



## Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

*August 10, 2020*

Chairman Steve Fox called the meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 7:01 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing. Commissioner Copple and Commissioner Geiger were present. Chief Halverson, Deputy Chief Fulcher and District Secretary, Cathy Barth, were present. Members of the public were in attendance.

**Additions to Agenda** – Commissioner Fox added a brief report on the Sno-Isle Board meeting he recently attended.

**Public/Staff Comments** – No public comments.

### **Consent Items** –

A motion to approve the Minutes of July 13, 2020, was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Geiger, and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Geiger asked that the July 27, 2020 minutes be amended under Old Business body armor discussion. Commissioner Geiger asked that his statement that a Fire District crew was sent on a Seattle Zone response during the riots and that there had been a recent shooting near the police station be added.

A motion to approve the Minutes of July 27, 2020 as amended, was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Geiger, Commissioner Copple abstained as he was absent from the July 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. The motion passed.

A motion to approve the payroll in the amount of \$118,958.70 was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Copple, and passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the following voucher/warrants for payment: Voucher numbers: 0427 through 0476 and totaling \$58,956.37 as verified by the District Secretary was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Geiger, and passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the following Safety Center voucher/warrants for payment: Voucher numbers: 1005 through 1010 and totaling \$892,391.76 as verified by the District Secretary was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Geiger, and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Fox under the emergency order restricting public meetings and District 5 Resolutions 2020-01 and 2020-02, authorized Chief Halverson to sign the payroll and vouchers for this month.

**Chief's Report** – See attached.

**Secretary's Report** – No report.



## Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

*August 10, 2020*

### **Old Business –**

**Body Armor** – Chief Halverson provided a “white paper” about body armor. Commissioner Cople commented that this issue should be brought to the Board of Commissioners to discuss during budget time. He commented that he has a lot of questions such as how will the public view the Firefighters and how will Firefighters view themselves once they are wearing the vests. He suggested that questions should be entertained in a setting where we are not compelled to make a purchase in a knee jerk manner.

Commissioner Geiger said there is a need for this purchase and it is a potential safety issue. He did not believe considering the purchase as a knee jerk reaction. He further stated that we recently sent crews to Seattle without vest protection. He expressed that other Districts may not have known that our Firefighters were not protected with vests. Chief Halverson stated that our crews where there as backup to Seattle fire to cover routine calls not as riot responders. Commissioner Geiger commented that the purchase cost would be minimal especially when you consider the cost of losing one of our Firefighters. He stated that we really need to move on this purchase. We should not be waiting six to nine months to make this purchase.

Commissioner Cople commented that our Firefighters should not be going to calls where bullets are flying, they are firefighters not police. We need to be aware of what type of situations we are sending them into and are responsible to respond to as Firefighters. We should know what liabilities we are taking on. Body armor is not complete protection from harm. He stated that he disagreed with the notion that our first responders should be in a combative situation. He offered that perhaps wearing firearms would be the next step.

Commissioner Geiger agreed that there will need to be some level of education as to the purpose of vest usage. Commissioner Cople stated that Firefighters should not be sent to slumper calls until cleared by law enforcement. Commissioner Fox agreed and said that this has been an ongoing concern. Commissioner Geiger agreed as well, slumper or domestic violence calls. He added, Firefighters should not be the first responders but in some cases police clear Fire to respond and there is still some risk involved. In cases of staging such as a domestic violence situation, Firefighters are in the vicinity even when staging. Commissioner Geiger remarked that some policies and procedures will definitely need to be put into place. He asked the question, if something did happen to our Firefighters how would we feel.

Commissioner Fox stated that everyone he knows wearing body armor has a side arm. Slumpers are an unknown situation and something we continue to deal with the Sheriff's over. Commissioner Fox suggested we find out which Fire Districts' have vests and obtain a copy of their policies and procedures. He asked the Chief to follow up on obtaining the policies and procedures from nearby Districts. The Chief replied that he does have some policies and procedures he obtained from Deputy Chief Clark from Districts utilizing vests. Commissioner Fox proposed that we question our staff to see if they would or would rather not have the vest. The amount of money is not prohibitive but he would be curious to get the staff's input. Once the vests are purchased we would need to have procedures in place. Commissioner Fox would like to read the procedures and policies that the Chief has already received. He asked the Chief to email the Commissioners copies prior to the next meeting.



## Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

*August 10, 2020*

### **Old Business – Continued**

#### **Body Armor –**

Commissioner Geiger pointed out that vests sell for between 200 and 600 dollars. Chief Halverson stated that in some cases the plates are provided separately and at an additional cost.

