

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

November 9th, 2016

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Commissioner Meursing.

In Attendance: Commissioner William Meursing
Commissioner Stanley Riffle
Commissioner Shannon Tomsen
Chief Christopher Carleton
Financial Manager Patty Markel
Recording Secretary Linda Hughes

Guests: Virginia Lester
Ed Lester
Richard Foreman
Vic Riley
Meg Olson
Assistant Chief John Shields

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Virginia Lester thanks the Fire District for sharing the container space with CERT and PREP. It's very generous and we are so grateful for the convenient and functional space.

Chief Carleton asked if they were using the space, and Virginia replied that they were indeed making good use of the space, and added she anticipated that the Food Bank would be utilizing the space as well.

Chief Carleton shared his view on the importance of the relationships between community organizations and his pleasure to share the District space with CERT, PREP and the Food Bank.

Richard Foreman reminded everyone of the Veterans' Day memorial celebration to be held at the Fire Station on November 11th, at 10:30 am. There was some further discussion about getting the invitation published to the community.

C. BOARD ACTION

C. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 12th, 2016

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 12th, 2016 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3-0.**

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Minutes of the Special Meeting, Budget Work Session, on November 4th, 2016 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3-0.**

D. FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

D.1 Financial Report

Financial Manager Markel provided her financial report as submitted.

Commissioner Riffle asked for clarification of the charges over \$1,000.00 on the Credit Card bill.

Chief Carleton reiterated the larger amounts already itemized on the Financial Report, including the charge for new tires on vehicle known as Chief 58 and the charge to DeWaard and Bode for kitchen appliances. There were no other charges over \$1,000.00 but he reviewed a list of additional unusual expenses that resulted in a \$9,000.00 credit card statement total. He asked the Commissioners if they would like a copy of the credit card statement each month, and they unanimously agreed that they did not require copies of the statement, that discussion of anomalous expenditures during the regular meetings was acceptable.

Commissioner Meursing asked about the higher payroll this month, and Assistance Chief Shields identified the Captain that had provided his ITIN (Individual Tax Identification Number) which entitled him to pay back of stipends to January 2016.

D.2 Approval of Fire District Vouchers

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Vouchers in the amount of \$39,319.76 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 \$17,140.50 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 - 0**

D.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel indicated that 25.27% of the budget is remaining with two months of expenses left to go.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Carleton reported receiving a number of emails with thanks for the Hallowe'en event. He also reported that if any correspondence of importance to the Commissioners were received within any month, that he would share it with them directly.

F. CHIEF'S REPORT

The Chief continues to remind homeowners to contact their insurance companies to seek potential savings related to the District's improved ISO rating.

The Chief also reiterated his concern for proper addressing of properties in Point Roberts and indicated that he is going to look into grants for roadside address options.

Chief Carleton indicated that the AFG Grant cycle will be closing soon and he will be prioritizing District needs that grants are available for, and proceeding with applications.

Chief Carleton also described a series of problems that both vehicle 58 and engine 5802 have been experiencing, including a primer switch and foam tank leak in 58, and the tank leak in 5802 that was discovered during its recent annual maintenance. Patching that leak is not recommended and the Chief has obtained estimates for the cost of the replacement of that tank, to be in the range of \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00.

He also mentioned that a fuel tank leak has been discovered in 858, but noted that details of that issue will be included in next month's report.

Commissioner Tomsen asked about the replacement tank for engine 5802, recalling Chief's comments from the budget work session wherein he mentioned a poly tank. Chief Carleton confirmed that is the type of replacement tank he is looking into.

Commissioner Tomsen asked about member roster certifications. Chief Carleton confirmed that two members had recently passed their Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 classifications, member Steinberger had completed her Advanced EMT and member Lutz is now certified EMT.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G.1 2017 Operational Budget

Chief Carleton projected onto the overhead screen a chart of levy options and the financial results from each option. This chart was the same as the one presented during the November 4th Budget Work Session, except the \$3,000.00 assumption of tax income from new construction in Point Roberts had been removed from the chart. Also, some 2017 capital expenditure projections were included for consideration. These projections included repairs to 58 and 5802, purchase of a Wildland ATV vehicle, and interior painting of the fire hall.

Commissioner Meursing reviewed the levy options presented in the chart.

