

Board of Commissioners Meeting

November 23, 2005

Ray Smith, Chairperson, called a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 5:32 p.m. on November 23, 2005, at the 701 Vine Street District Meeting Room. The following were present:

Commissioner Cameron	Commissioner Olson
Commissioner Merritt	Chief LaFave
Assistant Chief Headley	Fire Secretary Ballinger
EMS Administrator Ribelin	D/O Russ Neely
FF/EMT Travis McWain	FF/EMT Neil Agren
FF/Medic Jeremy Huff	FF/Medic Craig Ellenbolt
FF/EMT Steve Lamb	
Public: Eric Bergquist, Sherrie Headley	

Approve Previous Minutes:

A motion was made by Commissioner Cameron to approve the November 9, 2005, Board meeting minutes. Commissioner Merritt seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Awards & Recognition:

Captain Jean Ramey has been accepted into the Executive Fire Officer's Program.

Public Comment:

None

Risk Management:

AC Headley reported that a letter of interest was submitted to the Clark County Risk Management Group and we are waiting to hear back from them. Currently, their bylaws do not allow fire districts outside of Clark County to participate in their program. They will need to revise their bylaws in order for us to participate.

Verbal Reports:

Audit Update – Chief LaFave reported that overall the audit went very well with just a few suggestions. The State Auditors that worked here during the audit said that our staff was exceptional, the processes we have in place here are very good and they felt very welcome. They

also really enjoyed the atmosphere in the office area and appreciated the hospitality. Chairperson Smith attended the exit interview meeting, along with Commissioner Olson.

We received a Management Letter from the State Auditor regarding the interlocal agreement for fleet maintenance services for the City of Kelso. AC Headley had invited Paul Brachvogel, City Attorney for the City of Kelso to the exit interview, however, he was unable to attend. The State Auditor said that we cannot continue to provide these services to the City of Kelso.

Commissioner Cameron asked why we are getting the letter when the City of Kelso deviated from the selection process. Chief LaFave stated the reason for this is after their legal review, we do not have the authority under Title 52 to enter into this type of agreement for this type of work. According to our attorney, Clark Snure and the City of Kelso attorney, Paul Brachvogel, we are not in violation of Title 52. However, the State Auditor received advice from the Attorney General's Office the audit staff's attorney that we are in violation and cannot continue this agreement.

Chief LaFave stated that we have the right to disagree, however, if we do not abide by their Management Letter and are still working under this contract at the time of the next audit, then we will receive a Finding. If the City of Kelso would have approached us with an Interlocal Agreement, the problem would not have been discovered, however, we cannot go back and do that now.

Commissioner Merritt discussed other agencies, ports, etc. that have contracts and interlocals that provides mutual services that are not emergency services related. AC Headley stated that he asked the City of Kelso to do the research on this issue. The Commissioners feel that this is an important enough issue that our staff needs to do a little more research and talk with people who have a broader range of experience and background in these types of contracts and agreements. They would like staff to explore our options and bring them back to the next meeting.

Commissioner Cameron stated that we need to cease doing this operation, or at least provide notice to terminate this agreement by the end of 2006. AC Headley believes there is a 90-day clause in the contract to cease services. Commissioner Cameron also wants staff to research what the ramifications would be if we receive a Finding. One issue Chief LaFave mentioned was the negative publicity that would be received in the media. The publicity could be very bad for our public image. Even though we didn't do anything wrong, we could still be penalized. Commissioner Cameron recommended that staff write a rebuttal letter to the management letter and respond to this issue.

Mobile Data Terminal Technology Computers – AC Headley reported that there may be an opportunity to move to Mobile Data Terminal Technology Computers (MDT) using funding available through the Communications Center. We would install at least ten of these if it is available. They would be installed in all of the main response vehicles and the command vehicles. We will start with one for experimentation purposes and see what kind of programming or other issues there may be and what benefits there are. Longview has received a grant and is moving to these as well.

MDTs provide a direct link to the Comm Center at dispatch as soon as the call comes through. It can tie into mapping, our network, link to prefire planning, public works data, GIS, etc. This has a lot of potential, however, our biggest concern is that after we get them installed they won't have the capability to access the data we anticipated. It would be an expensive investment if all it does is enhance the dispatch capabilities and doesn't tie into the rest of the system. It costs approximately \$8,000 each to install these into the apparatus with minimal ongoing costs.

