

**SPOKANE VALLEY
FIRE
DEPARTMENT**

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REGULAR COMMISSIONERS MEETING

February 1, 2010

4:00 P.M.

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Bill Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Monte Nesbitt led the Board and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

All of the Fire Commissioners were present. Chief Mike Thompson, Deputy Chief Larry Rider, Deputy Chief Andy Hail, Human Resources Director Valerie Biladeau, and Administrative Director Debbie Cox represented Administration.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Chairman Bill Anderson stated the consent agenda included:

1. Approval of Minutes: January 19, 2010
2. Approval of Vouchers #229286-229363 in the total amount of \$156,219.02

Commissioner Dawson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Nesbitt seconded. Motion carried.

IN THE NEWS:

1. Valley Fire Honors Trio

Chief Thompson reviewed the article regarding the recognition of the previous Spokane City Council members at the last Fire Commissioner's Meeting. Chairman Anderson thanked Nina Culver, the reporter who wrote the story.

2. Arson in Apartment Among Fire Department Calls

Chief Thompson said crews responded to a fire in a vacant apartment at the Whimsical Pig Apartments; the fire was determined to be arson.

3. Valley Firefighters Take Training to Ice

Chief Thompson noted that there had been a firefighter death during an ice training accident in Toronto earlier in the week. He said firefighters must always think of safety first, even in a training exercise. Chief Thompson and the Commissioners thanked Nina Culver, Spokesman-Review Reporter, who was the author of this article.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Thank-You Letter from JoAnne Tracy

Chief Thompson said the Department received a very nice letter from JoAnne Tracy. Mrs. Tracy thanked the paramedics that came to her aid on three different occasions to provide lifesaving interventions.

ADMINISTRATION REMARKS:

1. Budget

Chief Thompson noted that in January 2010 the Department was trending above where it should be. The Department should be at 8.33% and it is at 10.3% mainly due to the sick leave payout included on the January 29th payroll. The payout occurs only once a year and the amount was \$28,000 less than budgeted. A detailed report prepared by Financial Advisor Ron Kirkwood was provided to the Commissioners.

Deputy Chief Rider provided new information on the proposed Administration Building. He addressed providing security to the exterior of the building. Ideally, trucks and other vehicles should not be able to be in close proximity to the building. Chief Thompson noted that once built, the building could be retrofitted with bollards, but that it seems better to address the issues now instead of later. Deputy Chief Rider said that one possibility is raising the building up; this would cost approximately \$50,000-\$60,000.

Chief Thompson pointed out that the Administration Building will be considered an essential services building and potentially could be used as an Emergency Coordination Center. As a result, the Department must maintain security and be aware of terrorism concerns. Chief Rider said the building will also have backup communications and power and could continue to function in an emergency situation. Commissioner Nesbitt asked if there will be a fence around the facility with a gate. Deputy Chief Rider said it will be fenced although a final decision has not been made regarding a gate. Commissioner Nesbitt suggested contacting a security agency to avoid omitting any

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potential security issues. Chief Thompson said the City Fire Department Training Facility (the County's Emergency Coordination Center) will be retrofitted to address security concerns. The estimated cost is \$120,000.

2. Run Stats – January 2010

Chief Thompson said calls for service increased 1% in January 2010 compared to January 2009. In 2009, there were 902 calls for the month and in 2010 there were about 911 calls. Most of the increase can be attributed to EMS calls. There was an increase in Alpha and Bravo calls as well as Paramedic calls.

3. Fire Investigation Statistics – 2009

Chief Thompson said that Deputy Fire Marshal Clifton Mehaffey compiled the annual data for 2009. He directed the Commissioners to Appendix A which gives a synopsis of the following: total fires, total fires investigated, number of arsons, number of accidentals, number of undetermined, estimated dollar loss for 2009, estimated dollar loss related to arson, number of suspects arrested, cases cleared and the arson rate. Chief Thompson said there is a high clearance rate, especially for arsons. The Commissioners expressed their thanks to Deputy Fire Marshal Mehaffey for the informative report.

4. January 22, 2010 – Legislative Report

Chief Thompson stated that he was made aware of House Bill 2351 last Friday. The bill would increase the state excise tax to fund modernization of the state 911 system. The proposal is to increase the 911 state excise tax from 20 cents to 25 cents and the county excise tax from 50 cents to 70 cents. Under the current funding source, there would be a deficit beginning in 2012 or 2013. This legislation would collect tax from voiceover internet users. Under current state law, tax is collected from hardwire phones and wireless phones, but not from voiceover internet. There has been a significant increase in usage of voiceover internet, and House Bill 2351 would require providers of this service to pay the 911 excise tax. Chief Thompson asked if the Commissioners would provide a letter signed by the Chairman and himself in support of this legislation. Commissioner Dawson moved to authorize the Chief and the Board Chair to sign a letter of support for Washington House Bill 2351. Commissioner Nesbitt seconded. The motion carried.

5. Leadership Academy

Chief Thompson said the Department is in the process of organizing its first Leadership Academy which is scheduled to start the first Wednesday in March. The five-hour class will be held monthly over a period of nine months. Chief Thompson provided the Commissioners a course outline. There will be fourteen or fifteen people in the first academy; feedback from the participants will help to plan next year's classes. The Leadership Academy will prepare people for succession planning and for promotions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Second Reading – Fire Commissioner Board Chair Term

Chief Thompson said a recommendation was made during the first reading to add language to the draft document which was amended and forwarded for the second reading and approval today. Commissioner Dawson motioned to approve as amended, Commissioner Hanson seconded. Commissioners Anderson, Nesbitt, Hanson and Dawson voted "Aye" to amend by addition. Commissioner Schmidt voted "Nay." Motion carried four to one.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Commissioner Dawson thanked Chief Thompson and Administrative Assistant Michelle Rodgers for organizing the Employee Recognition Dinner on January 30, 2010. Chief Thompson said he would like to see more attendance next year. He will send out a survey to ask for suggestions and recommendations for next year's event in hopes of increasing attendance.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

There will be a special meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners on Monday, March 8, 2010, at 4:30 p.m. to open the Station 10 bids.

The next regular Board of Fire Commissioners meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 16, 2010, at 4:00 p.m. at Station 8. **(Note date change due to President's Day Holiday).**

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ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Bill Anderson
Chairman
Board of Fire Commissioners

BA/mdr