

**MINUTES**  
**SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**June 15, 2021**

Chair Phil Paige called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners for SJCFD #4 to order at 4:00 P.M. The meeting was held with all participants in-person at the Station 41 Fire Hall training room. The meeting was also available by ZOOM conference call but there were no attendees.

Those present were Commissioners Phil Paige, Rebecca Smith, and Duane Bordvick, Chief Adam Bigby and Secretary Kim Herrenkohl.

Guests: Steve Greenstein, Hospital District Commissioner.

There being no changes to the **Agenda**, the agenda was **approved** as presented.

**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

There was no **Public Input**.

There was no **Correspondence**.

Hospital District Commissioner Steve Greenstein provided a **Partner Agency Report** on their most recent Hospital District meetings. The Hospital District is continuing its strategic planning work related to its mission statement. Steve noted that it did not include anything about finances so it needs to be updated.

They have groups working on their HRSA grant which is thinking about funding sources, how to effectively work interisland and if a separate non-profit would be a good idea. As ideas come forward, the Hospital board members will vote on them.

Hospital Commissioner Greenstein commented that the board is a large group made up of smart people discussing and planning complicated topics. At this point, they are trying to develop a preliminary plan and noted that it will not be one size fits all. At a recent meeting, they discussed whether there is an existing entity such as the Senior Centers to centrally administer a program. It was noted that San Juan County's Senior Centers are lumped in with Whatcom County's Senior Centers with their parent entity being the Whatcom Council on Aging.

It was noted that Orcas Island has Anne Presson administering their process along with the assistance of a consultant. San Juan Island has a lot of the parts and pieces already...but Lopez Island does not currently have the same administrative support. However, Lopez does have The Hamlet and they have a team working on related issues with a group in the Methow Valley area. The Hamlet is the only nonprofit entity of this type in the San Juan Islands. Commissioner Greenstein thinks that Catherine Washburn Medical Association will be very involved in trying to come up with a plan to keep people on island instead of moving off Lopez.

At the Hospital Districts regular meetings they have been focused on what they need to do as a hospital district, their consultant is focused on financial stability, and they are discussing healthcare, providers,

the amount of money needed to be able to stay on Lopez Island and the affordable housing issue. The Hospital District needs to find a sustainable model. What they have now is not sustainable.

They are discussing succession planning with the University of Washington Clinic, the anticipation that Dr. Bob will retire eventually, and a transition with the Lopez Pharmacy.

While not a part of the grant, after-hours urgent care is needed but how does this affect the hospital district. Would it make sense financially to UW to offer on-call appointments? UW could charge 2 to 3 times more for urgent care? Currently, these calls have to go to 911 and then they get flown off because the clinic is not available. The Fire District has paged Dr. Bob four times during after clinic hours and there has been no response so far. It was reported that both Dr. Bob and the Clinic Manager have stated that the Clinic has the capacity to provide more services. Commissioner Smith shared that before UW, there was a mutual understanding that Dr. Bob could work with Lopez EMS & Fire but this may not have been a contracted arrangement.

The Clinic & EMS meeting was pushed off until July 21<sup>st</sup> due to Dr. Bob being unavailable.

Commissioner Smith making a **Motion** to approve the **Regular Meeting Minutes**, with amendments of **May 18, 2021**, and with Commissioner Bordvick making the second, with amendments. All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

Commissioner Smith made a **Motion** to approve the **May 2021 Vouchers** for \$210,545.75 and the **May and June 2021 Staff Payroll** for \$37,717.76, and Commissioner Bordvick making the second, All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

## REPORTS

The Chief's Report, Overtime, Fire, EMS, Budget Reports were reviewed. Some of the highlights were:

- Chief went back and changed some of the response time percentages since last month's report based on Commissioner Bordvick's prior observation. As noted at Strategic Planning, the District is still working on improving response times.
- The District's annual Audit Reports to State Auditor's Office were submitted on time.
- There are currently no active cases of COVID in the islands and the total positive test count in the San Juan Islands is 191. The County's immunization counts are 12,684, of which 1,697 are from Lopez Island.
- Paramedic McDarmont is working on developing a hybrid 1<sup>st</sup> Aid & CPR training program with the initial part being done online. Summer can be difficult because instructors are not available.
- Driving District apparatus, the Chief and Paramedic Pal escorted the Lopez High School graduates from the school into the village after the graduation ceremony.
- The District is getting all of the stuff together for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration which is planned to be a similar response as what we have done in the past (based on the Chief's consulting with people that have been involved in the process for many years). The Chief is asking the EMTs and Firefighters to volunteer for the event. The pyrotechnics are being done remotely via computer and there will not be a parade this year.

The county-wide radio system project is coming along. They are still behind on some FCC licenses due to Orcas Island's channel being too broad and interfering with Canadian channels. They are waiting for the Canadian border to open up so people can come down for training. San Juan, Orcas and Lopez towers are up but they need to more testing to determine if there are areas of non- coverage.

There are problems with Paramedic McDarmont's vehicle where the radio and lights do not always work. San Juan County's mechanic is checking out the rig now but has not been able to duplicate the problem. They are considering most likely causes and fix options.

