

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

May 11th, 2016

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 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: Meg Olsen
 Ed Lester
 Virginia Lester
 Richard Foreman
 Patrick Harper
 Victor Riley
 Ken Calder
 Allison Szabo
 Annette Loewen
 Paige Szabo
 Assistant Chief John Shields

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ken Calder asked if David Gellatly has submitted an invoice for the demolition work done at the fire of April 6th site. Chief Carleton answered that WCFD#5 did not hire Mr. Gellatly and therefore does not expect any invoice to be submitted to this department for that work.

C. BOARD ACTION

C.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 13th, 2016

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Minutes of the April 13th, 2016 regular meeting as read. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Meursing. **Motion passed 2-0.**

C.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 27th, 2016

MOTION: Commissioner Tomsen moved to accept the Minutes of the April 27th, 2016 special 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

Commissioner Riffle asked for some clarification on the larger expenses incurred this month. Financial Manager Markel named the payees and Chief Carleton explained the expenses being to Alert All, for marketing materials, specifically children's safety kits which include replica helmets, coloring books and other items. He also clarified the charge to L N Curtis, which is a supplier of firefighting gear, such as helmets and safety clothing. The other large expenditure is with regard to firefighter training.

MOTION: Commissioner Riffle moved to accept the Vouchers for April, 2016 in the amount of \$21,019.49 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 \$15,498.50 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tomsen. **Motion passed 3 - 0**

D.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel indicated that 68.81% of the budget is remaining and tax receipts collected in April amounted to \$193,186.47 for the first half of 2016.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Carleton reported receiving 2 letters from Kenneth Calder, 1 email from Richard Foreman, 4 from Drew Rickard of the Point Roberts Yacht Club, 1 from Pat Grubb and 1 from John Hammell.

Commissioner Tomsen asked for the opportunity to address matters raised in a conversation with Kenneth Calder when he stopped by her residence to deliver one of his letters, and with the subsequent correspondence received from Kenneth Calder, as she had reviewed the correspondence very carefully and had made extensive notes.

Commissioner Tomsen reviewed each item in Mr. Calder's letter and made specific comments regarding the allegations contained in those letters. Mr. Calder's main concerns are related to the hiring of David Gellatly for the demolition work at the fire site, and with the actions of Assistant Chief Shields in recommending Mr. Gellatly for the job. Mr. Calder's letter outlines a list of accusations of wrongdoings and lack of respect. With respect to the allegation of disrespect, Commissioner Tomsen wanted to assure Mr. Calder and the public, that this department maintains a high level of respect for everyone, including its members, staff, the community and the audience members that attend the meetings. Mr. Calder was reminded that his recent attendance at the fire station to deliver something left the member on duty feeling intimidated, especially considering his use of profanity in the office. Commissioner Tomsen felt his demeanor toward the member on duty demonstrated a significant lack of respect. Mr. Calder apologized.

Moving forward, Commissioner Tomsen continued her remarks in response to Mr. Calder's letters by, again, expressing her deepest sympathies for the losses incurred in the fire of April 6th. She expressed an understanding that at least 90% of the damage and losses were directly due to the intensity of the heat of the fire. She acknowledged Mr. Calder's contention that at least a small portion of the damages and losses incurred may have been due to the inexperience of the operator hired by the Fire Marshall to continue the demolition of the building where the Fire Marshall had deemed it unsafe to leave unattended.

Mr. Calder continues to contend that either of the two known, licensed and bonded contractors in Point Roberts would not have created as much damage as Mr. Gellatly, claiming that he is not licensed, insured or bonded and does not possess the necessary experience to have done the job correctly. There was some discussion of a historical unhealthy personal relationship between Mr. Calder and Mr. Gellatly.

Commissioner Tomsen continued her remarks by outlining the importance of maintaining a proper chain of command within the District. Each level within the chain of command may not encroach on the authority of another. The Commissioners are responsible for oversight of the financial aspects of the department, making sure the taxpayers' money is being spent responsibly and appropriately.

Commissioner Tomsen continued, saying that the District has only two employees, the Chief and the Recording Secretary, and only have authority over the Recording Secretary. The Chief is hired based on experience and knowledge and is the executive of the fire district. The Commissioners are able to guide the Chief but may not encroach upon authorities delegated to him in his contract, including matters of member personnel. Commissioner Tomsen also clarified that absolutely no personnel issues may be discussed in public, not in

this district, and not in corporations. This is a privacy issue. Mr. Calder agreed that he would follow up his personnel concerns with Chief Carleton.

