



Grant County Fire District No. 8

PO Box 1728
510 Government Way
Mattawa, WA 99349
(509) 932-4777
Fax (509) 932-4747

Board of Commissioner Regular Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Grant County Fire Protection District No. 8 was held at Fire Station 81, 510 E Government Road, Mattawa, WA on March 8, 2016 and was called to order by Commission Chair Debra Crain at 1555 hours. The meeting was recorded, but the file was corrupted during saving and was unrecoverable.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Debra Crain.

Commissioners present: Paul Parker, Scott Nesbit, Richard Kummer, Debra Crain, and Russell Brixey. A quorum was established.

Others present: Fire Chief Dave Patterson, District Secretary Barbara Davis, and Brandon Wright.

The public was recognized, welcomed, and invited to comment. There were no comments

The agenda was reviewed. A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion: Parker, Second: Nesbit. Motion approved unanimously.**

The Consent Agenda with Vouchers, Payroll, and Transactions was reviewed. Review and Approve Vouchers, Payroll, and Transactions: Vouchers were audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expenses reimbursed claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090, having been recorded on a listing that had been made available to the Board. There were no transactions to review. There was discussion regarding several expenditures. A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. **Motion: Brixey, Second: Kummer. Motion approved unanimously.** The documents were signed by the Board members.

Chief's Report: Chief Patterson reviewed his written report.

1. Call Volume - Chief reported call volume was 23 EMS calls and 7 fire calls last month. He commented that call volume is up 30% over the average of the last five years, probably due to increased population.
2. Leadership Training for Captains - Darryl and Robert attended "Captain's College" February 28 through March 1. They learned several useful skills and reported that the training would help them a lot.
3. Sprint EMT Class - Darryl and Robert are enrolled in this class, which begins 4/18/16.
4. EMT Class in Mattawa - Chief is working on getting this training scheduled for fall through the Region 6 Training Counsel. The class will cost \$500-\$600 per student rather than \$1,125 through YCDEMS. There are currently eight interested members.
5. EPA/DOE Burning Rules - The District has no authority to enforce no burning on "no burn" days. Chief requested that the Board consider setting a policy for guidance. Commissioner Parker stated that we have never had authority in this matter. There was discussion on historical procedures. Chief suggested that the guidance state that we are to inform and monitor, then call the Fire Marshall if needed. The Board directed staff to create the policy and procedure for review at the next meeting.
6. Driving Policy - Chief said that during an Officers Meeting, Commissioner Kummer asked about the commissioners being able to drive the command vehicles if needed for transportation to trainings, etc. He asked the Board for clarification on the driving policy. Commissioner Parker said that the EVIP training policy states that members must be current on EVIP training to drive an apparatus. He stated that the commissioners have a procedure for mileage reimbursement to use their personal vehicles for transportation to approved events. The consensus was that if a commissioner wishes to drive a command vehicle, he or she must complete and pass EVIP training.
7. Disciplinary Policy - Chief said that during an Officers Meeting, it was pointed out that there is no policy or procedure outlining the disciplinary process. Secretary Davis read the staff manual passage regarding discipline. Commissioner Nesbit said that if everything is spelled out in detail then a supervisor is held to

the process instead of being able to take discretionary measure as the circumstances warrant. He then suggested that staff write a draft for the Board to review and consider.

8. Spillman Reporting - Spillman is the dispatch program. It will show dispatch information on a screen in the Bays at Station 81. It has also been loaded on the ambulance laptops so updates and call times can be accessed.
9. Engine 811 - Chief said that Cascade Fire discovered the pump was leaking, the valves were weak and they are repairing and replacing as needed. There was discussion on the details of the repair.
10. New Probationary Member - Mark Vanbebber has become a probationary member. He is interested in fire and EMS.

Chief had nothing further to add and there were no questions.

Business Manager/District Secretary's Report: Secretary Davis reviewed her written report.

