

# Clackamas Fire District #1



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS' WORK SESSION MINUTES December 19, 2022

### ATTENDANCE:

Board of Directors: Marilyn Wall, Jay Cross, Chris Hawes, Thomas Joseph, and Jim Syring

Others present: Nick Browne, Michael Carlsen, Steve Deters, Heather Goodrich, Izak Hamilton, Melanie Kinne, Sam McCullough, Dan Mulick, Shawn Olson, Ariel Roberts, Brian Stewart, Mark Whitaker, Doug Whiteley, and Michael Wong – Clackamas Fire; Mark Corless and Andrew Gordian – Local 1159; Jason McKinnon and Phil Schneider – Sandy Fire.

### I. CALL TO ORDER PER ORS 192.610 TO 192.690 ORS 192.650 – The meeting is being recorded.

President Wall called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### III. CONTRACT WITH SANDY FIRE DISTRICT – Assistant Chiefs Steve Deters and Brian Stewart

Assistant Chief (AC) Deters explained that the draft given to the Board is the same draft contract for service that was presented to the Sandy Fire District (SFD) Board earlier that month. He shared that CFD and SFD have been in an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for over two years. They've met through the Interagency Committee and jointly agreed and proceeded with a feasibility study. The recommendations have been discussed at joint meetings with both boards. The SFD elected officials requested CFD to draft a full contract for service.

AC Stewart explained that the contract is for seven years and would begin on July 1, which ties into the end of the existing IGA. This contract would be cost neutral. CFD would staff SFD stations 24/7, plus an additional peak activity unit for 12/7. This contract continues CFD staffing Station 18 (Eagle Creek) and provides volunteer opportunities. They have thoroughly itemized what the transition will cost to have SFD match CFD's standards. He proceeded to go through other details of the contract.

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Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Whitaker showed a cost analysis slide and demonstrated how the contract will be cost neutral.

Director Joseph noted that it was a seven-year contract but some of CFO Whitaker's estimates are only five years. CFO Whitaker said he was showing a conservative revenue forecast.

Director Cross asked why the contract was seven years. AC Deters said traditionally the contracts have been for five years. Other contracts have been shorter such as 18 months. This contract shows a long-term commitment from both districts for long-term planning.

Director Joseph brought up that in the feasibility study, it showed that within seven years SFD would not be able to survive as a district. Yet, this would be a seven-year contract. Would they be okay? AC Deters noted that the study said SFD would reach catastrophic failure within seven years if they were on their own. Through this contract, SFD would benefit from CFD's buying power as a large district for things such as health insurance and other benefits. Clackamas Fire also benefits from this contract as the peak activity unit will be servicing the eastern part of the District (Eagle Creek, Boring). This is an enhanced service that wouldn't be possible without Sandy. Chief Browne said that this is a regional win-win. It's not Clackamas coming in and saving Sandy. This is a win-win between two organizations.

Director Syring said that the contract was well written. He noted that it is up for approval from the SFD board in January. Regardless of whether it is approved, the current IGA will be ending soon. Currently, SFD is paying \$753,000 for services. A case can be made that that's not enough. If the new contract for service doesn't go through, the current IGA and those costs need to be reevaluated. If the current IGA goes away, Station 18 funding also goes away. He liked the fact that the contract was for seven years. It's not permanent and there are ways out. It's not a merger. He feels it's a win-win and if Sandy approves it, he would sign it in a heartbeat. He felt it was a no-brainer and in the best interest of the taxpayers from both districts.

Chief Browne said that SFD's Fire Chief relayed that Sandy's Board reached a unanimous consensus to give feedback to Clackamas's Board, which they referred to as a letter of intent. It basically said that the contract looks good, and they intend to move forward. SFD's Board has not voted on it yet. There are a few changes to the contract that SFD's Board is going over with their legal representation. They wanted their intent to be clear to the Clackamas Board, and that they appreciate the collaboration.

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Director Hawes said he liked what they've done with the contract. To him, it's as simple as economies of scale, and he believes that the numbers make sense. This really bolsters the response to the eastern area of the District.

Director Cross noted that he also liked the contract for several reasons and felt seven years was a good length of time. He doesn't expect the 5.8% average AV growth of the last five years to continue. It's very likely this will be lower, and this should be planned for. He also asked what ranks would staff the 12-hour staffed vehicle. AC Stewart said it would be an officer and an apparatus operator one of which would be a paramedic. Division Chief (DC) Mulick said it will be a lighter resource. It will be the first unit up for medical calls and will respond to these types of calls so that heavy assets are available for fires and motor vehicle accidents. The flexibility with the rank structure is consistent with the squad model that has been used in other stations. Discussion followed.

