort**

District Holiday Party, **Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 17:30 at Station 71**

Executive Session: At 5:18 p.m. Commissioner Milton called for a 30-minute executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140 relating to collective bargaining issues and negotiations set to run until 5:48 p.m. At 5:48 p.m., Commissioner Milton closed the executive session and reopened the regular meeting. No action was taken.

Adjourn: The regular meeting was adjourned by common consent at 5:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

Nichole Sawyers, Kitsap County Fire District #18 Board Secretary