

MINUTES
SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
March 16, 2021

Chair Phil Paige called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners for SJCFD #4 to order at 4:03 P.M. The meeting was held with some participants in-person at the Station 41 Fire Hall and some via ZOOM* conference call.

Those present were Commissioners Phil Paige*, Rebecca Smith, and Duane Bordvick, and Secretary Susan Sanchez, Paramedic Michelle McDarmont and 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**.

Several pieces of **Correspondence** were discussed.

- Chair Phil Paige mentioned his email regarding not waiting until noon when the Commissioners came out of Executive Session at their February 25th Special Meeting after noting that there were no members of the public logged into the Zoom meeting.
- Susan Sanchez passed around the San Juan County Lease Agreement which has been approved by San Juan County and is ready for Fire Commissioner signatures.
- Susan Sanchez passed around the final Title Insurance for the property on Hummel Road for the Fire Commissioner's information.

Health District Commissioner Steve Greenstein provided a **Partner Agency Report** on their most recent Hospital District meeting. The District will invite Chief Bigby to a future meeting. The University of Washington will start doing vaccines on Tuesdays. They discussed the HRSA grant to study and plan for long-term care in the San Juan Islands. They need to create a budget which factors in facility and personnel costs. The District is working on creating and publishing its quarterly Health Matters document.

Fire Commissioner Duane Bordvick, who is our representative to the Health District, added that the Health District adopted a sensitive communication policy and resolution authorizing the participation in the long-term care grant. While there are a lot of people in the planning group and it is taking a while to get things moving, the meetings have been productive. They will likely have different plans for each island to address their unique needs.

Commissioner Smith made a **Motion** to approve the **Regular Meeting Minutes** of **February 16, 2021**, and to approve the **Special Meeting Minutes** of **February 22, 2021 and February 25, 2021**, as written. Commissioner Bordvick making the second. All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

Commissioner Smith made a **Motion** to approve the **February 2021 Vouchers** for \$18,899.31 and the **February and March 2021 Staff Payroll** for \$39,953.12, Commissioner Bordvick making the second, All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

REPORTS

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

- In response to Commissioner Duane Bordvick's overtime expense question, the Chief stated that it is higher than normal at this time of year due to training, sick time (due to the vaccine), for helping administer the Thursday vaccination clinics and one paramedic's class. The Chief will monitor the overtime expense budget and evaluate the need to bring in any per diem medics.
- Call volumes seem normal so far and we responded to a request on Orcas Island to assist in the search for a missing hiker who was found.
- San Juan County's COVID case counts are a little behind but show that there are currently no active cases.
- The District provided logistical help with the vaccine clinic yesterday and will also participate in the regular vaccine clinic on Thursday.
- There was nothing new to report on the radio project.
- The District will have its first in-person EMS training tonight for EMTs and Medics that are vaccinated. The Fire Fighter training will probably need to be held outdoors.
- The firefighter training dates are set for Paramedics Nicole O'Bryant and Michelle McDarmont. Michelle is scheduled for April and Nicole is scheduled for mid-October.
- The Ecology Spills grant has been awarded and will pay for radios and vehicles but the truck purchases have been delayed into April which is getting close to the end of June deadline. For this grant, the trucks need to be assigned 24 hours per day to a specific driver. The district can submit for reimbursement as each ordered item comes in and is paid for.
- Chief Bigby has submitted for the SAFER grant which would provide funding for an assistant Chief position for 3 years with no matching requirement. This is a very competitive FEMA grant and FEMA has increased the available funding.
- Chief Bigby requested the Commissioner's support to apply for the Firehouse Subs grant for bunker gear which can be applied for quarterly. The Commissioners provided their support.
- The weight room deconstruction is complete and the district is working with the insurance company on an acceptable construction bid since the first bid was higher than expected.
- The \$27,100 COVID relief payment for personnel costs has been approved and submitted and we have already received the \$6,003.83 payment for reimbursement of supplies.
- The Safety Committee met recently and has scheduled a meeting for April.

Commissioner Bordvick requested that the Chief's statistics also include a year-to-date comparison by month and Commissioner Paige requested response time information.

