



North Mason Regional Fire Authority (NMRFA)

Meeting Minutes

Via Telephone/Videoconference

1/12/2021

Present: Commissioners Brooke Quigley, Paul Severson, Dan Kewish, Bob Miller; Executive Assistant Wassenaar; Chief Bakken; Assistant Chief Cooper

Meeting held via telephone/videoconference in accordance with Governor Jay Inslee's proclamation 20-28 issued on March 24, 2020

Absent: Kelley McIntosh

Guests: Ken VanBuskirk

Meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting minutes from December 8, December 15 and December 23, 2020, were presented for approval.

Commissioner Quigley had multiple spelling corrections to the December meeting minutes. Additionally, she requested clarification of the December 15 meeting minutes: *Chief Bakken advised the NMRFA will likely receive the vaccine prior to Mason County, as Peninsula Community Health Services has offered to provide vaccines to NMRFA.* Chief Bakken clarified that the COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed by Mason County Public Health through Mason General Hospital; NMRFA received the vaccine through Peninsula Community Health Services (PCHS) which is operated out of Kitsap County. As a result, NMRFA responders received the vaccine before it was available through Mason County Public Health.

Commissioner Quigley requested that Executive Assistant Wassenaar use complete sentences when documenting the meeting minutes. Commissioner Severson recommended tabling the discussion until the next Board meeting when Commissioner McIntosh will be available. Chief Bakken requested that any alterations or clarifications of the meeting minutes happen during the Board meeting with all Commissioners in attendance.

Executive Assistant Wassenaar will add the meeting minute discussion to the Agenda for the next Board meeting.

Commissioner Quigley moved to approve the meeting minutes with minor corrections. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Financial vouchers were presented for review.

Chief Bakken explained the large payment in excess of \$100,000 to Peninsula Community Health Services was for the QRT program; the expense will be reimbursed to the Authority at the end of the month by the federal government, as program is grant-funded.

A motion was made by Commissioner Miller to approve the expense and payroll vouchers under BIAS 210101001 to 210101087 in the amount of \$476,007.73. Commissioner Kewish seconded the motion. Motion carried.

FINANCIALS

The Financial Report will be available at the next Board Meeting January 19, 2021.

ADMINISTRATION

COVID-19 Update: Mason County continues to have a large number of new COVID-19 cases daily. Chief Bakken explained the Governor's new Two-Phase process for reopening; rather than treating each county independently, specific counties are combined into regions. Additionally, all regions start at Phase I with specific benchmarks required to move to Phase II including a reduction in COVID-19 related hospitalizations and in number of cases.

Special Use Permit Process: Due to COVID-19, the Special Use Permit Hearing for the new headquarters fire station has been moved from January 13, 2021, to January 27. Additionally, the Authority has an appointment with Mason County to submit for building permits on January 13. Chief Bakken explained the importance of submitting the permit package as soon as possible, as the energy code is scheduled to change effective February 1.

Organizational Meeting – Board Invitation: Chief Bakken advised the Authority is holding its annual Organizational Meeting on January 25 at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom and invited the Commissioners to attend. If more than two Commissioners would like to attend, we need to know in advance so that we can advertise as a public meeting. Chief Bakken also advised that the keynote speaker will be Dr. McGuire who has presented to the Mason County Opioid Stakeholder Group previously; Dr. McGuire will be sharing a presentation addressing the long-term impact of the pandemic/stress.

Tahuya Station Sign: The Authority is working in concert with Tahuya Community Club (TCC) to install a new reader board sign in front of the Tahuya fire station. Chief Bakken explained that a Tahuya resident passed away four or five years ago and left roughly \$100,000 to TCC for community improvement. TCC approached the Authority to partner on the installation of the sign; TCC will be paying for the sign itself, with the Authority providing the location and assisting with permitting. The sign will benefit the Authority, due to being able to provide emergency and training information to the community. Chief Bakken indicated he would also like to see a similar sign on Hwy 3 coming into Belfair.

Medic Unit Collision: An Authority medic unit was involved in a collision on Hwy 3 while responding to an emergency. The crash took place at the major intersection near Safeway in Belfair. The unit stopped at the intersection, controlled the traffic and swung wide around stopped vehicles. A passenger vehicle traveling the other direction collided with the unit. The driver indicated she assumed the ambulance was going to go left. Fortunately, there were no injuries to the medics or the other driver. The Authority is currently working with an insurance adjuster to determine the cost of the damage. Chief Bakken advised that once the damage amount is established, the Board will need to determine next steps; the vehicle

already has 180,000+ miles which is typically the end of life. Chief Bakken also confirmed the aid crew was not the first out medic unit and another backup is currently available.