1. Financial reports were reviewed. There were no questions or comments.
2. ImageTrend Software and Laptops - Davis reported that the laptops and docking stations were installed in the ambulances on 3/7/16. The ePCR form has been streamlined and appears to be working well. The transition plan is that the remainder of March would be testing and training; beginning April 1, 2016, paper reports will still be done but the official record would be the electronic report and all documents associated with the call would be attached and retained; and, as of May 1, 2016, any paper documents associated with the call would be attached and destroyed with the electronic record being the final and official record. The work flow process is that the EMT in the field will complete the report and post it. After posting, Chief will review it for QA/QI and add times if they are not included. Once he completes his review, Davis will attach all documents and ready the report for billing as needed. All electronic records will be archived annually on DVD even though they are stored on the ImageTrend redundant databases. Hospitals will access reports via a web link through the State DOH website. Davis and Chief are working on a procedure document for this new process.
3. Medical Incident Reports Handling Procedures -- HIPAA Forms Policy - This policy is outdated and needs to be updated to include the billing vendor to respond to medical records requests. Davis recommended the policy be updated to include legal references and the new ePCR procedures as well. The Board directed her to update the policy for review at the next meeting
1. Petty Cash Account - Davis recommended that the Board consider adding all Board members to the signature card for the petty cash account to alleviate the annual need to add and remove the newly elected chair and vice chair from the account because it takes a lot of time and effort from all involved. There was a motion to include all commissioners along with Chief and District Secretary on the petty cash signature card. **Motion: Parker, Second: Crain. Motion approved unanimously.**
4. Blood Drive - The next drive is scheduled for Tuesday, March 29, 2016.
5. Annual Report Class - Davis said that she would be at this class in Richland next Wednesday, 3/16/16, from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. The class is from the State Auditor's Office and reviews the changes in the annual report filing process.

There were no additional comments or questions.

Volunteer Association: No report

Committee Reports: No report

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business

New Business

1. Complaint Letter about Chief Patterson - Commissioner Crain said she was contacted by a volunteer member regarding a complaint about Chief Patterson's patient care on two incidents and his leadership on a third incident. She said she discussed the details with the volunteer told the volunteer to put it in a letter for the Board to review. She then met with Chief Patterson to get his view of the incidents in question. Chief provided her with a legal definition of "medical abandonment." She found that Chief Patterson did not abandon patients and she was comfortable with how he handled the scenes. She called the volunteer and discussed her findings, but said she would discuss the matter with the full Board at the

next meeting. The volunteer said she would rescind the letter if the Board found no wrongdoing and was willing to wait for the Board's findings. Commissioner Parker said that he gave a copy of the letter to Chief about a week ago because he believed Chief should have a copy of it.

Chief Patterson was asked to address each issue in the letter. Chief requested that a copy of the volunteer letter and the Board response letter be put in his employee file. He then went on to outline the first call. He stated that he had just gotten home after work when the call came out. He stated that it took approximately 20 minutes to convince the patient to go to the hospital as a precautionary measure because she had been short of breath for a few days and her home nebulizer treatments were not effective. The patient had no trouble talking or walking to the gurney. The letter stated that the patient's SpO₂ level was low, but the MIR recorded that her level was 100% on supplemental oxygen until about five minutes prior to arrival at the emergency department. Additionally, Chief said he would consider an albuterol treatment once the patient was in the ambulance and a full set of vitals could be taken. Commissioner Brixey commented that the volunteer was exiting the emergency department when he arrived with an MVA patient and he asked the volunteer how her call went. The reply was that she had no issues during the transport.

Chief reviewed the second call in the letter. He stated that he had treated this patient five times in 2015 and knew her history. He stated he had given the family his business card so they could call him if they were worried about the patient. He also stated that the family called him that night after they called 911 and asked him to come to the scene. He gave an albuterol treatment and the patient responded well and improved. He released the patient to the volunteer for transport because he was ill with gastric issues and could not transport. He stated that this patient had undiagnosed problems and some of the symptoms include syncope and seizure activity, which aggravate the patient's asthma. Because the patient had improved considerably after the albuterol treatment and vital signs were stable, he felt the volunteer was capable of monitoring the patient during the transport. He asked her if she was comfortable taking that call and she said yes. Commissioner Nesbit commented that he felt the volunteer wasn't comfortable taking these calls perhaps due to the lack of experience. Commissioner Crain stated that everyone she spoke with said Chief always asked if the EMT was comfortable taking the call.

