

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
January 10th, 2024

MINUTES

In Attendance: Commissioner Virginia Lester
Commissioner Norm Katz
Commissioner Pat Harper
Chief Christopher Carleton
Financial Manager Markel
Assistant Chief Shields
District Secretary Linda Hughes

Guests: All Point Bulletin, P. Grubb

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 by Commissioner Lester.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

C. BOARD ACTION

C.1 Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Katz moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 13th, 2023 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 the Fire District Vouchers

MOTION: Commissioner Harper moved to approve the Vouchers in the amount of \$32,238.48 for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Katz. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

D.3 Approval of Fire District Payroll

MOTION: Commissioner Harper moved that payroll in the amount of \$20,927.46 be approved for payment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Katz. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

D.4 Budget Update

Financial Manager Markel's financial report indicates that 0.76% of the budget remained at the end of December, compared with the December 2022 amount remaining of 0.89%.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

None to report at this time.

F. CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Carleton submitted and reviewed his report for the month of December.

Chief reported his intention to begin the bid process for a new vehicle needed for the new Welcome Home program. He reported that he had been shopping for a hybrid and AWD mini-van, a vehicle suitable to carrying passengers home from the hospital or other medical procedures facility. He is also considering which interior choice would be best, keeping in mind potential spills, etc. Chief noted that he had consulted with our insurance agent and learned that the current policy is sufficient, but there would be increased liability. Any driver of the welcome home vehicle will need to complete a

driver training course, have a clean driving record and hold a valid driver's license. Chief feels that this bid process should be completed by next month, and he is hoping to commence the program, with the new vehicle in place, by the beginning of the second quarter.

Chief reported that the district had 471 calls in 2023, noting that there had been 484 calls in 2022.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Chief reported that he will be commencing the bid process for a two or three bay pole-style building in anticipation of future vehicle storage needs. The building will not have any office space, and no water – just heat and electricity. He is looking at construction costs and also into a suitable pre-fab building. A new ambulance will be needed by the district, which will either be housed in the current fire station building or will have to be stored in the new structure as most ambulances are built longer in length than the current one.

District counsel Brian Snure will assist with the preparation of this bid, and the one discussed earlier for the new vehicle.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Lester called for an Executive Session at 4:25 pm for the purpose of discussing Chief Carleton's salary, with the expectation that the session will require one hour.

The meeting was re-called to order at 5:23 pm.

MOTION: Commissioner Katz moved to increase Chief Carleton's annual vacation time to 240 hours from 180 hours, not accruable, and to increase Chief Carleton's accruable sick leave to 12 hours per month from 8 hours per month, for a total of 144 hours annually, starting with banked hours of 1,160. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Harper. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

MOTION: Commissioner Harper moved to increase Chief Carleton's annual salary to \$79,000 effective January 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Katz. **Motion passed 3 – 0**

Financial Manager Markel asked if the Commissioners wanted the budget revised or whether it should be left as it is, with the increased salary reflected as a line-item overage at the end of the year. The Commissioners decided to leave the budget as is.

Pat Grubb asked what the new salary of \$79,000 was increased from, as of January 1, 2023. Chief replied that the salary as of January 1, 2023 was \$68,495.

Pat Grubb asked for clarification of the increased vacation and sick leave times. Chief replied that he has had 180 hours of annual vacation time since his 2017 contract was entered into. Vacation time does not accrue or roll over if unused at the end of the year. Chief also noted that he previously had a sick leave bank of 1,000 hours which has now been increased to 1,160 hours and the accrual of 8 hours per month has been increased to 12 hours per month. Sick leave does roll over from year to year but will only be paid out as stipulated in his contract, when taken as sick leave.


ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Commissioner Lester moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 pm. Commissioner Katz seconded the motion. **Motion passed 3 – 0.**

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be February 14th, 2024, at 4:00 pm.



Commissioner Virginia Lester




Commissioner Norm Katz



Commissioner Pat Harper

Dated February 14, 2024

Attest: 

Recording Secretary Linda Hughes