

TILLAMOOK FIRE DISTRICT

07/11/2023

The regular board meeting for Tillamook Fire District was held on Tuesday, July 11th, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. at the Tillamook 911 Center, 2311 Third Street, Tillamook, Oregon.

Board Directors Present:

Brian Cameron, Chair
Chris Kell, Vice Chair
Allen Burris, Director

Leonard Ingles, Director
Aaron Burris, Director

Staff Present: Jeff McBrayer, Interim Fire Chief

Guests: Tom Miller, Brenda Descloux, Samantha Spratt, Will Cherelle, Karleigh Kelly, Jerry Rillette, Mike Smith, Kris Davis, Hunter Perry, Brian Reynolds, Shae Reynolds, Robert Ollikainen, David Audet, Justin Aufdermauer, Joel Hamburger, Bradly Hamburger, Tim Hamburger, Ethan Gilbert, Heather Sims, Mario Neahring, Terry Zuercher, Mitch Zuercher, Kris Grimes, Charles Hall, Daryl Hamilton, Kyle Adams, Jason Sterling, James Garling, Cheryl Davy, Mike Boydell, via Zoom: Misty Burris, Kathy Marchant, Kenneth Martin, Jason Ulmer, Allyson Durrer, Sylvia Schriber, Brandon Abbott, Joann Teem, Angie Zuercher, Kekoaokeoula Lyn, Timothy Bennett, Daryl Hamilton, Casey Burden, Roy Ellerbroek, Emma Adams, Gabrielle Sterling, Rick Adams, David Helmricks, Denise Sterling, Lexie Hampton

Call to Order: The regular board meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Brian Cameron at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes: Vice Chair Brian Cameron performed the swearing in of the new Board Director, Aaron Burris. A motion was made to move Vice Chair Brian Cameron to Chair by Director Leonard Ingles and was seconded by Chris Kell. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0. A motion to move Director Chris Kell to Vice Chair was made by Allen Burris and seconded by Leonard Ingles. Motion to move Leonard Ingles to Secretary/Treasurer was made by Allen Burris and seconded by Aaron Burris. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0. A motion to approve the June 13th, June 26th and June 28th, 2023, minutes was made by Leonard Ingles and seconded by Allen Burris. Motion passed by a vote of 4-0, Aaron Burris abstained as he was not present for the June meetings.

Tillamook Volunteer Firefighters Association: A statement was made by TVFA President Jason Sterling. He spoke of stability within the fire district, responsibility and unity. The association wants to know how to move forward through all of the litigation and instability throughout this district. Sterling requested, on behalf of the association, that Interim Chief McBrayer be made permanent in order to establish strong leadership and stability. Sterling stated that that making Chief McBrayer permanent would increase confidence in the district among the

association, all the volunteers have voted, all are in favor and they would like the Board to finalize their decision.

Chief Paul Edwards made a statement following Jason Sterling, he stated that it is disturbing and alarming that the district is spending such a large amount of money on litigation that is much needed for equipment and day to day needs of this department.

No more comments from the Volunteer Association.