Commissioner Tomsen wanted to clarify that the assumed \$3,000.00 tax income had been removed from the chart because (1) it is not guaranteed income, and (2) no other taxing districts in Point Roberts take that assumption into account when preparing annual budgets.

Commissioner Tomsen asked Chief Carleton if he had looked into the possibility of insurance coverage for the leak in 5802's tank. Chief Carleton replied that he had, and it was not going to be covered by insurance due to the likelihood that the leak was not incident related, but rather simply a matter of the age of the vehicle.

Commissioner Tomsen asked if the proposed purchase of a Wildland ATV was intended to be a new vehicle or used. Chief Carleton replied that he was considering a new vehicle.

Commissioner Tomsen asked about consideration for replacement of a section of roof that Commissioner Riffle had earlier indicated concern for. Chief Carleton described a recent discovery of water pouring down the interior wall of the station after a particularly strong rainstorm. He asked the insurance adjuster to assess the damage, who came and looked at the situation and determined that the damage would not be covered by insurance because it appeared to be an installation issue.

Commissioner Riffle indicated that he felt that the roof replacement of the last remaining section that was not replaced earlier should be on our radar for this year. Chief Carleton indicated that he would put it in his calendar for the 2nd quarter to seek bids for replacement of that section of roof with 30-year lifespan materials rather than 15-year lifespan.

Commissioner Tomsen asked what the 1% levy option, which is actually .84574% equating to approximately \$4,600 in tax income, would result in per taxpayer.

There was some discussion about the total assessed value of Point Roberts and that District values are currently declining.

Financial Manager Markel added that the amount is approximately \$16.03 at 2% based on \$350,000.00 home valuation. She added that the difference between 2015 and 2016 is approximately \$1.34 per month.

Commissioner Tomsen described a conversation she had with Janice Judge, of Keith Willnauer's office, who confirmed that district values have indeed declined, saying that Point Roberts' value was \$586,018 million in 2016 and for 2017 is assessed at \$576,758 million. Commissioner Tomsen recalled Meg Olson's comment during the budget work session that she understood other districts usually take the 1% levy increase each year. Commissioner Tomsen continued by saying she called Keith Willnauer and can confirm that every fire district, except District 7, took the 1% levy increase last year.

Commissioner Riffle discussed the 2010 levy proposition to the Community which included a 1% annual increase, noting that it passed with an impressive majority vote of support. He continued that he does not believe in banking the levy and feels we should take the currently available 2.52227% and stay current thereafter.

Commissioner Tomsen followed up saying she had done a fair bit of research around the 2010 levy proposition and confirmed that it passed with 60% support. She also said she is not in favor of banking allowable levy amounts, and is very concerned about potentially

being in a position of having to use reserve funds for expenses. After reading six years of news articles, she feels that it is very possible to run out of funds, especially when something unexpected comes up, as has happened locally with the Water District and the Park District. She continues that she is not comfortable with the putting the District in a position where it doesn't have funds available that were clearly approved by voters to keep ahead of expenses. She would vote to take the entirety of the levy available at this time and to stay current going forward.

Commissioner Meursing agreed with Commissioners Riffle and Tomsen and said he supports taking the 2.52227% and also to stay current with the allowable levy increase of 1% each year.

MOTION: Commissioner Meursing moved to adopt Resolution 2016-03, stipulating the amount of the 2017 levy to be 2.52227%. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

MOTION: Commissioner Meursing moved to adopt Resolution 2016-04, approving the 2017 operational budget, including the levy amount, and to which a copy of the full budget is attached. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

H. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Tomsen has prepared a presentation which began with an overhead projection of a chart, showing the various taxing districts in Point Roberts, the Water District and the subject of the proposed new Library as top line topics. The Chart included monthly publication dates of the All Point Bulletin, and the details in the chart outlined the various articles published by the APB referencing those Districts and other topics. This presentation will demonstrate the coverage of WCFD5 events as compared to other community news.

Commissioner Tomsen reminded everyone of the timeline when Chief Carleton joined the District in Feb/March of 2010, and by October was acting Chief when the former chief departed for training.

At this point Meg Olson determined that she had to leave the meeting and she excused herself, saying that she felt Commissioner Tomsen's presentation was an admonishment of herself and the All Point Bulletin. She left the building.

There was some discussion as to whether the presentation should continue or be tabled for the following month so that Meg Olson, or some other representative of the APB, could be in attendance for it. It was agreed by the Commissioners that the presentation should continue and then perhaps be reviewed at the December meeting.

