

GRAHAM FIRE & RESCUE
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 10, 2024 (Hybrid)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Homan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL BY DISTRICT SECRETARY

Present: Chair Robert Homan, Vice-Chair Russell Barstow (virtual), Commissioner Christine McAfee, Commissioner Brian Estes, Fire Chief Dustin Morrow, Deputy Chief Oscar Espinosa, CFO-District Secretary Sandi Roberts, HR Director Leah Cunningham, and Administrative Support Specialist Lori Evans

Absent: Commissioner Neil Samuelsen had an excused absence.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lieutenant Glenn Barcus reported that the GFA meeting has been postponed until Tuesday, April 16th, at 5:30 p.m. There will be discussion at the meeting on whether or not they will continue the GFA program. They are having a lot of issues with the program and are currently working with IAFF L726 Union and Central Pierce Fire & Rescue Support Services for assistance with some of these issues.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Commissioner McAfee motioned to approve the Agenda as submitted. Commissioner Estes seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of the Benefit Charge Public Hearing Minutes of March 13, 2024
- Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 13, 2024
- Approval of Financial Documentation:

Payables:	Check #34985 through Check #35053	\$157,971.25
Payables:	Check #35072 through Check #35118	\$262, 658.90
Payables (EFTs):		\$140.45
Payables (Payroll):	Check #35054 through Check #35071	\$1,094,506.74
Payroll (EFTs):		\$1,078,815.34
	TOTAL:	\$2,594,092.68

Commissioner Estes motioned to amend the Regular Board Meeting Minutes from March 13, 2024, to replace “Public Hearing” with “meeting” under the heading “Call to Order”. Commissioner McAfee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner McAfee motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Commissioner Estes seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Staff Recognition

Certificate of Appreciation - Larry Rabel was recognized for his excellent guidance and assistance with the Fire Benefit Charge in 2023-2024.

Certificate of Appreciation – Benefits Specialist Liz Lombardo was recognized for her work with the Fire Benefit Charge and the Graham Fire & Rescue Awards Banquet.

Certificate of Appreciation – Communications & Outreach Manager Brianna Stenstrom was recognized for the job she has done as the Communications & Outreach Manager.

Certificate of Appreciation – CFO Sandi Roberts was recognized for the job she has done as Chief Financial Officer.

Fire Chief's Report

Fire Chief Morrow reported on the following:

- Benefit Charge Gratitude- Staff and I would like to thank Larry Rabel and Liz Lombardo for their leadership and work efforts for the 2024 Benefit Charge.
- Finance Coordinator- Given the needs of our evolving Districts, we are recruiting for a Finance Coordinator in lieu of the vacant Executive Assistant position. The new Finance Coordinator will be hired to assist Director Sandi Roberts' work as the Executive Services Director and the Chief Financial Officer for Graham Fire & Rescue.
To maintain full finance staffing, I will also be exploring a remote work option with the Guild, potentially allowing a single Finance Position to remain full-time but work 3 days per week in-building and 2 days per week remote. This would be similar to how Central Pierce has their OPEIU configuration for limited positions.
- EMS Coordinator- Congratulations to Michelle Greco who has been reclassified as the EMS Coordinator! Michelle will be coordinating the EMT and Paramedic certifications for members from all three (3) agencies.
- Annual Awards Banquet- A big congratulations to our 2023 Award Recipients: Brian Fortner; Brianna Baker; Fernando Espino; Michelle Miller; and Oscar Espinosa! Thank you to all those involved in planning and setting up this important event!
- Joint Board Workshop Update- Staff and I are looking forward to the April 9th Joint Board Workshop for GFR, OVFR, & CPFR. The agenda for the workshop will include dialogue on merger exploration, capital facilities projects, 2024 strategic priorities, statistics for the individual organizations, and statistics for the future combined entity. Please expect dinner during the staff presentations.
- Merger Update- Staff from the Executive Services Directorate has been busy researching and understanding the actual administrative process to merge the three Districts. This research includes the petition process, SEPA (environmental impact), boundary review, taxation and more. While this information was shared at the Joint Board Workshop on April 9th, additional information on these matters will be discovered and shared with the Board in the coming months.

