

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

August 11th, 2021

MINUTES

In Attendance via Zoom platform:

Commissioner Virginia Lester
Commissioner Pat Harper
Commissioner Raye Newmen
Chief Christopher Carleton
Financial Manager Patty Markel

Also attending on Zoom:

District Secretary Linda Hughes

Guests:

several guests via online Zoom platform

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:59 p.m. by Commissioner Lester.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public at this time.

C. BOARD ACTION

C.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 14th, 2021

MOTION: Commissioner Newmen moved to approve the Minutes of the July 14th meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harper. **Motion passed 3-0**

C.2. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 21st, 2021

MOTION: Commissioner Newmen moved to approve the Minutes of the July 21st special meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harper. **Motion passed 3–0**

D. **FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

D.1 Financial Report

Financial Manager Markel presented the financial report as submitted.

D.2 Approval of Fire District Vouchers

MOTION: Commissioner Newmen moved to approve the Vouchers in the amount of \$23,817.44 for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harper. **Motion passed 3–0**

D.3 Approval of Fire District Payroll

MOTION: Commissioner Newmen moved that payroll in the amount of \$17,470.70 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harper. **Motion passed 3–0**

D.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel reported that 49.90% of the budget remained at the end of July compared with the July 2020 amount remaining of 52.42%.

E. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Chief Carleton reported that there was an excessive amount of correspondence this month, almost entirely related to the impending Canadian border re-opening and Covid testing.

F. **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Carleton's Chief Officer Report was presented and submitted.

Chief reported that the CBSA had opened the Canadian border on a special exception basis for habitual residents of Point Roberts, to gain access to necessary goods and services in Tsawwassen, BC. He reported that a number of changes have been made, and are continuing to be made to this special exception opening.

Chief reported that the District is now facilitating Covid testing two days per week, to help with the increased traffic of residents and returning visitors wanting to travel into Canada.

Chief reported that the State will soon be taking over all of our Covid testing, but for the time being we are still receiving supplies and submitting our Covid tests to NW Pathology. He also reported that some logistical changes will have to be made due to this change and the upcoming change in

seasons. Currently the testing is done outdoors on a drive-thru basis, but with the new systems the volunteers will need hands-on access to computers to facilitate the tests, and with cooler weather approaching we will have to devise a new method of safely testing indoors.

Chief Carleton reminded everyone that the District is once again hosting an Open House this year, on August 21st, at the Fire Hall, after having to skip it last year due to 2020 Covid restrictions on public gatherings. There will be lots of fun and informative activities, and he invites everyone to attend.

Chief reported on two apparatus that have gone in for repairs for an approximate cost of \$30,000, and noted that the issues that caused the failures have been corrected and should never happen again.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

H. NEW BUSINESS

Chief Carleton thanks the entire department for all of their efforts in facilitating Covid testing and vaccination clinics over the past year and a half, and especially during the recent surge in testing. He reported that 107 Covid tests were administered on Wednesday of this week, and 149 tests just last Sunday.

Chief reported that there have recently been 10 positive cases of Covid-19 in our community, which he defines as an uptick, especially considering the increase of outside visitors to Point Roberts. He reported that all of these cases are properly isolating and some are taking advantage of the District's offer to do grocery shopping on behalf of isolating patients to ensure containment.

In response to a question, Chief reported that 9 of those cases were indeed breakthrough cases, and that 1 person had not been vaccinated. He noted that all cases resulted in mild symptoms, and said that all three vaccinations were involved, J&J, Pfizer and Moderna.

When asked if the Chief knew whether the breakthrough cases might be of the Delta or some other newly emerging variant, he responded that that type of testing takes weeks to complete, and we won't know the answer for some time.

Commissioner Lester reported that the one patient who had not been vaccinated had disclosed to her that the reason they had not been vaccinated was that they had previously contracted the Covid virus and believed that meant they did not need to be vaccinated.

Chief also reported that he has received a lot of calls regarding the costs of the Covid tests. He is hoping the State will be willing to absorb some of the costs for those who cannot afford it.

Commissioner Newmen asked about the course that Chief Carleton is currently taking while he is away at Fire College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Chief said that he is taking his Fire Instructor III course, which is the highest level of instruction in this classification. The Fire College is renowned for its high level of instruction and Chief Carleton

took his Fire Officer courses I through IV here previously. He feels this course will certainly help him become a better instructor, as he is also learning how to develop curriculums for instruction. He also feels that by continuing his education in the field, he is a stronger role model to members, hoping they might be inspired to seek higher education after seeing their chief continue to dedicate himself to the higher knowledge.

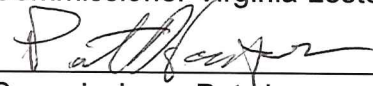
I. ADJOURNMENT

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

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be Sept. 8th, 2021, at 4:00 pm.



Commissioner Virginia Lester



Commissioner Pat Harper



Commissioner Raye Newmen

Dated September 8, 2021

Attest: 
Recording Secretary Linda Hughes