

**WEST BENTON REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY  
TUESDAY JULY 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
WBRFA HEAD QUARTERS STATION 310**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Williams called to order the July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022, regular meeting for the West Benton Regional Fire Authority at 6:05pm and he then led the participants in the Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Chairman S. Williams was present. Vice Chair D. Moon, Commissioner Richard Clizbe and Commissioner Randy Cobble were present. L. Galbraith was present via zoom.

**Others in attendance:** Fire Chief Charles Damron and Administrator Gayle Carrasco.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman S. Williams made a request for public comments. No public comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Williams requested for comments or questions from the board on the consent agenda. Chairman S. Williams requested for a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. A brief discussion took place to further provide detail on invoices. Commissioner R. Clizbe made a motion to approve the consent agenda for July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Commissioner R. Cobble seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. The motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**UNION CONTRACT:**

Chairman S. Williams informed the board that he heard from Kevin Wesley, and Mr. Wesley explained that he had not heard back from the union representative on the boards concept proposal.

**CITY OF PROSSER BULK WATER ILA:**

Chairman Williams requested the City of Prosser's status of the ILA, and will the board be able to sign the agreement. Chief Damron stated the agreement has been approved through the city and their attorney and it has been provided in the WBRFA board packet to sign. Commissioner Clizbe posed the question on how the bulk water will be tracked. Chief Damron provided a summary for the board on what he has instructed the staff how to track the city water usage, as part of this agreement. The department will continue to build and maintain the fire breaks for the city. Commissioner Cobble clarified the city's use of the departments training room, and the facility has historically been available for other government agencies upon request. It was clarified there would be a fee to non-government applicants for the use of the training room. Chairman Williams asked if there would be a motion to enter into the agreement. Commissioner Cobble made a motion to enter into the bulk water agreement with the City of Prosser. Commissioner Clizbe and Galbraith in unison seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. The motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CORRESPONDENCES:**

**Governing Board:**

Chairman S. Williams requested for WBRFA items from the board to report. Commissioner Cobble and Galbraith stated they did not have items to report.

Commissioner Clizbe mentioned the state of the social media accounts for the department and been able to update the information. Chief Damron has placed Captain Bowden and Petroff to oversee the Facebook account and subsequently they had run into issues with accessing the account with lack of passwords. Chief informed the board that the captains should have access by next week. Captain S. Friend used to maintain the Facebook page for the department, however since his departure the ability to update it rests on accessing the account along with lack of time or staffing to

### **Staff Reports: Fire Chief Damron**

- *Surplus of Apparatus:* Chief Damron reported the Type 1 has since sold and has been picked up by the purchaser. The new owner of the Type 1 has plans to convert the fire engine into a camper. Chief Moon with BCFD#5 picked up the Type 5's. The payment will be generated by district 5's accountants. The receipt of the funds should be received by the end of the month. Payment for the Type 1 is expected to arrive around the same time from the surplus auction company.
- *Current Fire Calls:* Chief Damron reported the department has been busy and described how a call went from being a bin fire to a structure fire that destroyed the Dollar Store in Grandview. The crew fought the Dollar Store throughout the night. The crew then battled the Bryon's Hill Fire between Prosser and Mabton. Chief Damron reported the new apparatus worked very well over the busy couple of days. Having only a break to a step, that he has already ordered and will be replaced by next week.
- *Summer & New Resident Staff:* Commissioner Clizbe begins the subject by asking about the status in hire for the temporary staff. Chief explains the seasonal staff has been hired and he has scheduled on seasonal firefighter per day. In the occurrences when more firefighters are needed the Chief will bring in the staff necessary, as with the structure fire and hillside fire. Chief Damron had an additional volunteer firefighter, Roy Haringa works for the department. Summer scheduling will be determined by the weather and need.
- *Byron's Hill Fire:* Chief Damron reports on the fire, and it is expected to have burned over 3,000 acres. Chief Damron was mapping the site of the fire, and informs the board the locations of the fire remained in the district 5, no man's land, and District 7 with our district being contained to a radius of 200 acres. Today, Yakima 5 brought their dozers in to strengthen the fire lines on the north side and up to the midway road. Chief reports the dozer is operating excellent, and the filter is doing its job. Chief explained the cost to repair the radio in the dozer and purchasing a spare. Chief Damron informed the board there were 4 dozers at the Bryon's Hill Fire. Commissioner Galbraith described her view of the fire as having a front row seat. She commends the Chief on the work she witnessed battling the fire as she watched through a set of binoculars it was being contained. Currently the Chief has deployed two Type 5's to monitor the fire.

