

JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

a.k.a. PORT LUDLOW FIRE & RESCUE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

September 23, 2008

CALL TO ORDER:

Board Chair Commissioner Robert Pontius called the Special Meeting of September 23, 2008 Board of Commissioners for Jefferson County Fire District No. 3, a.k.a. Port Ludlow Fire and Rescue, to order at 6:00 p.m. at Station 31 located at 7650 Oak Bay Road, Port Ludlow, Washington.

Commissioners present were Board Chair Robert Pontius, Commissioner Mike Porter, Commissioner David Wheeler, Commissioner Bill Hansen and Commissioner Gene Carmody. Administrative Staff present were Fire Chief Ed Wilkerson, Administrative Chief Arlene Obtinario and Administrative Assistant Tanya Arey.

CALL FOR THE FLAG SALUTE:

Pontius led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

CALL FOR APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Pontius called for approval of the agenda. **Motion:** Hansen made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Carmody seconded. Motion carried. Pontius stated that the Board of Commissioners would have discussion on the agenda item, he would then call for public comment, and finish up with more Board discussion and possible action by the Board.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE FIRE CHIEF'S STAFFING RECOMMENDATION OF 9/9/08 (Recommendation to Eliminate the Administrative Chief Position)

At the Chair's request, Wilkerson began the discussion by stating that the Board of Commissioners has been desirous for an Assistant Fire Chief position for the past several years. When he was hired three plus years ago, it was to fill the Assistant Fire Chief position. Seventeen days after Wilkerson started, then Fire Chief Wayne Kier announced that he was resigning to accept an Assistant Fire Chief position with a department in Kitsap County. Wilkerson explained that after looking at the financial state of the District, it was apparent that without a significant change to the funding structure of the fire district, the ability to sustain the staffing model in place when he was hired would not be possible. Wilkerson went on to say that the Administrative Chief position was proposed to save money and to make better use of existing positions at the time. Since that time, it has become clear that the Chief and Board expectations of the Administrative Chief position have not been met. Wilkerson, in addressing his staffing recommendation stated his opinion that a staffing model with three Chief Officers is not advisable with our budget limitations and the desire of the Board to have twelve (12) career line personnel. Wilkerson's staffing recommendation includes: A Fire Chief, a fully capable Assistant Chief, one Administrative Assistant, three Lieutenants, one Firefighter/Medical Service Officer, three Firefighter/Paramedics, four Firefighter/EMT's and three Residents along with a volunteer component. This model would allow for up to five line personnel working on shift.

Wilkerson's recommendation to eliminate the Administrative Chief position is partially based on the staffing model as well as on performance based issues, which he declined to discuss in an open public meeting. However he did report that he has discussed these performance issues with Administrative Chief Obtinario. Wilkerson then passed out a handout which gave a breakdown

of what the operating budget would look like with two Chief Officers vs. three Chief Officers. Attached.

Wilkerson passed out a second handout that explained the key components of a fully qualified Assistant Chief. Discussion by the Board followed. Pontius then opened the floor for Obtinario to speak.

Obtinario began by stating that her job description never indicated that she would go on calls. She indicated that she has been managing the finances of the District for a long time, longer than any of the current Board has been serving. She also made a point that the District has passed all of the State Audits while she was handling the finances.

Obtinario also mentioned that she recently planned the Port Ludlow Health & Safety Fair in which 300 people participated. She stated that she received lots of positive feedback.

Obtinario finished by stating that she understands the elimination of the position, but would like to continue working at Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue. The Board would be hard pressed to find anyone more dedicated.

Pontius then opened the floor for public comment.

Brandon Giger, a former Resident Firefighter for Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue, spoke in support of Obtinario.

Sandra Flaherty, a citizen spoke in support of Obtinario.

Audrey Peterson, a citizen spoke in support of Obtinario.

Tye Seeley, a current Firefighter/EMT with Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue, spoke in support of Obtinario.

Christie and Rich Gronquist, new to the area, spoke in support of Obtinario.

Jim Giger, a citizen spoke in support of Obtinario. He also stated that he felt that the board had been conducting illegal meetings and that board members could be recalled.

Wayne Kier, former Fire Chief of Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue, spoke to his knowledge of this Board and their ability to make good decisions. He also spoke about the thousands of hours above and beyond that he worked for the Fire District. He asked if the Board had looked into the possibility of a Joint Training Officer for the county.

Chair Pontius closed the public comment period and Board discussion followed regarding what would happen to Obtinario if the position were to be eliminated, the need for an assistant chief that could be a training officer and operations chief. It was also noted that in 2005 the board voted unanimously in favor of former Chief Kier's recommendation to hire an Assistant Chief because Kier worked to many hours and needed the help. **Motion:** Hansen moved to accept Wilkerson's staffing recommendation dated 09/09/08. Carmody seconded. Discussion followed. Obtinario asked what the motion was exactly. Hansen replied that the Motion is to accept the staffing recommendation of Wilkerson which eliminates the Administrative Chief position.

Pontius noted that more members of the Public had entered and gave them a chance to speak. Mike Bishop a former volunteer of Port Ludlow Fire & Rescue spoke in support of Obtinario. Beth Bishop, former volunteer and a past association president for two years, also spoke in support of Obtinario. Wheeler called for the question. Pontius called for the vote by a show of hands, Wheeler aye, Hansen aye, Pontius aye, Carmody aye, and Porter nay. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Wilkerson requested the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the performance of a public employee. Wayne Kier asked who the employee was, and Wilkerson responded, Obtinario.

The Board began Executive Session at 7:12pm for 15 minutes. Pontius announced a 10 minute extension at 7:27pm.

CALL BACK TO ORDER

Pontius called the meeting back to order at 7:37pm.

CALL FOR RECESS

Pontius called for a brief recess.

CALL BACK TO ORDER

Pontius called the meeting back to order at 7:40pm. He stated that no action had been taken in executive session.

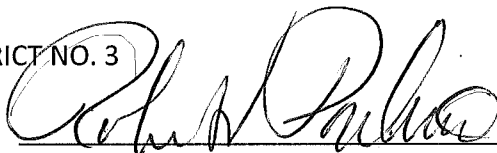
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Pontius called for adjournment at 7:40 P.M.

JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 3

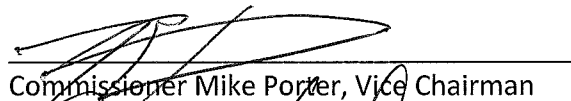
SIGNED:

BY:



Commissioner Robert Pontius, Chairman

BY:



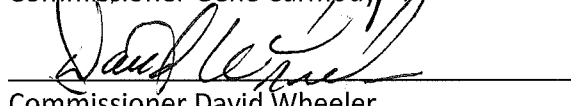
Commissioner Mike Porter, Vice Chairman

BY:



Commissioner Gene Carmody

BY:



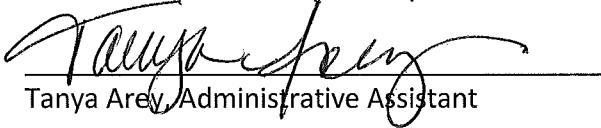
Commissioner David Wheeler

BY:



Commissioner William Hansen

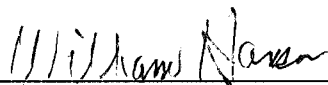
Minutes Taken and Prepared by:



Tanya Arey, Administrative Assistant

ATTEST:

By:



William Hansen, Commissioner, District Secretary