

Whatcom County Fire District #5

Point Roberts Fire Department

**2030 Benson Road, Suite A
Point Roberts, Washington, 98281**

Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

June 8th, 2016

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m. by Commissioner Meursing.

In Attendance: Commissioner William Meursing
 Commissioner Stanley Riffle
 Commissioner Shannon Tomsen
 Assistant Chief John Shields
 Financial Manager Patty Markel (via teleconference)
 Recording Secretary Linda Hughes

Guests: Virginia Lester
 Richard Foreman
 Victor Riley
 Marg Knowles

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Virginia Lester thanked the Commissioners, and especially Chief Carleton, for the recent CERT and PREP training. She advised that Chief Carleton is a wonderful teacher and that everyone who attended the training learned something. She further commented how very important this training is and how very much their groups appreciate the Chief tremendously.

Richard Foreman spoke on behalf of his neighbors, the rag-tag weekend warriors of Maple Beach, who wanted to welcome Shannon Tomsen as the newest Commissioner to the Board, and also reported being very glad to see Assistant Chief Shields continuing his important role within the District in a very professional manner, keeping his head held high, despite the recent negative media reports.

C. BOARD ACTION

C.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 11th, 2016

MOTION: Commissioner Tomsen moved to accept the Minutes of the May 11th, 2016 regular meeting as read. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Riffle. **Motion passed 3-0.**

D. FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

D.1 Financial Report

Financial Manager Markel provided her financial report as submitted.

D.2 Approval of Fire District Vouchers

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Vouchers for May, 2016 in the amount of \$15,811.99 for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 - 0**

D.3 Approval of Fire District Payroll

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved that the payroll in the amount of \$16,140.50 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 - 0**

D.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel indicated that 61.85% of the budget is remaining.

Commissioner Meursing asked what line item had the charge of \$2,447.13 payable to Delta Fire EMS been attributed to. Financial Manager Markel responded that it was currently noted under professional services, but that she would consult with Chief Carleton to confirm where that expense should be reported.

Commissioner Riffle asked if an invoice had been sent to the insurance company for reimbursement of the Delta Fire EMS invoice. Financial Manager Markel responded that Chief Carleton had earlier remarked that the District would be seeking reimbursement of that invoice, but she was unaware whether that inquiry had yet been sent to the insurance company.

Commissioner Tomsen clarified for the public that the invoice from Delta Fire EMS was for their attendance at the storage facility fire of April 6, 2016.

Commissioner Riffle asked if an invoice would be forthcoming from North Whatcom for their attendance at that same fire. Assistant Chief Shields indicated that no invoice would be coming from North Whatcom, due to the services provided being part of the mutual aid agreement between the Districts.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

Assistant Chief Shields reported that no correspondence had been received in May.

F. CHIEF'S REPORT

Assistant Chief Shields provided an overview of Chief Carleton's Chief Officer Report as attached.

Assistant Chief Shields repeated Chief Carleton's usual reminder to homeowners to contact their insurance companies to seek potential savings related to the District's improved ISO rating.

Commissioner Meursing asked Assistant Chief Shields for details about the number of members on the roster and the upcoming Academy scheduled for this weekend.

Assistant Chief Shields reported that 6 new firefighters were enrolled in the Academy. In response to Commissioner Tomsen's inquiry about the status of scheduled training when the Chief is away, Assistant Chief Shields responded that it is normal course of action for the training to be done by current Officers, and not by Chief Carleton.

Assistant Chief Shields also described an Officers Academy scheduled for next weekend, reporting that 4 applicants would be attending for the 60-70 hours of training to fill two vacant officer positions.

Assistant Chief Shields continued by reporting an Engineers Academy which is scheduled for next month.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Riffle inquired about the status of a potential blog that had been suggested by Commissioner Meursing at last month's meeting.

