

PIERCE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #3
WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 01, 2022

Chair Dalton called the meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners to order at 5:32. A quorum was present with Commissioner Clancy excused. Also in attendance were D/C McCurdy, A/C Adams, A/C McGrady, A/C Hebeisen, A/C Fiacchi, and Director Wick

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Chair Dalton Motioned for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Rankin motioned. Commissioner Durr seconded. All approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION

- Introduce Serena Rotondo, New Emergency Management Coordinator – Chief Sharp briefed the Board on the position of Emergency Management Coordinator. Serena was our AmeriCorps Volunteer and completed her degree in Emergency Management. Josh resigned for another position. As of today Serena is our full time Emergency Management Coordinator. We are so excited to have Serena in this role. Commissioners and Staff congratulated Serena for her new position.
Chair Dalton congratulated Serena. Serena stated how excited she is to start this next chapter.
- Education presentation – William Zabelka, Dan Bronoske, Kirk Lackermayer, Ernst Hebeisen, Lance Nelson, Scott Adams, Randi Force, Mike Willy, Andy Millard – Chief Sharp brought forward all our education recipients. All of these employees obtained their Master's degree. WPFR invests in their employees. This group represents a few years of degrees and we would like to congratulate them properly. Chief Sharp commented on each of them and the degree and program they completed. Commented on courses they took and the quality of education they received. On behalf of everyone at WPFR we would like to congratulate you on a job well done

Chair Dalton adjourned the meeting at 5:40 for five minutes to take pictures and congratulate Serena Rotondo and all our education recipients.

Chair Dalton called the meeting back to order at 5:45.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board Minutes of October 18, 2022. Warrants #66964 through #67033 totaling \$170,412.20. Warrant #67034 totaling \$618,970.7. Warrants #67035 through #67068 totaling \$1,416,020.41. October payroll \$2,981,346.36.

Commissioner approved unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE - None

CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Gordon Karg, attorney representing the City of Dupont. City of Dupont is very disappointed the memo was brought to WPFR Board of Commissioners and did not involve senior leadership at the City of Dupont. Would have been nice to have the city leaders in the discussion of this memo. He would like the Board members to reach out to the City Manager to discuss this matter and get something together to reach a mutual agreement.
- Bryan Copeland, President of West Pierce Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 1488 introduced himself and stated his concerns regarding the mutual aid agreement between Dupont and WPFR. Before the meeting President Copeland provided the Board Clerk the memo he would be reading word for word for the Board Minutes.
This memo is provided below and verification was made per the Board Clerk and will be a part of the minutes kept on file.

Good evening gentlemen,

My name is Bryan Copeland. I am the President of West Pierce Fire Fighters, IAFF Local 1488. I represent the roughly 185 frontline firefighters, paramedics, captains, battalion chiefs and support staff that make up our union. I rise before you this evening to share the concerns of our membership regarding the current status of mutual aid between West Pierce Fire Rescue and the city of Dupont.

I have been a fire fighter with Lakewood Fire District 2 and now West Pierce for just shy of 15 years. In those 15 years I have seen the relationship with Dupont take on many forms. When I was first hired, it was Lakewood fire fighters and captains staffing an engine company to supplement the response capabilities of Dupont. When the citizens of Dupont voted against supporting adequate fire fighter staffing that model shifted to West Pierce staffing a command officer in Dupont to provide command and control capabilities. But again and again Dupont failed to secure funding via ballot measure or other source to staff its fire department to levels considered adequate by local industry standards leaving us where we are today. That is West Pierce Fire & Rescue supplementing and subsidizing fire and EMS response for the city of Dupont.

As fire fighters we take an extreme amount of pride in our profession. We are proud to be there for our citizens in their time need. And we are proud to risk our lives for people we do not know. When people call, we go. When Dupont calls, we go and assist our brothers and sisters of Local 3829.

As the President of our fire fighters union, it's my job to look out for the safety and well-being of my members; To make certain they go home to their families; To work collaboratively with management to reduce and prevent undue risk to our members and to ensure that the citizens of West Pierce have a response ready fire department at their disposal when their number is called.

Over the past several months Dupont has seen a spike in significant calls, which has drawn attention to the topic of mutual aid. I'm here to tell you, that this discussion is long overdue, this has been an issue for the entirety of my career. The reality is that response to these significant events requires West Pierce to strip vital resources from our fire district so we can attempt to meet the minimum response standards we set for ourselves.

As part of the West Pierce response to two recent significant events in Dupont I can attest that our fire fighters and command officers are being placed in positions of added risk and liability and I truly fear for the potential worst case scenarios our members may be exposed to.

My primary concern is simple...safety. Safety of the men and women I represent, safety of the citizens of West Pierce and also the safety of the members of Dupont Fire Fighters local 3829 who have had the cards stacked against them for too long.

The motto stenciled above you reads...respond efficiently, execute flawlessly, be nice. The members of local 1488 are extremely proud of those words and will continue to be nice. Unfortunately we are being forced into positions when responding to Dupont that make the other two virtually impossible. Something has to change.

Local 1488 stands ready to support our brothers and sisters of Local 3829. I look forward to continued collaboration with Chief Sharp and this board, to plan for the safety of our members and respectfully ask you, the board of commissioners to reaffirm that the safety and well-being of YOUR fire fighters and YOUR citizens serves as top priority.