President Wall asked about the 16 employees that SFD is bringing over. If SFD terminates the proposed contract, Clackamas would be responsible for those employees. Are they quality employees? Chief Browne answered yes. DC Mulick said with the command and control of the current IGA, he can really see how SFD's personnel have adapted to CFD's strategies and tactics. Operationally, everything has gone great. Their crews are operating as one of CFD's companies right now. The relationship and partnership are outstanding. All their firefighters are trained as apparatus operators, and they have a high number of paramedics. He feels they are all outstanding people, and they will all be great assets. AC Deters also mentioned that the Sandy Fire personnel have been training with Clackamas Fire for the last three years. They are a small agency wearing a lot of hats and he does not foresee any issues bringing them over.

President Wall thought there was an early discussion that there would be a provision in this contract that SFD would need to go for a levy because they don't have enough money. Chief Browne said that it's not part of this contract. The discussion was that Sandy Fire would need a levy to provide the level of service that Clackamas Fire does.

President Wall said that the citizens of SFD will receive the same services that the citizens of CFD do, but at 22 cents per \$1,000 less than Clackamas citizens. If the levy passes, Clackamas citizens will be paying even more, while Sandy gets the same services. She has a hard time with that. Director Hawes brought up that if the levy passes, Clackamas Fire citizens would have stations with 4-person staffing but Sandy Fire's station would still have three-person staffing.

President Wall asked how SFD is paying for the PERS Tier 1 and Tier 2 liability if all their funds, minus capital funding, are going to CFD. How do you leave that liability with Sandy Fire?

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CFO Whitaker said that CFD is taking on their employees and their first contributions from July 1. As their PERS rates go up, CFD will cover them. It's possible that Clackamas Fire will take on some of that risk, but Sandy's reserve funds will need to cover the rest. Starting July 1, CFD would also do Sandy Fire's finances and budget and that will require Clackamas to do that planning.

President Wall asked about Sandy Fire's apparatus. Have they been inspected, and are funds being put aside for capital replacement? AC Deters said that the CFD Fleet department currently maintains their apparatus. One of the apparatuses is just under two years old. The building is only four years old. Sandy Fire also has some urban renewal dollars left that they can use. The main station is seismically updated. He also went over several other assets that they inspected prior to the contract.

Director Syring wanted to comment on the tax rate discussion from earlier. He said there has never been a contract for service where the tax rates have been the same. Clackamas Fire citizens are not paying more due to the contract with Sandy. Sandy Fire citizens are also continuing to pay their current tax rate. However, when Clackamas Fire receives the tax monies from SFD, CFD can do more with those dollars than Sandy Fire could on their own. Doing more with that money is better for both groups of taxpayers. Discussion followed.

#### **IV. CLACKAMAS EMERGENCY SERVICES FOUNDATION BYLAWS – Chief Nick Browne**

He explained President Jerry Kearney will be covering this later in the regular Board Meeting. The Foundation wants to update the bylaws. Currently, it says that Fire Chief of Clackamas Fire will be the ex-officio and they want to update that to the Fire Chief of Clackamas Fire or their delegate. He wants the ability to empower and delegate that responsibility.

Director Joseph said he supports the Fire Chief in this endeavor.

#### **V. FIRE CHIEF EVALUATION PROCESS– Chief Nick Browne**

Chief Browne said during the Executive Committee meeting, it was discussed that the evaluation process should be done earlier to coincide with budget time. They would also like to add to his evaluation how he interacts with the community and strategic partners. It will be an online form and have the same style of questioning that the Board completes during their evaluation of him. The intent is for the Board to have stakeholder feedback. In the future, he would like to open the

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form to internal stakeholders. He envisions switching back and forth between internal and external stakeholders each year.


President Wall said that they wanted the evaluation to be before budgets so they could plan a salary adjustment for the Fire Chief if they wish. She wanted to update the Board on these discussions.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 pm.

Minutes recorded by Executive Assistant Ariel Roberts and prepared by Administrative Technician Jessamyn Ode.

  
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**President Marilyn Wall**

  
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**Secretary Chris Hawes**