



North County Regional Fire Authority
COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
via ZOOM
September 13 , 2021
1:00pm

CALL TO ORDER

The following attendees were present:

COMMISSIONERS

~~Greg Oakes, Chair~~ Excused
Jan Iverson
Judy Williams
Ric Cade
Larry Longley, Vice-Chair
Rob Johnson
Marilyn Oertle
Deborah Nelson
Barb Tolbert

FIRE AUTHORITY STAFF

~~John Cermak, Fire Chief~~
Don Bartlett, Assistant Fire Chief
~~Mike Makela, Assistant Fire Chief~~
Katie Casey, Board Secretary
Randy Krumm, Finance Manager
Kayley Mizell, Administrative Assistant
Doug ten Hoopen, Temp. Project Manager

Meeting called to order at 1:02pm

MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

1st: Commissioner Johnson

2nd Commissioner Tolbert

Discussion:

APPROVED: Unanimous

TRAINING CENTER BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW

Chief Cermak reviewed a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview and business plan for the Regional Firefighting Training Center project.

Commissioner Nelson inquired as to where the \$900,000 for the property purchase came from and Chief Cermak let her know that it came from the Capital Reserve Funds.

Commissioner Nelson asked if we have considered partnerships with other agencies to share the burden of costs associated with this project and Chief Cermak explained that he has been collaborating with the Snohomish Training Consortium and have been provided with information that would lead him to believe there is not only interest from other agencies, but there is definitely a need for an additional training facility in this area.

Commissioner Nelson asked whether or not we have received letters of interest from local colleges expression interesting in utilizing the training facility. Chief Cermak stated that this has been considered however it has not been done yet because at this point it's unclear as to exactly what will be built on this site and that pre-negotiating doesn't give him the best latitude to negotiate at later date when we know exactly what the training center will look like.

Commissioner Nelson expressed concern over the financial burden put onto taxpayers.

Commissioner Tolbert asked if the crews would still respond to calls if they were using the training center to train and Chief Cermak stated that they would respond just as they do now, but they would do it from the training center vs. any other potential training site they may have been on. Commissioner Tolbert stated she thought the information that was presented during the merger talks were different than what was being presented now.

Commissioner Cade asked if Chief Cermak knew what the training center revenue looked like for Snohomish Fire District 4. Chief Cermak wasn't certain, however he did state that they just raised their daily cost from \$750 to \$1,000.

Commissioner Nelson would like to see a 10-year long range plan to include staffing, facilities, equipment, etc.



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Commissioner Nelson asked when the next Fire and EMS Levy's were scheduled. Chief Cermak stated the next Fire Levy will go to the voters in 2025 and will be in effect 2026 and they next EMS Levy will go to the voters in 2023 and will be in effect 2024.

Commissioner Oertle asked what the Union thought about the new training facility. It was decided that the Union will have an opportunity at the end of meeting for their comments.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the business plan is shown as operating on assumptions and that we won't know what the possible revenues are until the training center is operational. He also stated that ownership/share contributions can happen by way of a bond, loan (would be in favor of obtaining sooner rather than later), grants, and sales of ownership percentage for control. He would like to pull all the numbers together and review where we've been and where we are going, possibly on a 6-month scheduled review timeline.

Commissioner Cade noted that he generally was in favor of the training center. He inquired about when NCRFA would know whether or not the \$850,000 would be required for the frontage improvements and Temporary Project Manager Doug ten Hoopen let him know that he believed it would be around November. He asked Chief Cermak how much we are currently paying for outside training. Chief Cermak told him that we are currently not doing outside training due to COVID restrictions. Commissioner Cade asked what the revenue would be for the Snohomish EMS rent that we would collect and Chief Cermak stated that we don't know what that would be until we know what the size and space needed looks like.

Commissioner Williams asked how many other training centers of this scale are in the area. Chief Cermak stated there are none. When asked what the market was for a facility like this Chief Cermak stated that he believes the need and demand are there. If option 4 is chosen the completion date would be 9/11/2022.

Local 3438 Vice-President spoke in opposition of any funds been spent on the training center due to lack of staffing and too much overtime. He stated that improvement needs to be made with the working conditions by hiring more people. He stated that other agencies of similar size have 80 fulltime firefighters and we have less than 60. Overtime continues to be at record levels while the level of service in the Arlington area are not being staffed as they were prior to the merger. He also stated that the Local looks forward to working with NCRFA to find a solution.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion to adjourn at 3:25pm


1st: Commissioner Nelson

2nd: Commissioner Oertle

Discussion:


APPROVED: Unanimous

DocuSigned by:


Ric Cade

Interim Board Vice-Chair

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Katie Casey
Board Secretary