

KITTITAS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #2
Ellensburg, Washington

Minutes of: Commissioners' Board Meeting
Meeting date: May 31, 2023.
Meeting time: 1800
Meeting place: 400 E. Mountain View, Station 29

The special meeting was publicized according to the requirements of Chapter 188, Laws of 2012. Each Board member was sent a written notice via e-mail; the Daily Record was notified via an e-mail, a notice was posted on KVFR's website, and the notice of special meeting was posted in the front window at 400 E. Mountain View.

Commissioners in Attendance: Pat Clerf, Neal Houser, Neil O'Neill, Jerry Pettit and Ross Ogan.

Others in Attendance: Chief John Sinclair, District 7 Secretary Eryn Micallef, Deputy Chief Hutsell, Fire District 7 Commissioners- Commissioner Cernick, Commissioner Dickinson, Commissioner Zipperer, ASM McBride, Richard Curtis-ESCI, Patrick McIntosh-ESCI, numerous members of the public and numerous firefighters.

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Clerf called the meeting to Order at 1800 hours and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Dickinson opened the meeting for KCFD7.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Houser a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Dickenson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

3. Discussion on regionalization efforts between Kittitas County Fire District 2 and Kittitas County Fire District 7:

Chief Sinclair introduced ESCI's Richard Curtis and Patrick McIntosh. The following questions and discussion occurred.

- If another agency wants to join, can they? Yes, they can join at any point in time. You can look at an RFA.
- How long would the contract be? This depends, you can choose the length, but Eastside Fire & Rescue typically has a 7 year contract, with a 2 year notification phase if they intend to end the contract. Chief asked ESCI to talk about city annexation. Richard shared that there is an RCW that requires 3 years minimum once an annexation agreement is met, this is to help provide a timeline for effectiveness to be evaluated. If KVFR and FD7 decided to do a contract, the agencies would set the service level in the language. Chief shared that social media is reporting that tax money would be shifted to KVFR. KVFR and FD7 have separate levy rates. Both agencies have costs and a contract would not send tax money to one another. Both boards will remain in place.
- Commissioner Clerf asked ESCI to provide an update on the hospital district amendment to the report. Richard shared that the hospital is very proud of the pre-hospital care that is

provided and there is no interest in dissolving Upper County Medic One. There was talk about what can be done to improve services in the upper county, one item identified was having a BLS transport unit.

- Have you seen scenarios when agencies choose to not go down this road of consolidation? Yes, there has been. A District and City near Spokane started moving in this direction and then stopped. Lack of communication likely lead to this decision.
- When the study was being done, was there a reason as to why other agencies didn't want to join? Most felt that they would head in this direction but didn't feel ready at this time. There was a lack of communication and mistrust amongst agencies. Chief shared that he has approached other districts and departments and had no interest.
- Did you contact FD1? Yes, there was no interest. Commissioner Clerf shared that the entire board met a few years ago with FD1 and their board and citizens are happy with their level of service and were not interested.
- Has ESCI done a study with this much of a geographic difference? No, Patrick with ESCI is familiar with Orange County which has a large geographic area to cover including mountain and beach areas.
- Commissioner Clerf commented that he is interested in how we can better take care of the community and the people. Pooling resources works on the coast and there are several RFA's and consolidations.
- Commissioner Pettit spoke about when he was the county auditor and there was a time when FD7 was almost short of making payroll and now they are in a good position. The money and accounts will still be separate. We are still looking at consolidation, no decision has been made.
- Commissioner Dickinson asked Commissioner Zipper about the consolidation he is going through with the department he works at. Commissioner Zipper shared that the merger with his department is going through tomorrow but feels this consolidation is different than his department because of two things. The departments have been working together operationally for years, including training, and they are geographically closer. He had concerns that the two agencies have not been brought together enough to show the benefits of consolidating. Chief Sinclair stated that he has not been moving forward with getting details together because he doesn't want to get out ahead of the boards. He recommends looking at keeping the workforce separate but bringing together administrative things like payroll and HR to have cost savings.
- ESCI Consultant Richard doesn't believe that most consolidations save money, but administration working together helps bring unity, more efficiency and eliminates duplication.

Commissioner Clerf asked the Commissioners to share their individual thoughts. Commissioner Pettit felt that a closer look at the savings, where the benefits are, doing joint training together and publicly investigating together to see what the benefits are. Commissioner Ogan wants to see small steps and more investigation into the level of service before a merger. Commissioner Houser didn't feel it was feasible right now and other departments he worked at were closer to each other. Commissioner O'Neill wanted to continue to build relationships and have other contracts in time. Commissioner Clerf wants to look for the future and build something for future generations. Commissioner Dickinson wants to continue to come up with a plan and provide an opportunity for the Chief to identify things beneficial to both agencies.

No decisions were made but both boards would like to continue to work together. Chief Sinclair will be working on a resolution for both boards to review at their next regular meeting.

4. Adjournment

Commissioner Dickerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner O'Neill seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 1913 hours.


Board Chair


District Secretary