Commissioner Meursing indicated that he had asked around to determine the need for some kind of unbiased, objective communication tool on behalf of the District. His inquiries were met with enthusiasm and some members of the community undertook a polling of people's opinions, specifically with regard to the All Point Bulletin's reporting of the Fire District activities over the past year.

Commissioner Meursing reported that of the 42 individuals/families that responded to the informal poll, 5 were happy with the APB reporting, 37 were unhappy or disgusted with the reporting, and 16 were unhappy and felt cheated by the paper for not providing objective coverage. Of those 42 respondents, 12 were Canadian and the rest were local residents.

Commissioner Meursing feels that residents deserve some kind of unbiased, objective communication tool that would assist the District in providing transparency and full disclosure of events of the District, whether or not they were covered in the paper.

Commissioner Riffle asked how the blog or other communication tool would be contributed to, wondering if input by one Commissioner would violate any regulation governing the actions of any one Commissioner, adding that in his opinion the topic is definitely worth exploring.

Commissioner Tomsen agreed that an objective communication tool could help provide transparency and otherwise unknown facts to the community. She added that it shouldn't necessarily be an open forum, as anonymous posts can become problematic. She suggested a number of options be considered, whether a regular flier or circular should be published or the potential use of social media or a blog as suggested by Commissioner Meursing.

Commissioner Tomsen then provided several copies of a handout she had prepared for discussion at the meeting, which were distributed amongst everyone in attendance. The handout is attached as part of these Minutes but is summarized as follows:

Commissioner Tomsen's handout opens with acknowledgment of the Commissioners' responsibility to represent the District to the public with objective factual truth, utilizing a variety of methods, including public meetings, a blog, flier or circular, and welcoming input from the community via email.

The handout continues with Commissioner Tomsen's view that the All Point Bulletin's coverage of the April meeting, published in the May 2016 edition, was misleading to readers with its narrow reporting of the discussions at that meeting. The handout identifies a number of itemized uses of inflammatory language and omissions of fact from the article. The examples are accompanied by an annotated copy of the referenced APB article.

The handout continues with a number of additional examples of errors and omissions from an article published in the June 2016 edition of the All Point Bulletin, and also includes an annotated copy of the referenced article.

Discussion ensued, resulting in unanimous agreement that a communication tool of the nature proposed by Commissioner Meursing was worthy of further discussion and planning to implement and maintain in the near future.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Meursing reported that Peter van der Velden, of Cross Border Property Management and Maintenance, had suffered an injury, possibly a fractured shoulder, but despite that injury, had been observed power-washing the outside of the fire station earlier in the day, in preparation for the painting contract that he had been hired for. The Commissioners all agreed that a delay in completion of the painting contract may be in order and that Mr. van der Velden should be encouraged to properly heal first and then do the work when he was ready. All Commissioners unanimously supported this position.

Commissioner Meursing then broached the topic of the paint colors, and everyone agreed on the base color being very similar to the current color with the trim being slightly darker. He then proposed that a traditional red color be considered for the doors.

Commissioner Tomsen indicated her agreement with that proposal.

Commissioner Riffle disagreed, opposing the suggestion of painting the doors red, stating that he felt the fire station should blend in with the community surroundings and not stand out. He also suggested that Commissioner Meursing might have to take his proposal of red doors to the Character Plan committee, but Commissioner Meursing disagreed with the need for Character Plan committee input as the fire station is a public service building and not commercial property. Commissioner Riffle reiterated that he would not vote in favor of red doors.

MOTION: Commissioner Meursing moved that the doors of the fire station be painted a fire-engine red color. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 2 – 1** with Commissioner Riffle opposed.

Commissioner Tomsen wanted to discuss potential beautification of the grounds surrounding the fire station. She reported having received complaints about the container on the east side of the building, which Assistant Chief Shields confirmed will soon be painted the same color as the building. Additionally, Commissioner Tomsen personally wanted to see the septic mound on the west side of the building screened with small hearty shrubs or hedging. She volunteered to contribute the necessary shrubs and to solicit the help of other volunteers in the task of planting and caring for them until they matured enough to survive without regular watering.