Chief reviewed the third call in the letter. Chief said that the duty crew was out of district on another call when this call came in. They were dispatched to a "Bravo Headache" for a "70 year old male patient." Three volunteers responded in Ambulance 897 and Chief arrived after they were on scene in 800. On scene, a seven year old male patient with a history of seizures was found. Chief arrived after the two responding EMTs were on scene and made patient contact. He monitored their activities from across the room, but did not interrupt them as they were providing proper patient care. Chief left the house to move his vehicle because he was blocking law who wanted to leave the scene. The EMTs determined that this was a non-transport call and the scene was cleared. At the station, one EMT was completing the MIR when the duty crew returned. The volunteer who wrote the letter questioned both EMTs about what happened on their call, including looking over one EMTs shoulder to read his report. She stated in the letter that the two responding EMTs on that call were "newer" and should not have been allowed to disregard the department "policy" of getting two sets of vital signs (especially a blood pressure) on all calls and that Chief was negligent in allowing them to disregard this "policy." Chief stated that it is difficult to get an accurate blood pressure on a child and, generally, a visual assessment of the child is the best we can do. If the child is acting age appropriate and there is no suspicion of an underlying condition, no blood pressure is taken. Commissioner Brixey exclaimed that the volunteer violated HIPAA by questioning the EMTs and looking at the report. He said she had no right to second guess other EMTs when she wasn't even on scene.

Commissioner Nesbit read the last two paragraphs of the letter where the volunteer said she had been verbally abused by Chief. There were questions from the Board on Chief's temper and "bark" to direct others on scene. Commissioner Crain stated that she had asked a number of other volunteers about Chief losing his temper and they replied that they had not seen such a time. Some volunteers said that occasionally they take Chief's directions personally. Chief said he took offense at the volunteer's

statement the he doesn't take the wellbeing of the community and the volunteers into consideration because they are his first consideration. Commissioner Nesbit asked the Board about the volunteer contacting YCDEMS directly. Commissioner Brixey stated that it used to be that a higher level EMT took the call if they did patient care, but that is not the standard now. Chief said that every healthcare facility that uses an ambulance service to transport patients would be abandoning patients if the old definition was still in effect. Commissioner Kummer suggested that definitions be reviewed with the EMTs. There was much discussion about this and a suggestion of writing our own protocols to outline expectations.

Commissioner Crain asked the individual Board members for their feelings on the letter and Chief's actions. Commissioner Parker stated that he did not believe Chief Patterson was guilty of patient abandonment or any wrongdoing. Commissioner Brixey stated he saw no wrong doing and believed that this was a personal attack on Chief that was not substantiated, and the volunteer's lack of confidence in Chief was a resignation. Commissioner Kummer said that he would go along with the majority that there was no patient abandonment. He suggested having written protocols to help define the best way to provide patient care. Commissioner Nesbit concurred that there was no patient abandonment and the third incident was a "witch hunt." He said he had no issue with how Chief handled all of the calls, but suggested that he be more sensitive about raising his voice and how people might take it personally.

Commissioner Crain directed Secretary Davis to draft a letter stating the unanimous findings of no wrongdoing by Chief Patterson in all incidents and send it to the Board for review and approval. Commissioner Brixey stated there was no excuse for going around someone and not using the chain of command. Commissioner Parker said that calling YCDEMS was out of line and should be addressed. Commissioner Brixey said that the volunteers needed to know that the Board will hear what they have to say, but that they need to use the chain of command. He asked permission from the board to address the volunteers at the next Business and Safety meeting as a commissioner and explain the role of the Board as it relates to the District and volunteers. The Board agreed this would be a good idea.

There was no additional new business

Commissioner Crain asked the Board if they had any items to discuss under Executive Session. There was none.


Announcements & Upcoming Events

Commissioner Crain asked the Board if they had any announcements or upcoming events that had not already been mentioned. Commissioner Kummer said the he would be going to the seminars in Chelan at the beginning of June. Commissioner Brixey said he might go to Chelan. Commissioner Kummer suggested having a work session workshop in the near future. Secretary Davis was asked to put under New Business for next month.

Commissioner Crain asked if there was any other business, which there was none.

The next Commissioner's meeting was set for Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at 1600 hours at Station 81 in Mattawa, Washington. Proposed agenda items are 1) Consent Agenda 2) Chief's Report, 3) District Secretary's Report, 4) Volunteer Association Report, 5) Committee Reports, 6) Unfinished Business, 7) New Business, a) Work Session Workshop, 8) Executive Session, and 9) Announcements & Upcoming Events.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 1759 hours.


Chairman


District Secretary