### **Staff Reports: Administrator Carrasco**

- *None to report:*

### **HIRING POLICY:**

Chief begins to explain the procedure in hiring. A lengthy portion of the discussion was determining the need to open the hiring vs keeping the pool internal. Commissioner Moon stressed the negative effects with hiring in this manner. Chairman Williams explains his reasoning for the policy being as department personnel. Chief describes the process as being competitive and fair, with physical agility, written tests, oral boards, and interviewing. Chief Damron foresees the need to have the applicants learn

the hiring process and succeed. Chief will set the bar high and notes there are several items to observe when hiring. Chief provides an example for the using the 5 applicants being generated from the volunteers as he observes the number of calls a volunteer currently attends for our department. Commissioner Clizbe is looking for the description of the firefighter position. Chief Damron has already prepared the position announcements, the minimum requirements, the basic qualifications, the written testing the physical agility test. This has been completed and Chief agrees a job description will need to be ironed out. Commissioner Clizbe stresses a bit of concern on how many volunteers would meet the criteria. Commissioner Clizbe does not intend to eliminate any volunteer member but brings up the possibility of the department not possessing 5 applicants with the credentials as posted. Commissioner Clizbe states the goal of the resident program. Chief Damron agrees with Commissioner Clizbe, and this is a good point. Before moving onto the next agenda item, Chairman Williams asks each member for their thoughts. Commissioner L. Galbraith expresses being pleased with Chief Damron providing the hiring process for the board. Commissioner Galbraith explains her theory of a good employer having a road map for hiring good employees and hiring and promoting within and this will assist in organizing the department. One item within the policy was in question by Commissioner Galbraith and this being the number of in-house applicants being 5 and is this obtainable with a department as small as WBFR. Chief is confident in the number of applicants as 5, anything less would require the need to search outside the department. This does not equate to eliminating the volunteers in applying, only that there will be outside individuals within the hiring pool. Commissioner Moon asks in curiosity the number of applicants obtained for the Shift Captains positions. Chief states in the last testing there had been 10 applicants. Commissioner Moon explains his position is the possibility the department is losing out on candidates by not opening the position beyond the department. Chairman provides the history of hiring for the department as the last 3 had been outside department, including Chief Damron. Chief Damron views the knowledge of knowing the firefighter with working along side them for many years is a factor. The discussion summed up with the board expressing their appreciation for creating the hiring policy and these lays good groundwork. Commissioner Clizbe agrees as he will be reading the policy further. Chief lastly states the larger the department becomes the promotions will be becoming from within, and the experience with the hiring process adds to experience. No other comments were made from Commissioner Galbraith, as she stated she left briefly to deliver a baby.

**RESOLUTION 2022-11 – Adopting Volunteer Banquet:**

Commissioner Clizbe made a motion for 2022-11, Commissioner Moon seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. Motion Carried.

**RESOLUTION 2022-12 – BCFD#5 Surplus:**

The resolution required correction. Will be brought to next meeting for signing.

**RESOLUTION 2022-13 – Advance Travel:**

Commissioner Galbraith made the motion to approve resolution 2022-13  
Commissioner Cobble seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Williams states the board will table the executive session and move to the next meeting.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Commissioner Clizbe jokingly expressed his being pleased there was not damage to the equipment over the last fires. Commissioner Galbraith gave her appreciation again the Chief and his crew for all the arduous work battling the last fire. With no other items for the good of the order the next meeting will be held on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chairman S. Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

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SHANE WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN

*The West Benton Regional Fire Authority's minutes are intended to be a reasonable summary of the RFA's governing board deliberations and actions. The Minutes are not a verbatim record of everything said at the meeting. The minutes include all actions taken by the West Benton Regional Fire Authority Board.*

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GAYLE CARRASCO, ADMINISTRATOR