

**VASHON ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

Minutes

Date: 03/29/16

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: 10020 SW Bank Rd., Vashon, EOC

REGULAR MEETING

1 **Present:** Hank Lipe, Chief
2 George Brown, Assistant Chief
3 Candy McCullough, Chair
4 Brigitte Schran-Brown, Vice-Chair
5 David Hoffmann, Commissioner
6 Camille Staczek, Commissioner
7 Ron Turner, Commissioner
8 Susan Wolf, District Secretary

9 **Guests:** Susan Reimer, Craig Harmeling, Jojo Weller, Joe Ulatoski, George and Kim Brown,
10 Barbara Huff and members of the public.

11 **Amendments to Agenda**

12 None.

13 **Acceptance of Assistant Chief Brown's Retirement**

- 14 • Chair McCullough read the Commissioners' *Letter of Commendation* for Assistant Chief
15 Brown.
16 • Chief Lipe made a presentation of a shadow box for A/C Brown with badges and the VIFR
17 patch.
18 • Craig Harmeling comments with two suggestions: 1) that George write a letter to the Board
19 giving his thoughts about the Strategic Plan and going forward; 2) that whether the Board
20 replaces him or if the chief retires, that whoever the Board selects have a very strong
21 presence with the volunteers AND paid staff.

22 [SHORT BREAK at 6:48 p.m.; A/C Brown and his wife leave]

23 [The meeting reconvenes approximately 7:00 p.m.]

24 **Approval of 03/08/16 Minutes**

25 Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

26 **"I move we approve the 3/8/16 minutes."**

27 A copy that was corrected for grammar was provided.

MINUTES APPROVED, 5-0

30 **Voucher Approval**

31 Motion by Commissioner Turner:

32 **“I move that we approve the referenced vouchers and transfers as detailed in**
33 **Administrative Memorandum 03.29.2016-1.”**

34 **MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

35 **2015 Year End Financial Report**

- 36 • Barb Huff gave a summary for 2015 with year-end figures comparing 2014 and 2015. There
37 was a \$251,000 decrease in Expenses of which \$169,000 was transferred from Expenses to
38 ALS Equipment. It showed only \$71,000 less but we will recoup that in 2016. There was
39 excessive overtime because of Labor and Industries claims, but VIFR can submit a claim (to
40 ALS) to recoup that. There was a \$148,000 drop in Revenue for Services in 2014 because
41 we received an additional funding for \$200,000; but that was an exception. Expenditures
42 increased by 4%, due to some small adjustments to finalize the Association Building (Vashon
43 Multipurpose Center) remodel. VIFR ended the year in a very strong cash positions, in spite
44 of a lot of challenges. Chief Lipe handled things very well in regards to spending.

45 Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

46 **“I move we accept the 2015 Financial Report.”**

47 **MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

48 **January 2016 Financial Report**

49 Barb presented both January and February because the reports are very similar. Revenues are ahead
50 a little bit, expenditures are at 6-7%, February is also tracking right along the budget for
51 Revenues/Expenses. One thing she noted in the details is that sometimes one line item will be spent
52 early in the year at 100%, because it is a one-time purchase.

53 Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

54 **“I move we accept the January 2016 Financial Report.”**

55 **MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

56 **February 2016 Financial Report**

57 Motion by Commissioner Hoffmann:

58 **“I move we accept the February 2016 Financial Report.”**

59 **MOTION PASSES, 5-0**

60 [Barb Huff leaves the meeting]

61 **Chief’s Report**

- 62 • Chief Lipe drew the Board’s attention to the ATR Report Engineering in the packet with
63 respect with Burton station front wall. Erosion from underneath, thought to be due to storm
64 water drainage, has cracked the concrete. ATR recommends fixing it sooner rather than
65 later. The Facility Manager is getting quotes, but the Chief recommended putting off the
66 roof replacement on the Burton station, which was budgeted. Comment from the Board was
67 to remove the moss to extend the life of the roof.

- 68 • The second item on the report concerned the antenna on the Penny Farcy Training Center.
69 The chief wanted an analysis to see if it was structurally sound. That examination resulted in
70 the good news that it is sound; just needs a guy wire. Voice of Vashon will do the
71 maintenance to add the wire in late April or early May.
- 72 • New recruits are in the station training, recognizable in their red T-Shirts. They are another
73 group of highly energized, highly qualified volunteers.
- 74 • VashonBePrepared and VIFR are planning for the Cascadia Rising exercise scheduled for
75 June 6 – 10. Representatives from the National Guard will be here as well as guest
76 dignitaries. The King County Executive will be here one day.
- 77 • The Chief met with Bob and VashonBePrepared to analyze the Training Center to see if the
78 EOC could be relocated to that building. There is grant money available through Puget
79 Sound Energy (PSE) and the deadline to apply is April 1. There will be more to come on
80 this.
- 81 • PSE will replace at no charge all the outside lights on all our buildings. They will also
82 supply interior lighting with high efficiency bulbs for zero cost to the District. If new
83 fixtures are needed, PSE will replace them for the majority (80%) of the cost.