Headquarters Station Build/Design Update: Chief Bakken indicated the Authority has signed the guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for the new station and the work since has been behind the scenes preparing for the permit submission scheduled for January 13. Chief Bakken would like to hold a kickoff or groundbreaking ceremony for the project itself; advised he would like the ceremony to be in-person for the Board members which will be recorded and streamed through the website and social media.

Administrative Assistant Update: The new Administrative Assistant Sarah Morgan has officially started with the Authority. She will attend the next Board meeting for introductions.

Structure Fire Haven Way: Chief Bakken provided an update on a significant residential fire on Haven Way. Chief was the first to arrive; upon arrival, all three occupants were safely vacated prior to his arrival but the structure already had significant damage. The cause of the fire is unknown at this time; the residents indicated they were in a back bedroom and heard a sound. When they came out of the bedroom, the living room was engulfed in flames.

Chief Bakken advised Authority responders received assistance from Union Fire, Grapeview Fire, Central Mason Fire and CRT. Additionally, the fire occurred during one of Ryan Cloud's first shifts serving as Lieutenant; his response was phenomenal.

OLD BUSINESS

Chief Bakken's Evaluation: Because Commissioner McIntosh is not in attendance, the Board will wait until next week to present Chief Bakken's evaluation. Executive Assistant Wassenaar advised that she put a copy of the draft evaluation in Commissioner Kewish's mailbox with instructions.

CAC Meeting: Commissioner Quigley provided an update on the CAC meeting that was held yesterday via Zoom. She indicated there was increased attendance; topics included the new headquarters fire station, an update on COVID-19 and follow-up meeting schedule. The next meeting will be held in March via Zoom; during that meeting they intend on discussing meeting frequency and whether they would like to meet via Zoom or in person. Assistant Chief Cooper advised that during the meeting he discussed the Tahuya fire station, including the grand opening ceremony, landscaping and items that are left to complete. Also discussed the plan for phase II but did not provide a timeline.

Commissioner McIntosh attended last night's CAC meeting; Commissioner Kewish volunteered to attend the next meeting in March.

NEW BUSINESS

COVID-19 Vaccine Program: Chief Bakken provided an update. At this time, the vaccine is available for Tier1A; Authority responders were offered the vaccine through Peninsula Community Health Services (PCHS) prior to Christmas; 50-55% of membership have received the first-round vaccination. Chief Bakken explained there are some members within the Authority who are currently electing not to receive the vaccine to due safety concerns. Chief advised that he feels the Union would push back if a mandatory directive were put in place; as a result, vaccination has been made available but will not be required. Additionally, at present, there are no specific state or federal guidelines for vaccination within the first

responder community. Because of the unclear guidelines, the Authority's current COVID policies including Personal Protective Equipment and physical distancing will remain in effect indefinitely. Commissioner Miller asked if Commissioners are eligible to receive the vaccine; Chief Bakken explained that only responders within the Authority are eligible at this time. Commissioner Miller asked for Chief Bakken's personal opinion regarding the vaccine; Chief Bakken indicated he understands the concerns, but also the need for the vaccine.

Commissioner Severson reiterated the importance of following the state and federal guidelines. Commissioner Kewish questioned the vaccine frequency, specifically, if it will be required every three months; Chief Bakken indicated he is unsure at this time. Commissioner Severson had read that it may be required every 6-8 months. Commissioner Quigley advised that the Authority will need to create a policy at some point for those responders electing not to receive the vaccine. Chief Bakken confirmed that a policy will be necessary, but is waiting for clarity further down the road.

Mental Health Request for Proposals (RFP): Chief Bakken advised that he and Executive Assistant Wassenaar are finishing the RFP for the new mental health and wellness program and will send to the Board for review later this week.

Labor Negotiations: Chief Bakken advised that no closed session is necessary; the Union body will be voting on the proposal at a meeting being held this evening. Approval/ratification of the proposal is expected. Commissioner Severson advised the Union representatives, Captain Cleveland and Lieutenant Cloud, came to negotiations well-prepared and creative; the process has been fairly simple and enjoyable. Chief Bakken indicated he is hoping to receive the results of the vote at the next labor meeting, scheduled for tomorrow. Commissioner Severson wanted to note the fourth shift proposal is a very large step for the Authority; does not anticipate implementing the additional shift until the second quarter or later, due to scheduling and vacation processes that will need to be finalized.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Public Comment: Ken VanBuskirk in attendance. Mr. VanBuskirk indicated he commented on the SEPA for the Special Use Permit and sent an email with an attachment to Chief Bakken. Chief Bakken confirmed that he forwarded the email and attachment to the members of the Board. Mr. VanBuskirk advised if they have questions or would like to discuss, he provided his phone number.

With no further business Commissioner Severson adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Authority Secretary Renee Wassenaar

Commissioner Kelley McIntosh

Commissioner Paul Severson

Commissioner Bob Miller

Commissioner Daniel Kewish

Commissioner Brooke Quigley