The last element of the chain of command is the Fire Marshall. Once a fire is extinguished, command of the scene is then turned over to the Fire Marshall and law enforcement. The Fire Marshall hired Mr. Gellatly. Mr. Calder acknowledged that he would follow up his concerns over the hiring of Mr. Gellatly with the Fire Marshall and potentially other law enforcement agencies.

Discussion ensued about avoiding this type of conflict in the future, perhaps by having a list of licensed, bonded contractors available to recommend to the Fire Marshall and Chief Carleton confirmed that this is an administrative issue and he would set his mind to determining what type of policy might be implemented, although felt there could be some risk of negative repercussions and potential liability from making such recommendations. Chief Carleton remarked that there has been extensive discussion on this issue since the fire and this has been a learning experience for the District.

F. CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Carleton provided an overview of the Chief Officer Report as attached.

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 described the status of the three outstanding grant applications for funds to support a variety of district expenditures, which have now been scored and have proceeded to panel. This is no guarantee of grant funding, but it is encouraging to have the applications moved to panel.

Chief Carleton discussed the loss of 10 of our members to career firefighting organizations.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Riffle indicated that the references he received on behalf of Cross Border Property Management and Maintenance were very favorable and asked if Mr. van der Velden had been notified. Chief Carleton confirmed that they were moving forward with a contract for the job of painting the fire station.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Riffle asked what the new container outside the building was for. Chief Carleton responded that the container had been donated and will be used by the District for storage, and space in the container will be shared with PREP and with the Food Bank, as both of their organizations recently lost much needed storage space. The Chief also indicated that he intended to have it painted for aesthetic purposes.

Commissioner Meursing noted that he had heard from various members of the public that they would support a blog, where the public could learn of fire district activities and engage the district and/or the commissioners with questions. He asked the Commissioners to consider this idea and recommended a re-visit of it at a future meeting.

I. ADJOURNMENT

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

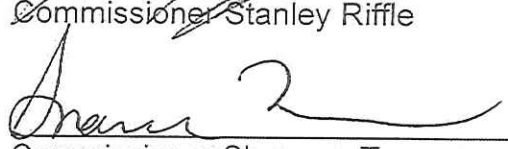
The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be June 8th, 2016.



Commissioner William Meursing



Commissioner Stanley Riffle



Commissioner Shannon Tomsen

Dated 6/8/16

Attest: 

Recording Secretary Linda Hughes

FINANCIAL REPORT
May 11, 2016

WHATCOM COUNTY
FIRE DISTRICT 5

Warrants total \$21,019.49; Items to mention (over \$1,000): US Bancorp (credit card) \$10,780.68, Alert All \$1,152.27 (Public relations supplies), EMT & Fire Training \$7,077.40 (FF training x 2 personnel) and LN Curtis & Sons \$1,229.31. Volunteer payroll included in Warrants total \$3,753.00.

May payroll totals \$15,498.50; Chief Carleton's salary \$4,212.50, Asst Chief Shield's pay \$2,750.00; the volunteer portion totaled \$6,746.00. There were two events for the commissioners and secretary.

The total payout for volunteers (warrants included) is \$10,499.00.

Your April financial statements are in your meeting book.

We need a motion to approve the warrants for \$21,019.49 and payroll in the amount of \$15,498.50.

Respectfully,

Patty Markel
Finance Manager

2016 Budget Remaining – 4/30/16	
Legislative	90.12%
Administrative	60.28%
Suppression	69.61%
Suppression Training	46.44%
Maintenance	66.92%
Vol. FF EMS	73.44%
EMS Training	76.71%
Total Budget Remaining:	68.81%

Whatcom County Fire District 5

Chief Officer Report

May 2016

For April 2016

Point Of Information

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

Apparatus

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

Member Roster

41 Members (24 Canadian / 9 Point Roberts / 8 County)

- 6 Paramedics
- 17 EMTs (6 AEMT)
- 4 Ambassadors
- 34 Firefighters

Volunteer Hours 2768

Volunteer Payroll 12349

Combined Chief Hours (Chief 168.0 /// Asst. Chief 135.0) Total Chief Hours = 303

Incidents

Total Calls (19)

EMS Calls (11)

<u>Transports:</u>	Saint Joseph Hospital (2)	Bellingham FD Medic (0)
	Airlift Northwest (2)	North Whatcom Fire Rescue (0)
	No Transport (6)	Ferndale FD Medic (1)
	Home Visit (0)	

Public Service (1)

Agency Assist (0) Law Enforcement

Fire Classification (7) -- (1/1*) Outdoor Burns - permit/illegal* (1) Smoke invest. (1) False Alarms
(0) Vehicle fire (0) Power Lines Down (3) Structure

Other (0) – Chimney Fire