

**GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 10, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Skaggs called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Commissioner Gerald W. Gustafson, Commissioner Robert E. Skaggs, Fire Chief Reggie Romines, Deputy Chief Gary Franz, Assistant Chief Tony Judd, Assistant Chief Ryan Baskett, Public Prevention Education Officer Merdian-Drake and District Secretary Kathy Hale.

Absent: Commissioner Verne M. Pierson had an excused absence.

Commissioner Skaggs led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed the audience.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 25, 2008, were approved as presented.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Retirement invitation for Assistant Fire Marshal Russ Henderson
- Letter from United States Department of Homeland Security

FINANCIALS:

Vouchers #3001 through #3069 in the amount of \$67,875.67 were presented for approval.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to accept the payables in the amount of \$67,875.67 after proper auditing. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION

Assistant Chief Espinosa and Battalion Chief Jensen presented Certificates of Appreciation to the instructors of the last Driver Operator Academy. Present to receive their awards were: Lieutenant Rickey; Lieutenant Waltrip; Fire Fighter Bales. Not present were: Battalion Chief Hannah; Lieutenant Fortier; Lieutenant Juergens; Fire Fighter/PM Kolibas. Assistant Chief Espinosa recognized Battalion Chief Jensen for the outstanding job he did putting the class together.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION:

Chief's Report

Station No. 21-0. Assistant Chief Baskett reported that the wells have been completed, and the geologist did not see anything unusual in the soils. Testing will take place next week.

Graham Engine One. Deputy Chief Franz reported that the pressure plate has been removed and taken to Portland to be rebuilt. Hopefully this should only take a few weeks to complete.

Air Quality at Station No. 21-1. Chief Romines stated an estimate of \$2,800 had been received from a company to do additional air quality testing at the station. We are continuing to receive complaints from members about the air quality in the station.

Chief Romines recommended the Board approve the expenditure.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to approve the expenditure of \$2,800 for testing the air quality at Station No. 21-1, with the monies coming from the Emergency Fund. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Carlson Lawsuit. Chief Romines informed the Board that the trial is set to begin April 14, 2008. Our attorneys will be working with those members involved to get them prepared for testifying.

Fuel Cards. Chief Romines thanked Lynne Walters for her research in determining a cost savings for the District. The District will now be using Safeway as a back-up to the County Shops instead of Shell for fueling apparatus and staff vehicles.

Class A Uniforms Uniformity. Chief Romines stated Deputy Chief Franz is working with personnel regarding continuity of their Class A uniforms.

Commissioner Skaggs asked if staff was still having problems with their Class B uniforms. Deputy Chief Franz replied he had met with the company supplying our uniforms and the problems are being worked out.

PPEO Report

Public Prevention Education Officer Merdian-Drake presented her report to the Board. Decorating for the Daffodil Parade will be the afternoon of April 11th. Please come and help if you can.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution No. 691, Specific Transport Accounts be Written Off. District Secretary Hale read Resolution No. 691, Specific Transport Accounts be Written Off, into the record.

Commissioner Gustafson moved the approval of Resolution No. 691, Specific Transport Accounts be Written Off, as presented. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 692, 2008 Fire Fighter/EMT Eligibility List. District Secretary Hale read Resolution No. 692, 2008 Fire Fighter/EMT Eligibility List, into the record.

Commissioner Gustafson moved the approval of Resolution No. 692, 2008 Fire Fighter/EMT Eligibility List, as presented. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Romines informed the Board he had had a conversation with Chief Vellias of District No. 15 & No. 17 regarding our position not to continue providing ALS service to

the Town of Eatonville. Chief Romines reminded the Board that in January a letter had been sent to the Town of Eatonville written jointly by himself, Chief Andren of Central Pierce Fire & Rescue and Chief Shelton of Fire District No. 18 putting them on notice that as of April 1, 2008, ALS service would no longer be provided to their citizens by the three districts. Chief Vellias had also sent notice that his districts would not be providing ALS service after April 1st.