Thank you

OLD BUSINESS

- City of Dupont Mutual Aid Agreement – Chief Sharp briefed the Board on the New Business that was brought forward at the previous Board meeting on October 18, 2022. Provisions are not being met with Dupont in the Mutual Aid Agreement. There is a significant lack of reciprocity and the need for commanded control from Dupont is not put in place. WPFR is sending command officers in and level of coverage necessary to meet the District's required standards. Attorney Joe Quinn is here to comment on the background of the Mutual Aid Agreement.
- Joe Quinn briefed the Board on his involvement of the Mutual Aid Agreement and how the agreement has grown and changed over the years. Should be mutual and reciprocal. Intended to be no cost except for the exchange and mutual aid to each department. If not, there is a section in the agreement 2A that states the circumstances when "mutual aid" is not reciprocated. These specifications needs to be addressed and come to an agreement of which are mutual to both parties. Reviewed the incidents in Pierce County where mutual aid agreements were not followed and letters were sent and problems were addressed. Spoke of these events. Command and control problems need to be addressed. Briefed the Board on examples of these mutual aid agreement that were adjusted over the years. Section 2A of the agreement addresses this problem and says that if mutual aid is not reciprocated then the Chief has the authority to dissolve this agreement.

Briefed the Board on the residual potential liability to WPFR. Briefed on a Seattle Fire case and how the potential of negligence is in this circumstance. Concerned about response times. Concerned about the command and control of the 55 calls over the last two plus years. Dupont is not capable of responding to WPFR calls and give the mutual aid back to WPFR. RCW 43.09.210. Article 8 section 7 of the State Constitution states there will be no gifts of public funds. Money raised should be used in taxing district. He expressed concern regarding audit compliance. Safety is the biggest concern. Reviewed workplace safety regulations. WAC codes require 2in/2out for offensive fire attack. Dupont does not have the staffing to meet these codes consistently. All employers have to make sure that their employees are safe. Problem needs a remedy and cutting off mutual aid is not the greatest answer and requires notice. Dupont needs time to budget and put a plan in place. No rash decision needs to be made. Plan needs to be put in place and followed through with that is beneficial to both departments.

Commissioner Sheeran asked about the concern about liability of not responding. Joe Quinn stated there is no liability for no response. Contract is set to be "mutual aid". If one party is not following the guidelines, agreement is not valid. Section 10B speaks to the parties involved and does not take out all the parties involved. Pieces of the Mutual aid Agreement can be dismantled.

STAFF REPORT

- Chiefs Report – Chief Sharp
 - Budget presentation from Director Wick. Are there any questions or concerns? There were no questions from the Board of Commissioners. Budget will come back for final adoption at the next meeting.
 - Seven Paramedics started today. Started with 16 who accepted and ended with seven who started October 31, 2022. Five weeks of training and they will start recruit academy in January
 - Fall Safety days was October 22, 2022. Great event. Lots of pumpkins. Gave a bunch away and offered them to schools and the public. Lots of fun for all the kids.
 - Upcoming – Lakewood Rotary Fall fundraiser.
- SOG 14 Section E – Identity Theft Prevention – Director Wick briefed the Board on the SOG 14 Section E. Per Board policy once a year we are required to report on fraud. Happy to report we have had no incidents.

ACTION ITEMS - None

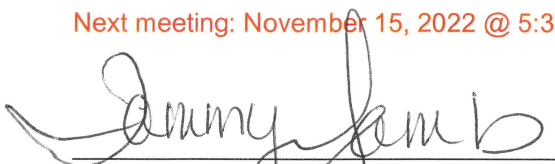
BOARD COMMENTS

- **Commissioner Rankin** – Congratulated all the Master Degree recipients. Thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Conference for Fire Commissioners in Spokane was excellent. 379 attendees and lots of education. Commissioner Rankin term ends in 2023 for President of the Commissioners association. Thanked everyone for their hard work. The public trust the Board of Commissioners to protect the safety and well-being of the District. Congratulated Serena.
- **Commissioner Durr** – Appreciated the overview of the Dupont Mutual Aid agreement. Nice to see the Local, Dupont officials, and Joe Quinn here to give an overview of what needs to be done.
- **Commissioner Sheeran** – Feels the pain of Dupont. Worried if he had a heart attack in the city of Dupont where he has a house, response time would be life threatening. Glad to see them here at the Board meeting to discuss this problem. Citizens need to take a certain responsibility in Dupont. Nice to see all the graduates. Difficult to go through school with a full time job. Congrats.
- **Chair Dalton** – Sorry to lose Joshua but excited to see Serena in her new role. Congrats to Dan Rankin for his presidency of WFCA. Thanked Dupont and the local for talking on the viewpoints of each entity. Commissioners need to make sure our district is safe but also help our neighbors. The process will be long and discussions with the City of Dupont need to be continued. Thanked Joe Quinn for his legal point of view.
Thanked Staff and crew for all their hard work

ADJOURNMENT

- There being nothing further to bring to the Board, Chair Dalton adjourned the meeting at 6:15.

Next meeting: November 15, 2022 @ 5:30 Station 31


Tammy Lamb, District Clerk


Koree Wick, District Secretary


Bart Dalton, Board Chair

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