Standing Committees

- Policy & Procedure Committee:
 - Policy 106 – Fire Commissioner Compensation
Commissioner Estes reported that the policy was reviewed and edited.
Commissioner McAfee motioned to approve the policy as submitted with the edits.
Vice-Chair Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried.
 - Policy 109 – Board of Fire Commissioners' Uniform Policy
Commissioner Estes presented some changes that were made to the policy. The Board had a brief discussion about changing some of the verbiage in the policy. Following the discussion, a decision was made by the Board to table the policy until the next meeting. After his report on Policy 106, Commissioner Estes petitioned the Board for approval to attend meetings and be compensated for an aviation program he is heavily involved in that he felt would be a benefit to the District. Discussion was held regarding Commissioner Estes being permitted to be on the aviation committee and attend meetings at his discretion through the end of 2024; at which time the Board would revisit the request for Commissioner Estes to continue to be on the aviation committee for 2025.
Chair Homan motioned to approve Commissioner Estes to be on the aviation committee for the remainder of 2024. Vice-Chair Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Legislative Affairs Committee:
Chair Homan stated he was going to stand down the Legislative Affairs Committee until next year. There are no other reports to be made; therefore, it will be taken off of the Board Agenda until that time.
- Mergers & Consolidations Committee:
Nothing to report on.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board Book Pilot Program

Chief Espinosa reported on the next phases of the Digital Board Book Pilot Program and provided realistic timelines to support research, development, training, and administrative needs.

Hiring Update

HR Director Leah Turner gave a brief hiring update to the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 998 – An Exception to Resolution 969

CFO-District Secretary Sandi Roberts presented Resolution 998 to the Board for approval to authorize an exception to the requirements of Resolution 969, for Deputy Chief Tom Mason. This Resolution will allow Chief Mason to receive the medical benefits he is entitled to, whether he retire in 2024, 2025, or in 2026.

Commissioner Estes motioned to approve Resolution 998 as submitted. Vice-Chair Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Barstow thanked the Chiefs and all the admin staff and agencies involved. He also wanted to congratulate everyone tonight who received a Certificate of Appreciation.

Commissioner McAfee echoed Vice-Chair Barstow's words. She congratulated everyone who received a Certificate of Appreciation. She thanked Central Pierce for hosting the Special Board Meeting the evening before on Tuesday, April 9, 2024. She looks forward to seeing how the merger and exploration consolidation pans out. She just wants to make sure we take our time and make sure all the "i's" are dotted and the "t's" are crossed. She thanked the staff and everyone.

Commissioner Estes mimicked what has already been said. He applauded and congratulated everyone. He stated these are really exciting times moving forward and we have the opportunity to really be something awesome. He thanked everyone for all their hard work.

Chair Homan thanked the Policy Committee for their work on the policies. He agreed with Commissioner Estes that the direction we are heading in is exciting and historic and we are crossing a lot of historic boundaries right now. It's going to be great to work with all the people from all three Districts.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Homan announced the following Executive Sessions:

- RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) To evaluate the performance of a public employee.
- RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) To consider the price of a site for acquisition of real estate by purchase.
- RCW 42.30.140(4)(a) To discuss strategy for negotiations of a collective bargaining agreement.

The Executive Session was announced for 15 minutes starting at 6:42 p.m. and ending at 6:57 p.m., unless extended.

The meeting was reconvened at 6:57 p.m.

Commissioner McAfee motioned to direct the Fire Chief to pay the \$850,000 for property acquisition as long as the feasibility study passes. Vice-Chair Barstow seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McAfee motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commission Estes seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chair Homan adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.



Robert L. Homan, Board Chair



Sandi Roberts, CFO-District Secretary