84 **New Business**

85 SOP 4043 Unlawful Burning

- 86 • Secretary Wolf explained that A/C Brown had found that for those citizens who blatantly
87 disregard the rules and continue with unlawful burns, VIFR can bill Puget Sound Clean Air
88 for the cost of the response. We would inspect the fire, ask the citizen to douse the flames, if
89 in violation, and bill the Clean Air Agency for our expenses. That agency will then fine the
90 homeowner. While our crews may respond, a comment from the Board was that, per Brian
91 Snure (an attorney), firefighters are not enforcement. Chief Lipe explained that he can visit
92 the resident for enforcement.
- 93 • A question from the audience is what constitutes unlawful burning? Answer was violating
94 the conditions on the Burn Permit: burning trash, burning at night, allowing smoke to drift
95 across property lines which becomes a nuisance or health hazard to neighbors. The Board
96 suggested we get legal advice on the policy and provide the public information about burning
97 lawfully, such as an article in the Beachcomber.

98 **Old Business**

99 SOG 4001 Emergency Response Guideline

100 Chief to sign; no comments had been received on this Guideline.

101 Medic One Proposal Update

- 102 • Chief Lipe met with Chief Hebert and Chief of Ops Aaron _____. At this meeting they
103 spoke about building some empirical data for conducting an analysis on medic transports
104 both now and a previous time period. They want to look at how the calls are presently
105 handled and how those same calls would be handled under the new proposed plan. They
106 want to see if there are gaps, strengths and weaknesses based on data sets rather than
107 opinions. This will be done in the next two weeks in order to build a foundation for the
108 Board and public to make decisions on the plan. First things first: the Operations Chief
109 is now looking at our data and is monitoring all of our calls. Chief Lipe will follow up
110 with him at end of week. Comment from the Board would be to take the summer as the
111 previous time period, including June, July and August. That's when

112 Commissioner Schran-Brown found the highest number of calls last year. The Chief
113 promised to identify that time period and consider it.

- 114 • *Discussion:* The average person will say since Advanced Life Support (ALS) money
115 goes to ALS, it doesn't cost us for the medics so if they leave we are losing eight
116 Firefighters. But that's not really true because we can replace them with Resident
117 (volunteer) firefighters. Dr. Warren's letter (in the packet) supports the transition and
118 because of that Commissioner Turner is in favor. There was a comment that we need a
119 cost analysis for true picture. Commissioner Schran-Brown looked at some recent calls
120 and found that if both medics leave the island there were between 40 minutes to two hour
121 gaps before another unit could arrive here. Comment from the Board was that when
122 Dispatch left, and Commissioner McCullough did not want it to go, we had the same
123 emotions. While she would not say it is better, it is different but it has worked.
- 124 • Joe Ulatoski sat in at the SPOT meetings were he learned that it was anticipated that there
125 would be a \$300,000-\$500,000 shortfall if the medics left. The recent article in the
126 Beachcomber focused on physical evidence (logistics) and what it will do to us or for us.
127 He wants fiscal aspects addressed; whether there would be a tax increase, deferred
128 maintenance or reduced operations. He stated the Board must have some idea of the
129 financial impact, and asked that the Board put the whole package to the taxpayers. He
130 asked that the Board not approve the plan until they have the complete package. The
131 Board commented that the proposal was a first draft and after research it will be
132 presented to the public. No negotiations are going on. Chief Lipe explained that an
133 important piece is his responsibility as the Chief Executive Officer to represent the public
134 trust. His job is to improve services, make it more efficient under a whole different
135 funding mechanism if necessary and look at the financial impacts. He and the Board are
136 in no rush to make a change; they are looking at everything and it is not being taken
137 lightly. Then they will present their concerns back to Jim Fogarty. After working
138 through the concerns, they will report back to the public for further input.
- 139 • Chief Lipe explained that there will be a leadership change at Medic One at the end of
140 April since Jim Fogarty is retiring. The draft proposal is with the operations folks now
141 who know the idiosyncrasies of island life. Jim Fogarty asked the Board members to
142 give them comments to help them iron out the details. The Chief commented that the
143 issues are complex with lots of moving parts. Comment from the public was that the
144 public doesn't understand the structure and if you don't know you start to imagine. For
145 instance he (Joe Ulatoski) didn't realize the Board wasn't in the control, but could only
146 influence Medic One. Medic One provides the funds and oversees the program.
147 Discussions with them are ongoing.
- 148 • A question from the public asked if the commissioners don't have input into Medic One.
149 Chief Lipe provided background to the Medic One system by explaining all these cities
150 within King County subcontract with Medic One for ALS and some BLS. The financial
151 piece is the countywide EMS Levy. Everyone but the City of Seattle pools into it and it
152 funds medic units per their formula. We used to have medic units, but then they awarded
153 it VIFR to hire our own paramedics. Whether the medics work for VIFR or Medic One,
154 the medical doctors direct that program. Those medical doctors/directors are the
155 oversight and they can discipline medics for their work in the field. We have to be
156 sincere about considering what those doctors say when they are all saying they see a
157 better way to deliver EMS on Vashon. Medic One also has a mid-period review within
158 their strategic plan.