Non-Agenda Items

Public Comment: 1) Jerry Rillette stated that ‘when you swore in the new member, you stated that Allen Burris would not be associated with financial considerations on a board where he is associated with the other Mr. Burris. If that is the case, how can Aaron Burris be involved when his brother cannot? As a public taxpayer, I don’t understand how that works.’ Director Cameron stated that as long as proper recusals at times when litigation and sensitive topics come up and all laws are followed it would be ok. Director Allen Burris stated that the litigation has nothing to do with the day to day financials which are all public information, ‘we cannot make any decisions or be in any discussions involving the law suit’; 2) Tim Hamburger asked Director Aaron Burris to resign based on ethics violations and conflict of interest or potential of making profits off of his lawsuit. Director Burris declined to resign; 3) Donny Burden stated that he is ‘good friends with Don Averill and Don stated that the fire district did a very good job on the fire last night. Tillamook is the best, they know what they are doing but this won’t continue if everyone keeps fighting’; 4) Cheryl Davy offered her love and support to TFD and wants to vote for a levy; 5) Mike Randall asked Director Aaron Burris what he ‘could do on the board that is positive and useful for the TFD’. Director Aaron Burris stated that he has ‘25 years of service and experience with the district, and it is a passion’ of his. Mike Randall asked, ‘how do you think a lawsuit against the district that could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars is going to help the district?’ Director Burris declined to answer based on litigation; 6) Chad Holder, “I volunteered in 2002 - 2009 for the district, one of the primary responsibilities of being part of a board is that you are responsible for the business finances, how can we have board members with outstanding lawsuits against the district? The other primary duty of the board is to select the chief, you heard Jason Sterling on behalf of the association, the decision to select a chief is one of the most important decisions that the board will make. Usually, the board would have about 6 months to see how everything works, it’s really hard to do that when the new chief is saddled with multiple lawsuits. The other issue is that there is two brothers serving on this board, an important thing about a board is transparency, as time goes on, the public, board members and volunteers need to understand how decisions are made on the board and how transparency is being maintained. This department is very important to me, my brother is a firefighter, when we came here to check it out we were amazed at the reception we received, I want this organization to succeed’; 7) Brenda Descloux, ‘it is very important to remember how we got here, lawsuits don’t just come about because, its usually because somebody feels that they have been wronged and anyone at any time can file a lawsuit about anything. I filed a grievance with this board on June 26th and I have yet to hear any response, will my grievance be addressed?’ Board Chair Cameron stated that ‘the grievance was submitted during an emergency budget hearing where non agenda items were not included. We did not take your grievance, though you are welcome to send it now and we will

take it.’ 8) Jim Harling, ‘the volunteers saved my life and my wife, we don’t know what we would do without you and I say thank you every day’. 9) Kathy Joe, ‘I am grateful for this volunteer fire department, it has changed my son’s life, if we lose all of these people because of all of this then I feel sorry for you all. I am proud of my son, and I am proud of all of these people for taking him under their wing and teaching him how to be a grown up. We need these people to be around to teach the next group of people’.

Financial Statement / Correspondence:

May and June Financial statements were presented to board members, Allen Burriss motioned to approve, Seconded by Leonard Ingles. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Copies of the bank statements, LGIP balance and accounts payable were forwarded electronically and presented to the board. A motion to pay the bills was heard from Allen Burriss and seconded by Leonard Ingles. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Fire Chief Report: Chief McBrayer submitted a copy of his report electronically to the board of directors Financials to date June 31st, 2023. Personnel Services \$596,688 Materials & Services, \$381,191 Capital Outlay, \$68,735 for a combined Total \$ 1,046,615.

88 Calls for Service in June. 60% were for emergency medical services, there is an article in the paper about extended call time for ambulance service due to staffing. This issue has put a severe hardship on the department due to critical patients that we have needed to stay with for 20 minutes or longer. We will have to increase our budget line item for EMS supplies because we are using supplies that we typically have not used before because the ambulance service would arrive within a few minutes. Call volume is increasing, and I fully expect to reach at least 100 calls in July.

The Chairman has asked that I relay that the State Fire Marshal and the State Police are leading an investigation in a suspicious fire that started at 0130 this morning. This fire has already been investigated by Sharon Miller with the state fire marshal’s office, she was contacted immediately after we arrived on scene and found evidence that was suspicious in nature.

Apparatus Ladder 71 is still out of service, there has not been any preventative maintenance done in several years. The water weight O rings, seals and pullies had corroded and failed. It will be another week or two before it will be available to us.

Heavy brush 71 will go in for repairs after Ladder 71 is complete, heavy brush has issues with a leak in the transmission, the PTO pump and a computer control board that we are unable to fix inhouse.

We are making a change from the first due software that was approved last year because of cost increase and budget shortfall. I spoke with the state fire marshal’s office, and we can get a program called image trend at no cost to the district. We are in transition to do that, and it will take a couple months to get that data transferred, I will keep the board apprised.