Discussion ensued about the necessity for water to support any new plants and the various considerations for adding a water source to the west side of the building.

The Commissioners unanimously support the installation of a water source for the purpose of watering the plants and tabled this discussion to the July meeting, as Commissioner Meursing suggested that Chief Carleton should be consulted prior to making a decision to proceed as it will impact the budget. It was unanimously agreed to bring two Motions to the July meeting, one for the approval of shrubbery and one for the approval of the plumbing changes.

Richard Foreman asked for an opportunity to contribute to the discussion and was granted the floor. He reminded everyone of the growing attendance at the annual observance of Veteran's Day in November and asked if the Commissioners might also include consideration of an epitaph or small memorial garden near the flag to further beautify the station and enhance the ceremonial area. The Commissioners agreed that the idea was worthy of further consideration.

I. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Commissioner Tomsen moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Riffle seconded the motion. **Motion passed 3 – 0.**

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be July 13th, 2016.



Commissioner William Meursing

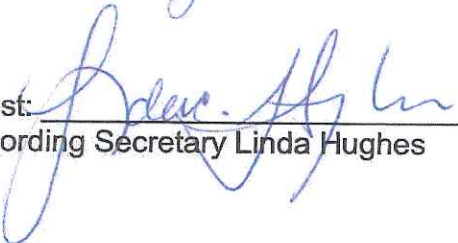


Commissioner Stanley Riffle



Commissioner Shannon Tomsen

Dated July 13, 2016.

Attest: 

Recording Secretary Linda Hughes

FINANCIAL REPORT
June 08, 2016

**WHATCOM COUNTY
FIRE DISTRICT 5**

June warrants total \$15,811.99. The total for payroll is \$16,140.50; including Chief Carleton's salary \$4,212.50 and Assistant Chief Shield's pay of \$2,750.00. There was one event for the commissioners and secretary.

The total payout for volunteers (warrants included) is \$10,892.00.

Your May financial statements are in your meeting books.

We need a motion to approve the warrants for \$15,811.99 and payroll in the amount of \$16,140.50.

Respectfully,

Patty Markel
Finance Manager

2016 Budget Remaining – 5/31/16		June Warrants – Items over \$1,000 ~	
Legislative	88.06%	Delta Fire & EMS	\$2,447.13
Administrative	52.97%		
Suppression	59.69%	US Bancorp (credit card)	\$5,632.90
Suppression Training	15.40%	<i>Includes:</i>	
Maintenance	60.34%	Dodge Dealer – B58 Repair	\$2,610.03
Vol. FF EMS	73.43%		
EMS Training	68.83%		
Total Budget Remaining:	61.85%		

Whatcom County Fire District 5

Chief Officer Report

June 2016

For May 2016

Point Of Information

1. Home owners should call their insurance company due to ISO change

Apparatus

E58	No report
E5802	No report
B58	No report
U5802	No report
A58	No report
A5802	No report
C58	No report

Member Roster

45 Members (27 Canadian / 9 Point Roberts / 9 County)

- 6 Paramedics
- 16 EMTs (5 AEMT)
- 4 Ambassadors
- 36 Firefighters

Volunteer Hours 2240

Volunteer Payroll 11764

Combined Chief Hours (Chief 142.0 /// Asst. Chief 133.5) Total Chief Hours = 275.5

Incidents

Total Calls (16)

EMS Calls (12)

Transports: Saint Joseph Hospital (2)
 Airlift Northwest (0)
 No Transport (10)
 Home Visit (0)

Bellingham FD Medic (0)
North Whatcom Fire Rescue (0)
Ferndale FD Medic (0)

Public Service (0)

Agency Assist (0) Law Enforcement

Fire Classification (3) -- (3*) Outdoor Burns - permit/illegal* (0) Smoke invest. (0) False Alarms
(0) Vehicle fire (0) Power Lines Down (0) Structure

Other (1) – Biological Hazard