Commissioner Fox and Geiger asked for input from staff. Commissioner Cople would like them to be also aware of the SOP's that come with the purchase and situations that we would expect them to respond to wearing the vests. Commissioner Geiger stated that responses to slumper calls would possibly need to be more defined with the Sheriff's department along with our stance on responding. We would also need to know our neighboring district's expectations when we respond in their district during a staging, domestic violence or a school shooting when we mutual aid. Chief replied that we try to follow county wide practices and procedures so fire organizations know what to expect from one another.

Commissioner Cople commented that his discussion with Commissioner Bill Tubbs was left with the ball in his court and a meeting regarding ALS services will be somewhere in the future due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

### **New Business –**

**PO#2020 – 2528 Snohomish County PUD** - A motion to approve [electrical installation to the Safety Center](#) was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Cople, and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Fox under the emergency order restricting public meetings and District 5 Resolutions 2020-01 and 2020-02, authorized Chief Halverson to sign Purchase order 2020-2528.

**Surplus Laptop** – A motion to approve [surplus the laptop](#) in a manner consistent with District policy was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Geiger, and passed unanimously.

**Sno-Isle meeting** - Commissioner Fox gave a brief report about his attendance at the Sno-Isle meeting.

**Executive Session** – No meeting necessary.

**Commissioner Comments** – Commissioner Fox again thanked staff and expressed his excitement about the station progress. Commissioner Geiger echoed those comments and thanked the District Secretary for representing the body armor discussion in the minutes so well.

**Adjourn** - Being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Fox, seconded by Commissioner Cople, and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

---

Cathy Barth  
District Secretary

# Chiefs Report to Board of Commissioners

August 10, 2020

## Station Construction

All building slabs are poured and framing is underway. The push is to get the remainder of the excavations complete before the end of September. Areas that have been excavated and compacted need to be covered by concrete or asphalt before the rains begin. The drainage system requires major excavation and refill during relatively dry conditions. Rain during excavation exacerbates soil conditions and leads to more removal and replacement operations.

At the start of the project there were concerns about Covid causing shortages of materials that would slow progress. So far there haven't been material shortages that couldn't be satisfactorily substituted with another product. There have been no deviations from the schedule except for the early rain delays and commensurate soil removal/replacement at the beginning of the project.

## Systems Upgrades

We completed upgrades to our firewall and wireless access points (WAP). For instance we will now be able to provide visitor Wi-Fi access that either expires or can terminate without disturbing other users passworded access. Fire walls, Wi-Fi access and cyber security in general are issues State Auditors are issuing warnings over and for which we will be audited later this year.

## COVID-19

The County ECC remains in operation on a scaled down version and Fire Chiefs continue to meet weekly. We anticipate a surge this fall during our usual flu season. If schools reopen other than on a virtual basis the combination of seasonal flu and Covid-19 will be very difficult to control and will lead to many more very sick people

If we could just get people to do three things; wear masks, social distance and wash or sanitize hands regularly we could get the upper hand on Covid and other viruses plaguing society, but it looks unlikely that Americans are going to do that.

The Snohomish County Fire Chiefs have been provided an Abbott Labs ID NOW COVID-19 test machine. The machine was provided to the Snohomish County Fire Chiefs by the Snohomish County Health Department and is described as the same machine that is used by the feds to test people meeting with the President, and although still not accurate, is reported to be one of the best. We have not yet had to use the machine but my understanding is that the test results are provided in 15 minutes; like an influenza test at the clinic. The testing facility is in the basement of the old Everett fire headquarters station, I believe on Oaks. Everett has staff trained to provide the testing. Swabbing is done by the patient and is not the very deep swab

required in other similar devices. Testing is available to all emergency responders. There will be a charge only for the swab kits when the first 350 are gone.

The outlier in this Covid fight is that we still do not have an accurate test. It is a given that there is more Covid in the world than we are aware of. If the test is positive it is very accurate and if negative maybe 50% accurate. Relying exclusively on tests isn't going to solve our problem.

We need to social distance, wear masks and wash our hands. If we do those three things we have two opportunities. First to drive the R-Number below 1 and let the virus burn itself out and second to delay until we find a treatment and/or vaccine. It is difficult but not complicated.

### **ALS Negotiations**

I have spoken with Chiefs from D#7, D#17 and D#26. I also have contacted our Attorney regarding technical issues and am awaiting a reply. DC Fulcher and I are working on costing an ALS standalone program for D#5.

### **Labor Negotiations**

We received a request to bargain letter from IAFF #2718 and will begin talking with them the first of September.