At a recent drill, it was determined that Engine 42 had something come loose in the pump. The Chief will keep the Commissioners updated after the fire engine mechanic is able to assess the engine's pump.

Engine 44 is back on Lopez. The weight room is now open, the downstairs office has been repaired and the needed septic electrical work has been completed with all of the bills having been received. Our insurance company is working with Fisherman Bay Sewer District on the septic overflow incident.

The District's volunteer training is mostly back to normal. EMS high school students will be in attendance at the training tonight and since there will be more than 10 people in the room, masks will be required.

Paramedic O'Bryant is scheduled to go to the firefighting training class in Texas in October.

We have received most of the invoices, and they are in the Claims Request packet, for the Ecology Spill Grant, however the radios for the new rigs are on backorder. We have asked the Department of Ecology for an extension but we have not heard back yet. As a backup, if we don't get an extension, we are looking into another brand of radio if we could get them before the end of the month.

Nice pictures of the decals on one of the new grant funded F-350 rigs was provided.

There is nothing new to report on the SAFER grant. We have not heard anything on the Firehouse grant but if we are not awarded this time, we will submit a new proposal for the next round.

The Chief and Paramedic McDarmont are working on a fire academy plan and will try to bring in new recruits. A prior student firefighter volunteer has re-applied as an adult and he is scheduled for his physical exam.

We are still waiting for payment of our \$27,100 reimbursement request to FEMA (Homeland Security) for volunteer stipends.

The Safety Committee only meets quarterly so there is nothing new since last meeting.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **LEVY DISCUSSION:**

A first draft of a postcard mailer to all Lopez residences was presented for the Commissioners input. Commissioner Bordvick reinforced the need to make sure that the postcard clearly conveyed that the EMS Levy would be new funding to the District. The cost to produce and mail the postcards will be around \$1,400 to \$1,600. Commissioner Paige asked if there was sufficient budget and the Chief responded that there is.

There will be an information meeting for the public tomorrow night in Fire Station #41's bay at 6:00 p.m. The Chief will give a brief presentation and keep it open for questions. It was noted that it was not advertised as a Zoom meeting but we could set up a Zoom meeting for the next presentation on June 30<sup>th</sup> and the Commissioners did not think that it needed to be. It was felt that it would be good for the public to see some of the District's aging equipment.

Commissioner Paige asked if our EMT and Firefighter volunteers are involved or aware of the meeting tomorrow and the Chief stated that he will be bringing copies of the one page informational flyer to the EMS training tonight.

We were not sure if there is an official "no" committee and if anyone submitted an advisory statement to the Auditor's Office which was due last Friday.

### **SUMMER POSITION HIRING DISCUSSION:**

The Chief has posted the new, paid EMT positions internally but has not received any applicants. He posted the positions externally which closes on June 23<sup>rd</sup> but there has not been any interest so far. The Chief is hoping to get 2 people but if he only gets one he will try to adjust the hours. If anyone from San Juan or Orcas Islands are interested, we can accommodate the ferry schedule.

The positions are full-time temporary and are posted for work from July 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> which can be extended if needed. The Chief will update everyone at the EMS training tonight. With our existing EMTs, there appears to be some interest in this type of position but not if it is temporary and some people are currently burnt out.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **TWO ADM TEMPORARY POSITION'S DRAFT JOB DESCRIPTIONS:**

The Chief could not find a paid Temporary EMT or Firefighter job description so he created the two draft job descriptions in the Commissioner's packets using the Fire Lieutenant job description as a template.

Commissioner Bordvick making a **Motion** to approve the ADM 21-10 Paid Temporary Full-Time EMT

and ADM 21-11 Paid Temporary Full-Time Firefighter -EMT Job Descriptions and Commissioner Smith making the second. All in Favor, **Motion Passed.**

**PRELIMINARY 2022 BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

We received an email from the San Juan County Auditor's Office which stated that they can release the budget information earlier this year. The Chief stated that he will sit down with Kim Herrenkohl and the Paramedics to discuss the budget. We have been creating new BARS accounts to help us better track and understand our budget and expenditure costs.

Commissioners asked about the percentage of EMS versus Fire expenditures. It is still early in the year but we can work on getting this information. It was noted that our current property tax levy is limited to the 1% increase, even with all of the high home sale prices. But there has been an increase in new construction which could be a decent increase in our total property tax levy revenues for 2022.

**BOARD MEMBER ITEMS:**

Commissioner Bordvick asked for clarification on the amount of overtime and it was stated that it was primarily due to the District sending Paramedic McDarmont to the required firefighting training and the related coverage needed while she was gone.

Everyone hopes that the July 4<sup>th</sup> activities go off without a hitch.

Chair Paige adjourned the Regular Meeting at 5:09 P.M.

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

- Special Meeting – EMS Levy Information Meeting – June 15, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.
- Special Meeting – EMS Levy Information Meeting – June 30, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.
- Regular Meeting – July 20, 2021 at 4:00 P.M.

  
Chair Phil Paige

  
Secretary Kim Herrenkohl