

**WEST BENTON REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY  
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023  
WBRFA HEAD QUARTERS STATION 310**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman R. Cobble called to order the February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, regular meeting for the West Benton Regional Fire Authority at 6:00pm. and he then led the participants in the Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Chairman Randy Cobble, Vice Chair D. Moon was recorded as an excused absence. Commissioner Richard Clizbe, and S. Williams were present. L. Galbraith had been given an excused absence.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman R. Cobble made a request for public comments. No public comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Randy Cobble requested for comments or questions from the board on the consent agenda. Commissioner Chairman Randy Cobble requested a motion to approve the board agenda. Commissioner S. Williams made a motion to approve the consent agenda for February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, with the minutes for 1/17/23 and 2/7/23. Commissioner D. Moon seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. The motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None Reported

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CORRESPONDENCES:**

- **Governing Board:**
- ***Commissioners:*** Commissioner R. Clizbe provided a summary report from the Tri County Fire Commissioners meeting he attended. Seats on the association have been reassigned. Lonnie Click will be replacing Ron Duncan. Michael Harris will be the acting Governors. Chief Carlisle will be the backup representative. Commissioner Clizbe stated other districts are utilizing Liz Loomis Public Affairs in preparing for bond measures and levy lid lifts. Estimated costs to retain this company were mentioned in the area of \$5,000 a month. Commissioner Moon reported the purchase of the new apparatus for West Benton Fire Rescue was acquired at the right time. Other districts reported a substantial wait time of over a year to receive purchased trucks. The association mentioned the Snure Seminar and a possible subject matter of volunteer stipend pay. Chief Damron informed the board that he has instructed G. Carrasco to purchase the group level package for the Snure Seminars. This will be offered to the WBRFA board commissioners and administrative staff within the department.
- **Staff Reports: Fire Chief Damron**  
***Chief's Report:*** Chief Damron informed the board on the current career staff levels of 7. The hiring of the Shift Captain will move forward with application reviewing on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, and oral board to include skills testing on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. Volunteer enrollment remains consistent. The resident student enrollment is currently at 2 students. C. Wolfe resigned from the program to seek education after obtaining an internship out of

- **Staff Reports: Fire Chief Damron (continued)**

state for technical trade. Captain J. Petroff is actively recruiting and will be conducting personal interviews this weekend. Fire Chief Damron then proceeded to review the current budget status. The Chief will transfer funds from the General Fund in the amount of \$364,824.95. Placing \$314,824.95 in the Reserve Fund. The Reserve Fund balance will then be at \$500,000.00. Chief Damron stated he would like to eventually maintain the Reserve Funds at \$600,000 or a 25% of the department's budget. By building a healthy reserve fund, this will manage the departments financial risks and should reasonably cover the operating and liability costs to ensure emergency services will continue to meet the public needs. This will protect against financial instability in the economic downturns, and the inevitable unforeseen event that would trigger a fiscal hardship. The remaining \$50,000.00 will be transferred into the Capital Debt/Outlay Expenditures for the purchase of a SCBA rehabilitation trailer. Further discussion was held on other options that would assist the department with the needs for rehabilitation equipment to care for the department firefighters. Commissioner Moon requests the need to research liability of a glass containment when filling the equipment. Chief Damron continued with the percentage breakdown of the department's budget. Payroll represents 55% of the budget, and the purchase of new turnouts this year has been budgeted in the amount of \$30,000.00. Chief Damron explained the reason for the expenditure is to supply newly hired staff and turnouts that have expired to fight fires. They can be used for only training.

Fill station is in constant repair. Electrical issues with the heating system, Apollo made repairs. Overhead door is waiting on parts. Murphy Brothers was not available to make the needed repairs to the well at station #320 and they rescheduled for the upcoming week. The water is turned off. Engine 1312 is back in service. The ladder truck had a check valve leak, and it is operational. This month is Hazmat training on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Last Month trainings consisted of Hazmat refresher, ladder truck training, swift water quarterly's an EMS drill. Chief Damron summarized the calls and turnout times for January 2023 and stated most were medical calls. Commissioner S. Williams requested to add last years calls. Chairman Cobble asked who was monitoring the task books. Chief stated the immediate supervisor oversees their staff and Deputy Chief Clara verifies the requirements are being met.

- **Staff Reports: Administrator Carrasco**

January 2023 Financial Report: Monthly report supplied to the board and G. Carrasco gave the board a summary. Preparations are being made to amend the 2022 balances. Annual report for 2022 is being prepared for the State Auditors. IT Networking companies are being interviewed based on the needs for the department and currently the Fire Chief is reviewing all these companies. Chief Damron pointed out that there is now a printer available in the multipurpose training room. Chief also explained he attended an informational meeting presentation for the Hop Hill Solar project – 6,000-acre project with 3,000 of the acreage having solar panels. Chief met with permitting director of the project. Chief Damron presented his bi-annual report to the City of Prosser. The report went well with the city with very little questions. Chief met with Chuck Mercer and stated the Dozer will be in use cut in fire lines and to provide training. Weather warming up with determine the start of the project.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

### **Personnel Discussion:**

Chairman R. Cobble confirmed the need for an executive session with Fire Chief Damron. Chairman R. Cobble then stated that the board will break into Executive Session per RCW 42.30.140.(4)(a) Collective Bargaining Agreement interpretation or application of labor agreement. as noted on the agenda at 6:44p.m. for 5 minutes to reconvene by 6 :49p.m. The board indicated to extend the session for 5 minutes at 6:49p.m. and reconvene at 6:54p.m. The board indicated to extend the session for another 5 minutes at 6:54p.m. to reconvene at 6:59p.m. The board ended the Executive Session at 6:56p.m. and resumed the regular board meeting at 6:58p.m.

No Action Taken.

## **GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Chairman R. Cobble asked the board for items for the good of order. Next board meeting March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. No Items Provided.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, Chairman R. Cobble adjourned the meeting at 6:59p.m.

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RANDALL COBBLE, 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  
BOARD SECRETARY