The Chief reported that the pump is in Engine 41 but they still need to do the transmission work. The repair shop will send a bill after each engine is repaired.

Commissioner Smith inquired about the two boat transports and Paramedic Michelle McDarmont stated that it was due to the snow. Michelle also stated that they have been carefully evaluating each

off-island transport to determine which option will provide quicker transport. Commissioner Smith stated that she has tracked transports over the years and it will be good information for the Levy when explaining the services provided to people on Lopez Island.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

LEVY DISCUSSION: While an EMS Levy would not solve all of the District's financial issues, it would stabilize the District. However there will still be the need for apparatus funding such as a potential Bond issue.

The Commissioners discussed the sample educational materials that Adam had prepared and the pros and cons of 1/2 page mailers versus double-sided informational sheets was discussed. They discussed the need for a "Yes" committee and reported that former Fire Chief Ghiglione had volunteered to participate or head up a committee.

Chief Bigby explained that the document provided was drafted after consulting with our attorney which provides the voter turnout requirements and "Yes" vote count needed (561) in order for the levy to pass. It was discussed that an EMS levy does not impact the \$5.90 maximum cap limit.

Commissioner Bordvick noted the importance of defining EMS and being able to explain why two different levies are needed. Commissioner Smith stated that she has spoken with some people that are not surprised about the need for an EMS levy because of changes in EMS. Also that it would be good to ask volunteer EMTs/Firefighters if they want to be involved in the "Yes" committee and Chief Bigby stated that he would work on that.

Commissioner Smith made a **Motion** to approve the employment contract to hire Kim Herrenkohl for the Administrative Assistant/Secretary to the Board position to replace Susan Sanchez and authorize Commissioner Paige and Chief Bigby to sign the contract. Commissioner Bordvick making the second, All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

Chief Adam Bigby administered the **Oath of Office** to Admin Assistant/Board Secretary, Kim Herrenkohl. Ms. Herrenkohl formally stated Oath.

NEW BUSINESS:

CURRENT 2020 BOND BALANCE:

There is at least \$170,000 remaining available from the Bond with Islanders/Banner Bank. There was a discussion on the cash flow needs given the timing of property tax revenues and need to have cash on hand to initially pay for the trucks before the District receives reimbursement from the grant. The Commissioners discussed retaining any withdrawn funds until the District knows if the EMS Levy passes.

Commissioner Bordvick made a **Motion** to make a draw from the 2020 Bond in the amount of \$170,000 and Commissioner Smith making the second, All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

SJC SHERIFF RENTAL CONTRACT APPROVAL:

The lease agreement is only for an additional one year period since the District is still evaluating its needs for the space for the future.

STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP:

After considering participant's upcoming schedules, May 3, 2021 was set as the date for a full day Strategic Planning Workshop from approximately 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. While this will be an open public meeting, it was decided that District staff and the Commissioners would be invited and staff would keep the volunteers informed about the process. The planning is very important for the levy process to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Within the next few weeks, everyone should send their topics and ideas to Chief Bigby. Commissioner Smith mentioned that the former Chief Ghiglione had created agendas and a workshop list that was helpful for past planning meetings. Commissioner Paige stated that there are national models for Fire District strategic planning efforts.

RESOLUTION 2021-04 - EMS LEVY:

Based on the prior discussions and acknowledging the written resolution document provided in the meeting packet, Commissioner Smith made a **Motion** to approve the 2021-04 Resolution to put an EMS Levy on the August ballot for \$.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value to begin in January 2022. Commissioner Bordvick making the second, All in Favor, **Motion Passed**.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS: None

The Chief stated that the Executive Session agenda item was included due to a stipulation in his employment contract that which requires a discussion on the goals and objectives of the Chief's position at/by the March 2021 Commissioner meeting. It was decided that most of the Chief's goals will be determined at the upcoming Strategic Planning Meeting and that Chair Paige would draft a list of goals for an Executive Session discussion at the April 20, 2021 Commissioner meeting. No Executive Session was held.

Chair Paige adjourned the Regular Meeting at 5:30 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: April 20, 2021 at 4:00 P.M.

Chair Phil Paige

Secretary Kim Herrenkohl