

**South Whidbey Fire/EMS  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**Strategic Planning Retreat  
Saratoga Inn  
201 Cascade Ave., Langley, WA  
January 16, 2016**

**MINUTES**

In Attendance: Chairman Kenon Simmons  
Commissioner Bob Elliot  
Commissioner Frank Mestemacher  
Chief Rusty Palmer

- I. Call to Order – The Strategic Planning Retreat for South Whidbey Fire/EMS was called to order by Board Chair Kenon Simmons at 08:03.
- II. The Agenda was approved.
- III. Minutes of the approved minutes of the 2015 Retreat were reviewed.
- IV. The District's Vision, Mission and Values Statements were reviewed and discussed. Chief Palmer discussed placing the Mission Statement in each station and values on our apparatus.
- V. **Action Item:** Chief Palmer presented a previously approved Interlocal Agreement (ILA) between all Fire Districts and the City of Oak Harbor to apply for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant to replace all fire frequency base radios. The purpose of the new ILA was to change the Lead Agency for the grant from the City of Oak Harbor to Camano Island Fire and Rescue. The Chief requested that the Board authorize him to sign on behalf of the Board. **Commissioner Elliot moved to authorize Chief Palmer to sign. Commissioner Mestemacher 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion Carried.**
- VI. The development of a new Strategic Plan was discussed at length. The current plan is mostly complete, with the exception of construction of the Bayview fire station. Chief Palmer requested that we contact organizations outside of the department that were skilled at development of such long term plans to assist us in its development. Citizen outreach and participation in the plan process was discussed as an important part of its development.

- VII. Chief Palmer updated the Board about a number of policy amendments he will bring to the Board for 1<sup>st</sup> reading at the February meeting.

Chief Palmer presented a draft of amendments to the District's Awards & Recognition Program. The intent is to broaden the program to make the awards more meaningful to members. The amendments will add actions that the District does not currently recognize.

Amendments will be presented for the following policies areas:

1. To change the process by which Cost of Living Allowances are determined during the budget process.
  2. To allow retirees from the previous year to attend our Annual Awards Banquet in order to recognize them in front of the membership.
  3. A clarification of member responsibilities concerning concealed weapons.
  4. To allow issuance of warrants twice per month, one prior to legislative approval by the Board.
  5. To expand the District's internal Emergency Plan to add clarity to expectations of staff actions should we be affected by an emergency.
- VIII. The Chief updated the Board on the status of the Bayview fire station project. We are waiting for word on the approval of our application address needed site plan changes. Once approval is granted for the site plan language change, the next step will be development of the construction documents. Discussion ensued concerning the process, timing of funding, and next steps. Chief Palmer will invite a speaker to a Board workshop to discuss Councilmanic Bonds, current rates, the process from the bond agent's position, and timing.
- IX. The Chief updated the Board concerning the program development process for part-time firefighters. The Chiefs will start to develop the program at the upcoming Chief's Retreat on January 21<sup>st</sup>. That will be further refined at the upcoming Officer's Retreat on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Inspection services for fire inspections were discussed. The Chief advised that inspections will be part of the duties for part-time firefighters.

The Chief presented a Salary Matrix sample to the Board for consideration. The purpose of the matrix is to allow for clear long-term planning for salaries and benefits. The Chief will present a matrix based upon current salary ranges at a future regular meeting.

- X. The Chief discussed finding concerning the Volunteer Participation Standard. The Board reiterated their expectation that members participate at the minimum standard or greater in order to provide service to the public, and also stay a member.

The Chief advised the Board of an opportunity to allow volunteers to participate in our health insurance program by creating a volunteer health group. Following discussion, the Chief will conduct a survey of our members to see who among them might participate. Funding, whether it be by the member or District or combination of both was discussed but undetermined. The Chief will pull all of the numbers together to present to the Board.

- XI. The Board and Chief reviewed the Capital fund balance and future needs. The Chief recommended that the Facilities Plan Schedule and the Apparatus Plan Schedule be reviewed and updated to ensure that our replacement plans were still on track based upon our maintenance needs. The Chief will discuss those plans at a future Board meeting.

- XII. A general discussion of future funding needs took place. Much of the results of the new Strategic Plan and how it relates to current capital and operational needs will impact future funding. No specific options were address.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 14:30.

Respectfully submitted,

H.L. "Rusty" Palmer

Fire Chief, EFO