Chief Romines stated the Mayor of Eatonville has asked for an extension on the April 1st deadline to give them time to formulate a plan. Chief Romines recommended holding firm to our deadline and relayed that the other districts involved were making the same recommendation to their Boards. Chief Romines reminded the Board that the Town of Eatonville has been talked to about this problem since 2001 and has chosen to do nothing to formulate a plan or solution. He also stated that he has been receiving telephone calls from our citizens inquiring why Graham Fire & Rescue is “giving away” services to the citizens of Eatonville. Chief Romines stated he is explaining to those inquiring that we are receiving transport fees whenever we respond to the Town of Eatonville and transport the patient to the hospital to cover the majority of our costs.

Commissioner Gustafson voiced he is in full agreement that the April 1st deadline stays in place. He went on to state that maybe if they had come to us with a plan that was going to take some time to implement an extension would have been considered, but they have had years of notice and chosen to do nothing.

Commissioner Skaggs stated his agreement with Chief Romines’ recommendation to hold firm with the April 1st deadline. He went on to say that helping the Town get on their feet is one thing, but the Town doing nothing for years to solve their emergency service delivery problem can no longer be our problem.

Chief Romines stated he would relay the Board’s decision to the Mayor of Eatonville. He also reminded the Board that this deadline does not mean that we will stop responding to the Town of Eatonville if they ask for mutual aid, just that we will no longer be on the run cards for Fire Comm as a first-out ALS unit.

Chief Romines informed the Board he will be having a meeting with Retired Chief Dick Moore regarding the City of Orting and Fire District No. 18 tomorrow. Chief Moore has been hired as a consultant by the two agencies.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Skaggs announced a 5-minute Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g), to evaluate qualifications of public employees or review their performance, and a 5-minute Executive Session under 42.30.140, collective bargaining, with business to follow. Executive Session was announced as beginning at 7:20 p.m.

An announcement was made at 7:30 p.m. to extend the Executive Session another 10 minutes.

Commissioner Skaggs announced that during the Executive Session discussion was had regarding the mechanic position and the qualifications of personnel. Chief Romines recommended the Board suspend the hiring process for the mechanic position.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to suspend the hiring process for the mechanic position due to not finding the level of qualified/certified people needed for the position. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Romines asked for Board approval to allow Assistant Chief Baskett to look for an individual for the position with the qualifications and certification needed for the position. The Board gave their approval.

Chief Romines recommended the Board authorize the hiring of the top six persons on the Fire Fighter Eligibility list instead of three. He explained to the Board that five of the six are our members. They are highly qualified individuals who the District has already invested time and money into their training. Also, when Station No. 4 was opened personnel were assigned to three stations instead of two, which often times results in Station No. 3 only having two people. Chief Romines added that from a safety standpoint and our desire to go to a three-person engine company, hiring six would bring us closer to resolving those two issues.

Commissioner Skaggs voiced that his and the Board's number one concern has always been firefighter safety, so to that end he would be in favor of hiring six people.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to give conditional offers of employment to the top six candidates on the 2008 Fire Fighter Eligibility List, and full offers pending their passing of a medical physical, background investigation and psychological exam. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Skaggs noted for the record that Commissioner Pierson had stated at the last meeting that if staff could show where the monetary resources were available for hiring the additional three people, he would also be in complete favor of hiring six people.

Chief Romines asked the Board to transfer \$225,000 from their Reserve Fund into the General Fund to cover some of the costs of the soils clean-up at Station 21-0. The cost to complete the clean-up has far exceeded the original estimate and the general budget is not funded for this.

Commissioner Gustafson moved to transfer \$225,000 from the Reserve Fund, 690-021, to the General Fund, 686-021, to help cover costs of the soils clean-up. Commissioner Skaggs seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Robert E. Skaggs, Commissioner

Kathy J. Hale, District Secretary