# SOUTH WHIDBEY FIRE/EMS SPECIAL MEETING

**5579 Bayview Road, Langley, WA 98260**

**December 20, 2023 – 4:00 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 220 802 6387

Passcode: 926342

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**In Attendance:** Commissioner Towers, Commissioner Noblet, Commissioner Erickson, Chief Walsh and Nicole Hagen

**Audience:** Capt. Gideon and Lt. Kalahiki

1. **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Noblet motioned to approve the agenda with the addition of financial outsource proposal, Erickson seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

1. **New Business**

Strategic planning

Chairman’s comments

Review capital plan updates

Commissioner Towers stated that there are potential additions to the capital budget. Commissioner Noblet stated that the budget needed to have the flexibility to secure the propane tank and generator at Station 36 as well as the other stations.

Discuss potential station changes

Commissioner Erickson stated that Station 32.5 seems more efficient. Commissioner Noblet added that Station 32.5 serves the public best.

Review standard of cover document

Review need for levy

Chief Walsh discussed that the levy lid lift range that the District was looking at was between $1.10 and $1.20. Commissioner Noblet added that he votes for $1.20 lid lift. Commissioner Towers agreed with $1.20 based on the spreadsheet.

Commissioner Noblet motioned the Board to approve a $1.20 levy lid lift. Erickson seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Review financial outsource proposal

Chief Walsh explained that the District would benefit from an outside agency taking a look at our finances and seeing how we could possibly streamline some of our processes. Chief Walsh had a tele conference with Plante Moran. They proved AP, budgeting, and account auditing, but do not provide payroll. Chief Walsh proposed that the District use them in the interim.

Commissioner Towers asked if we would be doing Payroll, AP and AR in the interim?

Chief Walsh explained that we can do Payroll, AP and AR in the interim and that the alternative is that we continue what we are currently doing and then go out for another Finance Officer in the future.

Commissioner Towers asked what the estimated cost to the District would be to use Plante Moran.

Chief Walsh explained that the estimated cost would be between 6-8k/month depending on what services of theirs that we chose.

Commissioner Erickson expressed concerns with going outside for cost vs. benefit as Plante Moran seems costly.

Chief Walsh explained that the District can absorb these costs as long as it is beneficial.

Commissioner Towers asked when the State Audit will be happening.

Chief Walsh explained that the Audit was already in process.

Commissioner Erickson would like to clarify what exact services Plante Moran will be providing for the District initially and then moving forward.

Chief Walsh explained that he will have another conversation with Plante Moran regarding the scope of services they will provide the District. He also explained that Plante Moran will only do up to three months interim.

Commissioner Towers discussed the blended rate versus the Senior Accountant rate and that he suspects the first month or so will be at the higher rate as well as more hours.

Chief Walsh talked about the HR gap that the District currently has that needs to be filled. This was previously done by the Finance Officer.

Commissioner Noblet asked if HR could be contracted out.

Chief Walsh explained that he has looked into this option and was unable to find a good resource.

Commissioner Noblet motioned to move forward with Chief discussing details with Plante Moran to have something to vote on in January’s Board Meeting, potentially sooner if needed. Erickson seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Commissioner comments

Commissioner Noblet commended the crews for the Department Christmas Party and the lights. He also mentioned that the Chief’s review is coming up in January and that the Finance Officer and/or Plante Moran is the number one priority.

Commissioner Towers would like to see the Chief’s review before the January meeting. He also asked for Finance Officer comps and the start of the Finance Officer job description.

Commissioner Noblet nominated Commissioner Erickson to Chairman for 2024.

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1. **Executive Session**

***RCW 42.30.110(1)(f)*** *To receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee. However, upon the request of such officer or employee, a public hearing or a meeting open to the public shall be conducted upon such complaint or charge;*

***RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)*** *To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment*

*or to review the performance of a public employee. However, subject to RCW 42.30.140(4),*

*discussion by a governing body of salaries, wages, and other conditions of employment to*

*be generally applied within the agency shall occur in a meeting open to the public, and*

*when a governing body elects to take final action hiring, setting the salary of an individual*

*employee or class of employees, or discharging or disciplining an employee, that action*

*shall be taken in a meeting open to the public;*

1. **Action taken as a result of the Executive Session**

No executive session taken.

1. **Conclude**

Commissioner Noblet motioned to adjourn the meeting, Erickson seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm

Nicole Hagen,

Board Secretary