

JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 3

PORT LUDLOW FIRE & RESCUE

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

July 21, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Board Chair Commissioner Robert Pontius called the special meeting of July 21, 2009 Board of Commissioners for Port Ludlow Fire and Rescue, to order at 7:00 p.m. at Station 31 located at 7650 Oak Bay Road, Port Ludlow, Washington.

Commissioners present were Board Chair Robert Pontius, Bill Hansen, David Wheeler, Mike Porter and Gene Carmody. Administrative Staff present were Chief Ed Wilkerson and Assistant Chief Randy Coggan.

CALL for the FLAG SALUTE:

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Pontius.

CALL for APPROVAL of the AGENDA:

Pontius called for approval of the Agenda. Hansen moved to approve the agenda as written, Porter seconded. Motion carried.

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

Review of Ambulance Billing Plan

Wilkerson noted that this item is on the agenda at Carmody's request. Wilkerson stated that he is seeking direction from Board as to how they would like staff to proceed with the ambulance billing process. He handed out the present policy and a policy labeled "draft" but which had no record of being adopted. Wilkerson stated that the good news is that we have a billing process that works well and our collection rate is 90% - well above the national average of 50%. We can improve our policy by rewriting it to establish a standardized process that staff can follow and is defensible. Wilkerson reviewed his notes on what the policy should include. Wilkerson also reviewed the current process with the Board. He then reviewed how other districts handle billing - Systems Design makes 3 attempts to contact patient for payment, the district sends a certified letter, then refers to collections if no payment is received.

Pontius inquired as to how HIPPA impacts information the Board can get. Coggan clarified that only if a person waives their rights under HIPPA, such as a request for a charity waiver, would the Board be allowed to see any information that could ID patient. Carmody stated that policy needed to be updated, Porter and Hansen agreed. Pontius feels that District residents should not be sent to collections without coming before the Board. Wheeler stated that the policy needs to be equitable to all. Further discussion regarding the equity issue continued.

Wilkerson reminded the Board that district residents already get a discount under our tiered system. Wheeler felt that the tiered system was flawed because it applied to all district residents whether they owned property and paid taxes or not. Carmody pointed out that we did not bill for the service but rather for the transport, consumables and mileage.

Discussion ensued regarding the policy of only billing district personnel for their insurance. Pontius felt that the public might feel that this was an unfair benefit. Wilkerson stated because this had been the practice for some time the union likely has impact bargaining rights if the benefit was considered for removal.

The Board discussed whether there should be an annual increase of ambulance fees tied to the consumer price index. Wheeler stated that he could not support an automatic increase. It would need to be tied to an increase in costs of service that are documented, and that it should not be more than others in area are charging.

Consensus of the Board was to ask staff to bring a draft revised policy.

CALL for RECESS

Pontius called for a five minute recess at 7:50 p.m.

CALL BACK to ORDER

Pontius called the meeting back to order at 7:55 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pontius called for an Executive Session for one hour to review the performance of the Fire Chief, with only the Board members in attendance at 8:00 p.m.

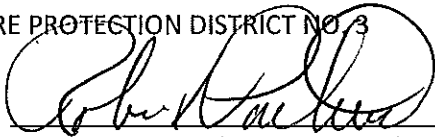
CALL BACK to ORDER

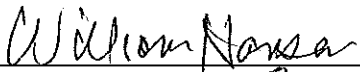
Pontius called the meeting back to order at 9:00 p.m. and stated that no action had been taken. He asked that Wilkerson prepare a list of goals for the next evaluation period next year to be discussed at the August 11, 2009 Board meeting.

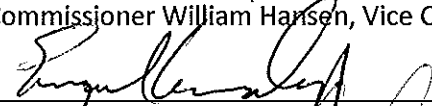
Adjournment:

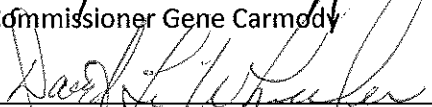
There being no further business, Pontius called for adjournment at 9:14 p.m.

JEFFERSON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 3

SIGNED: BY: 
Commissioner Robert Pontius, Chairman

BY: 
Commissioner William Hansen, Vice Chairman

BY: 
Commissioner Gene Carmody

BY: 
Commissioner David Wheeler

BY: _____
Commissioner Mike Porter

ATTEST:
By: 
William Hansen, District Secretary

RECORDING SECRETARY:
By: 
Randy Coggan, Assistant Fire Chief