Commissioner Riffle asked why he had not been provided with an advance copy of the presentation, and Commissioner Tomsen replied that she did not want there to be any illusion of impropriety and so she had not shared it with her fellow commissioners prior to this meeting.

The presentation continued with Commissioner Tomsen pointing out the timelines where the APB did cover stories and events of WCFD5, but pointed out that the tone of those articles was often inflammatory and very often contained errors and omissions.

She further presented that this District is in the best shape it has ever been in, and feels that the consequences of the biased reporting in the APB is damaging to the District's reputation, further proliferating poor assumptions about the District and creating divisiveness in the community. She continued that it is time that the APB becomes a professional news reporting organization and suggested that it should treat individuals and community organizations fairly and accurately.

There was some discussion about how to get this information out into the community without creating further divisiveness.

Commissioner Tomsen agreed that she does not want to "get into it" with the APB but that she is simply interested in objective reporting of the facts.

Commissioner Meursing said that is our responsibility as Fire District Commissioners to look after the taxpayers' interests, saying that each of us is elected to be accountable to the community we serve. He then thanked Commissioner Tomsen for her efforts.

Chief Carleton indicated that he feels his attendance at the Taxpayers' meetings is one method of advancing transparency of the District. He has been planning to prepare a year-end report for the Commissioners this year and if the Commissioners feel it is worthy, he will also prepare and submit a Year-In-Review article to the APB. Commissioner Tomsen said she felt that would be a good idea.

I. ADJOURNMENT

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

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be December 14th, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.



Commissioner William Meursing




Commissioner Stanley Riffle



Commissioner Shannon Tomsen

Dated December 14, 2016

Attest: 

Recording Secretary Linda Hughes

FINANCIAL REPORT

November 09, 2016

WHATCOM COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 5

November warrants total \$39,319.76. The total for payroll is \$17,140.50; including Chief Carleton's salary \$4,212.50 and Assistant Chief Shield's pay of \$2,750.00. There were two events for the commissioners and secretary.

The total payout for volunteers (warrants included) is \$15,042.00.

Your October financial statements are in your meeting books.

We need a motion to approve the warrants and payroll for November as presented.

Respectfully,

Patty Markel
Finance Manager

2016 Budget Remaining – 10/31/16		September Warrants – Items over \$1,000 ~	
Legislative	29.97%	Shell (Fuel)	\$ 1,138.03
Administrative	15.87%	Municipal Emergency Svcs.	\$ 1,144.68
Suppression	30.25%	(SCBA Bottle)	
Suppression Training	37.93%	Emergency Svc. Institute	\$ 1,500.00
Maintenance	0.22%	(Safety Officer Training Course)	
Vol. FF EMS	31.60%	LN Curtis & Sons (Bunker Gear)	\$15,996.69
EMS Training	28.05%	US Bancorp (Credit Card)	\$ 9,124.69
		<i>Includes:</i> Discount Tire	\$ 1,057.52
Total Budget Remaining:	25.27%	Dewaard & Bode (Appliances)	\$ 3,256.60

Whatcom County Fire District 5

Chief Officer Report

November 2016

For October 2016

Point Of Information

1. Home owners should call their insurance company due to ISO change
2. Home Addressing
3. Haunted House October Success
4. AFG Grant Cycle Has Opened (Truck, LP15, Training Tower, Lucas)

Apparatus

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

Member Roster

- 47 Members (27 Canadian / 11 Point Roberts / 9 County)
- 6 Paramedics
 - 15 EMTs (7 AEMT)
 - 3 Ambassadors
 - 37 Firefighters

Volunteer Hours 2744

Volunteer Payroll 15418

Combined Chief Hours (Chief 153 /// Asst. Chief 154.5) Total Chief Hours = 307.5

Incidents

Total Calls (16)

EMS Calls (10)

Transports: Saint Joseph Hospital (3)
 Airlift Northwest (0)
 No Transport (5)
 Home Visit (0)

Bellingham FD Medic (0)
North Whatcom Fire Rescue (0)
Ferndale FD Medic (2)

Public Service (0)

Agency Assist (1) Law Enforcement

Fire Classification (5) -- (1/0*) Outdoor Burns - permit/illegal* (0) Smoke invest. (2) False Alarms
(0) Vehicle Fire (1) Power Lines Down (1) Structure (0) Hazmat