

Kitsap County Fire District #18
Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2026
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)
Amy Strzalka	Finance Director (FD)	Kevin Vay	Battalion Chief
Trevor Holmberg	Firefighter	Josh Warter	Lieutenant

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

Approval of agenda:

Commissioner Ellingson moved to approve the 06/24/2026 agenda. Commissioner Uberuaga seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 06/24/2026 agenda. Passed.

Public Comment: No comment

Executive Session: None Requested

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. June 10, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Vouchers
 - c. Department Payroll (June)

Commissioner Whiteley moved to approve the 06/24/2026 consent agenda. Commissioner Uberuaga seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to approve the 06/24/2026 consent agenda. Passed.

2. **Commissioner Payroll (June):** Commissioner Whiteley stated the June commissioner payroll totaled \$3,703.00.

Commissioner Whiteley moved to approve the June Commissioner Payroll in the amount of \$3,703.00. Commissioner Uberuaga seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to authorize the District to approve the June Commissioner Payroll in the amount of \$3,703.00. Passed.

3. **Employee Handbook:** AD Sawyers requested the board adopt the 2026 Employee Handbook. Commissioner Ellingson noted the handbook references a 3-platoon schedule, not the current trial 4-platoon; AD Sawyers explained updates will follow if the 4-platoon is adopted. AD Sawyers also asked for minor changes to be approved without returning to the board unless policy changes are needed. The board agreed.

Commissioner Ellingson moved to adopt the updated 2026 Employee Handbook as presented. Commissioner Whiteley seconded. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote to adopt the updated 2026 Employee Handbook as presented. Passed.

Discussion Items:

1. **Impact Fees:** Chief Gillard provided an update regarding the District's efforts to establish impact fees for new construction. The City of Poulsbo has accepted the ordinance, though details are still being finalized concerning who will draft it, with implementation expected by January 2027. The city has updated language so that the fees apply to all certificates of occupancy issued after the effective date. Permits become vested when the city provides

a projected cost, meaning larger projects that have already submitted for permitting will be vested and not required to pay the new impact fees. There is ongoing discussion about those who have yet to submit permit applications. Commissioner Milton inquired whether impact fees had been implemented at the county level. Chief Gillard responded that only Poulsbo Fire has initiated such fees within the city, with the county still under consideration. Commissioner Ingalls expressed concern that it seems inequitable for larger companies who previously filed permits to be exempt from fees, while smaller residences with new occupancy would need to pay. Chief Gillard clarified that anyone with approved permits and a fee schedule prior to implementation will not be subject to the impact fees, as they are considered vested. There is a need to confirm if the city is notifying new permit applicants about the addition of impact fees once a certificate of occupancy is issued. Commissioner Ingalls also asked whether the fire department or the City of Poulsbo is responsible for collecting payments. Commissioner Ingalls and Chief Gillard received a letter presented to the County Commissioner expressing support for impact fees.

2. **Capital Bond:** Chief Gillard shared a handout that Administrative Specialist (AS) Robideaux created, intended for social media and the upcoming Chat with the Chief, which includes frequently asked questions (FAQs) about the capital bond and district plans. Chief Gillard also mentioned the need to discuss key capital projects if the bond passes, including planning for a potential separate fleet facility and considering new building options. AS Robideaux will pin the handout to the district Facebook page and add it to the website for easy access.

Informational Items:

1. **St. Michael Medical Center (SMMC) Status:** Chief Gillard reported worsening metrics at SMMC, including frequent divert status and record-high wait times. Despite a brief improvement last year, conditions have declined again. Crew feedback and the emergency director's resignation have increased concerns. The interim director has reached out for solutions, and Chief Gillard is urgently seeking input from neighboring agencies and key stakeholders to address these issues.
2. **Culture Survey Results:** Chief Gillard updated the Board on the district-wide survey. He spoke with all shifts—administrative, dayshift, and volunteers. Main areas for improvement are communication, transparency, decision-making, and accountability. Positive outcomes include trust, respect, and personnel safety.
3. **Station 71 Second Floor Restroom Remodel Project:** DC Anderson provided an update regarding the remodel; tiling and shower installation are nearing completion. The project continues to progress, with painting underway, and has officially entered phase 2.
4. **Station 76 Retention Status:** Chief Gillard reported that drainage is resolved, and landscaping is the only remaining issue. Irrigation problems persist, but the project is nearly complete.
5. **Staffing/Hiring:** AD Sawyers provided the Board with an update regarding ongoing recruitment initiatives. A Lateral Firefighter/EMT is currently progressing through the pre-employment process, with a projected start date in late July or early August. Interviews for the chaplain position are scheduled to begin this Friday. Captain John Warnke has officially notified the department of his planned retirement, effective April 2027.
6. **Apparatus:** Chief Gillard reported the ladder truck is fully operational. Engine 108 is preparing for possible wildland deployment. One of the medic units has air conditioning (AC) issues, but the fleet overall is performing well. Commissioner Uberuaga inquired about pump testing; Chief Gillard explained there were vacuum concerns with potential leaks, repairs are underway, and certification will be sent after completion.
7. **Finance Report (May):** FD Strzalka noted receipt of the final tax income for May. The treasurer's report shows a new account labeled "cap project sub fund," holding remodel retainage. A Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) notice was received for 2025, with nearly \$725,000 expected in the next 60 days. Assessed values remain negative but less so than anticipated. Commissioner Uberuaga inquired about the Station

76 budget; FD Strzalka will update the tracker by the next meeting, as little has changed. The project is still expected to come in under budget.

8. **Overtime Report (May):** DC Anderson reviewed the May overtime report, which totaled \$106,139.00, noting that minimum staffing was the only portion unbudgeted, while other items were budgeted. Overtime is higher than last year, but staffing levels are down by 6.5 positions. He expects improvement over the next few months as personnel return from training and sick leave. FF/PM Runyon and FF/PM White have graduated from the fire academy. Minimum staffing is under-budgeted for 2026. Commissioner Ellingson asked about the cost comparison between a four-platoon system and a three-platoon system, observing that certain rules may be affecting the process. By the end of May, 54 percent of the budget has been spent. Commissioner Uberuaga questioned whether the District is considering all options to reduce overtime, such as hiring additional staff or changing operations. FD Strzalka also discussed data and staffing, suggesting that a four-platoon system could benefit the district and that the abnormally high overtime is due to high rates of sick leave and probationary staff, as well as those currently attending the fire academy.
9. **Operations Report (May):** DC Anderson reported 380 calls and 44 CARES calls in May 2026, compared to 355 calls and 34 CARES calls in 2025. DC Anderson shared with the Board details regarding a recent significant event involving a fire fatality on Sunday—crews responded effectively. Battalion Chief Rahl will conduct a post-incident survey to identify lessons learned, aiming to enhance service through constructive feedback. The Kitsap County Fire Marshal has offered peer support, and Kitsap County Incident Management Procedures (KCIMP) for the county will investigate and collaborate with mutual partners.

Commissioner and Staff Comments:

Commissioner Ellingson: Commissioner Ellingson talked about a letter that was received and mentioned the budget community meeting held at North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKFR). The main takeaway is that budgets are tightening, which could lead to potential layoffs within the county.

Commissioner Whiteley: Recently met with his nephew who is a wildland firefighter, commented on the unique and hard job it is. Will be absent in July and early August. Requested Ellingson to audit the financials during that time.

Commissioner Uberuaga: Attended the Poulsbo City Council meeting last week and was pleased to learn there is support for fire district impact fees.

FD Strzalka: The new groundskeeper has started, so you will see their payroll soon in the next reporting cycle.

Chief Gillard: Chief Gillard praised the dedication of the crews and staff, noting that their commitment has fostered a high level of satisfaction among employees. He emphasized that operational issues identified in the recent survey are manageable, thanks to the team's strong work ethic and collaborative spirit. The Chief highlighted that the professionalism and resilience of the department's personnel are key to their continued success.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Good of the order:

Next Regular Meeting **Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 16:00**

Chat with the Chief, **Monday, June 29, 2026 at 18:00 via Zoom™**

Annual Kitsap County Fire Commissioner Picnic/Meeting **Saturday, July 18, 2026 @ Island Lake Center at 4:30 p.m.**

Adjourn: The regular meeting was adjourned by common consent at 5:41 p.m.

ATTEST:

Nichole Sawyers, Kitsap County Fire District #18 Board Secretary