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- There are direct and indirect costs figured on a percentage including housing, wages, and benefits, with provisions for excessive overtime. We have to fund those costs through our operating budget; then we request Medic One's funds to replace those costs. When you see the financial percentages, you will see what happens with that Medic One funding.
 - A comment noted that the public wants information so they can understand what the issues are and provide feedback. The Board and Chief pledged there will continue to be public discussion about this issue and that it would probably be 2017 before any change is made, if it is made. It was discussed that VIFR has influence versus control, but Jim Fogarty told the Board at the last meeting that the ball is now in your (the Board's) court. It's better to make a planned and studied change to improve while not under a crisis. If the ALS service on the island can be improved, what will it cost? During the mid-period review, the system is studied and, if necessary, units and funds are reallocated through a vetting process. For instance, whether it's Vashon, Shoreline or some other area, there might be changes. What is in VIFR's control is to look at our services when the Medical Directors have stated they want more paramedics present on critical calls. If we were not very fiscally responsible or had more poor medical outcomes, Medic One could cancel the contract and take the program back. For certain reasons, they could do it within six days or six months. While the Board has influence, can provide input and while they should respect our wishes, the final decision is really up to them.

179 Board Retreat

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- Commissioner Schran-Brown explained we have tentatively reserved Camp Burton and a "Happy Brain" speaker for \$1,500 instead of their usual fee of \$15,000. The camp would provide lunch, coffee and cookies for a total \$20 per head with a minimum of 20 people to rent the camp for the day (9-4).
 - *Discussion.* The retreat would be open to the public who can come sit and observe, but if they want to eat, they would have to pay. We would probably have to have a registration so that we could get a head count for the public members in attendance. There is a base fee for the camp. Except for that particular Sunday (May 22), the camp is booked solid the rest of the summer. Commissioner Turner is not available to attend; the rest of the Board is available. Topics cover leadership, building morale, how to build consensus, and working as a team. A comment from the Board is there is an "Us versus Them" mentality within the workforce, however, that was met with another comment that the Board has been trying to address it for 10 years. Commissioner Schran-Brown will send out an agenda. The retreat would also be open to all the members of the District. Because we will eventually be getting a new chief, this retreat could provide some tools. Chief Lipe commented that his education focused on this type of training. He also said he has different ways to help offset the cost. The cost will be \$1,900 altogether.
 - Joe Ulatoski related an experience of a workshop which was not anticipated to be worthwhile by the officers invited. However, the four star general invited frank questions, open discussion and brainstorming ideas from everyone. It turned out to be the best thing ever.

201 Motion by Commissioner Staczek:

202 "I move we go forward with the retreat for \$1,900 on May22nd."

203 MOTION PASSES, 5-0

204 Q/A Committee

205 Nothing.

206 Strategic Plan Update

207 The Public Information Strategic Team is gathering data and will get back to the Chief.

208 **General Comments**

209 None.

210 **For the Good of the Order**

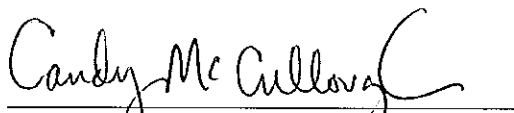
211 None.

212 **Documents Signed**

213 The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

214 *The next Regular Meeting will be on 04/12/16 at 6:30 p.m. at 10020 SW Bank Rd, Vashon, EOC Room*

Approved this 12 day of April, 2016.


Candy McCullough, Chair


Susan Wolf, Minute Taker