Commissioner Merritt later asked about dead spots in the County and its impact on MDTs. Chief LaFave stated that like any other form of communication, there is potential for it not to work in a certain area. However, they are like a separate radio backbone system. One of the benefits is that the MDTs can become a secondary form of communication.

Written Reports:

Revenue & Expense Report – October, 2005: Information for year-to-date expenses was provided to the Board in their packets. AC Headley reported that we are right on track.

Calls Report – October, 2005: Information for October, 2005, calls was provided to the Board in their packets. EMS Administrator Ribelin also provided an additional breakdown of information on types of EMS calls.

Action Items:

Resolution #637-2005; Reschedule Regular Meeting of December 14, 2005: Staff requested a time change for the December 14, 2005, Board of Commissioners meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. due to the bicycle giveaway at 5:00 p.m. for local children. This Resolution authorizes that time change.

Commissioner Cameron made a motion to approve Resolution #637-2005. Commissioner Merritt seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Chief's Report:

- The bicycle giveaway is going to be a very large event; we will be giving away at least 100 bikes and fitting the bike helmets for local low income children. We will also have hot dogs, chips, cookies, pop and coffee, which has all been donated.
- Attended the State Chief's Legislative development meeting for Cowlitz & Clark County Chiefs. They have been going around the state to gather the priorities for all areas. Funding is the number one item. Another high priority in our area was exempt properties and the negative effect it has on our area and agencies.
- AC Headley has been very busy with the radio upgrade. The Safer Act & Fire Act Grant were both denied. Under Homeland Security Region 4, Tom McDowell has secured radios for those agencies that were involved with the interoperability and were denied the Fire Act Grant. Base radios for our fire stations and portable radios were ordered. Commissioner Cameron later asked about the usefulness of the OSCAR frequency. An issue and frustration for Chief LaFave right now is not having one communications plan. Fire, law and others are working separately, not together. There is a law enforcement representative in the radio tag group.

- Met with the County Commissioners on the Libby Lane Bridge to try to address the issue cooperatively. George Raiter is working very hard to find a solution to this. Hopefully by the first of the year, the County will have developed the best solution possible. Dave Flemings is looking into engineering standards for existing bridges and developing a list of qualified engineers. Commissioner Cameron later asked if the only issue is the bridges; AC Headley clarified that the issues include road standards as well. Commissioner Cameron noted that we need to make sure we maintain our position. The County needs to adopt a county-wide policy so that it applies to everyone.
- We have exceeded the contract amount for fire investigations with the County so they have revised the figures in an amendment to the contract. There are numerous fire investigations and activity occurring right now.
- Met with the Sheriff's Office to streamline the process and improve the relationship.
- New squad chassis came in and others should be arriving any time. Shop is very busy with those projects.
- Extended opening date on ambulance bids due to some errors in publicizing the information. The new closing date is the 5th of December.
- Met with ESCi on the work they are doing. The emphasis for us is on training and some volunteer components. The emphasis for Cowlitz 5 is to do a 360 evaluation of their district, develop strategic and objectives plans. They are on track with the feasibility study between Cowlitz 2 and Cowlitz 5. A lot of the information they needed from us had already been developed and AC Headley has submitted it.
- All Call meeting on December 12 for volunteer and career at Cowlitz PUD at 7:00 p.m.

Payroll:

A motion was made by Commissioner Merritt to approve the payroll of November 18, 2005, totaling \$59,914.36 for warrant numbers 20109 through 20125. Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried.

Vouchers:

A motion was made by Commissioner Olson to approve the vouchers totaling \$85,132.01 for warrant numbers 20126 through 20162 dated November 29, 2005. Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion. Further discussion. Motion carried.

Announcements:

- None

Executive Session:

Meeting was adjourned into Executive Session at 6:20 p.m. regarding a personnel issue for approximately 15 minutes. Executive Session was adjourned at 6:35 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting. The regular meeting was again called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m. by Chairperson Smith.

Chairperson

District Secretary