Seismic upgrade grant is in play, we have met with the folks who have written the grant, advertisements have been placed for RFQ for grant liaison and contractors, we will have walk throughs and architectural work beginning in September. We estimate that construction will begin in January with a 6-month construction time which is one of the reasons that we are meeting in the 911 center. We will, if possible, continue to do use the 911 center for board meetings so as we use the facilities at station 71 to store additional EMS equipment and prepare the upstairs for the seismic upgrade.

Numerous wildland classes have begun, and most everyone here spent their entire weekend off doing a drill. We have done burn training where we use the burn trailer in front of station 71 for hose stream training. Staff and volunteers have agreed to take fire inspection classes and have worked with Shannon Miller at the State Fire Marshals office to get their fire inspector certification. All the firework stands have been inspected and we shut down two illegal fireworks stands. Rope rescue classes have also taken place.

Additional information: Ambulance service increasing response time to 20 minutes, Director Burris stated that we used to get supplies from the hospital, Chief McBrayer agreed to speak to hospital administration about receiving supplies due to the recent TFD 20k expenditure on medical supplies. The nationwide standard is 10 minutes, 20 minutes is double the national standard. The concern is that at times the closest ambulance is in Pacific City, we could have a call in rockaway and we have only one ambulance, possibly two. In the recent weeks where the closest ambulance was in Pacific City, we had a critical anaphylaxis, allergic reaction at Safeway in the pharmacy that we treated and stayed with for almost a half hour. Then we had some other critical calls where there has been a significant delay. We are doing the best we can to support Adventist and their crews, we know that it is not their fault and that they are shorthanded, we are doing the best we can, we are just stretched very thin with fire season and budget. Director Burris asked if we could look into ER Recovery to try to recoup some of that cost through patient insurance. Chief McBrayer stated that his understanding is that we would need a transport or billing license through the state, which is not possible due to our fire tax coverage. We are still doing ER Recovery services and billing for car accidents and have had several tourists take their RV's off roading through ditches and telephone poles, we have billed those and received 300-500 per incident. Director Burris asked, what does it take to become licensed? Chief McBrayer stated that we would need to get with the Oregon Department of Health, and we would have to have a transport capable rescue, I do not have an immediate cost of a rescue, somewhere in the 100k range. We have several certified EMR's, EMT's intermediates and then me as a medic, all of those folks would need to get their DPSST per the licensing agreement and then we would be able to transport. Director Burris asked, do we have to be a transport facility in order to bill insurance? Chief McBrayer stated, yes, and I have spoken to the crew about this before, due to Medicaid/Medicare cuts there is generally not a lot of money in billing, typically private ambulance companies make their money in mileage that they bill, and in Tillamook, there isn't much mileage. I can explore this next month and give you a better idea. Our concern now is that if there is no ambulance service, we may have to load a patient into the back of the suburban and take them to Adventist.

Old Business: Director Allen Burris asked about security camera progress, we have not sent out an official RFQ but we are getting more information from folks in the area and are working on getting quotes.

Director Burris stated that he would love to take advantage of the free SDAO free board training. Chief McBrayer stated that he would be happy to get a calendar from SDAO, Director Burris stated that they will come here to do the training. Chairman Cameron stated that per our attorneys, any active litigants are not permitted to represent the fire district anywhere, even at training. Those who are not active litigants on the board are welcome to represent the fire district.

New Business: Director Burris asked, have we posted a job application for chief yet? Chief McBrayer stated that he has contacted SDAO, they have an interim fire chief board, he has requested that they take on the process of doing that. Director Ingles reiterated that there is a contract with Chief McBrayer for one year, the lead time to hire a Fire Chief is quite long.

Executive Session: Per ORS 192.660 (2)(b)(f)(h) Entered at 6:31pm and Exited 7:19pm
No decisions were made in this session.

Concerns of the Board: Chairman Cameron, requested that all communication between the board be kept in email to avoid serial meetings.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. was made by Leonard Ingles and seconded by Chris Kell. Motion passed by a vote of 3-0. Both Directors Burris had recused themselves during a portion of executive session and were not present. The next meeting will be the regular board meeting on August 8, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Board Chair, Brian Cameron

Jeff McBrayer, Fire Chief