



# WINDSOR SEVERANCE FIRE RESCUE

100 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street • Windsor • Colorado • 80550  
970-686-2626

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## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

100 N 7<sup>th</sup> St

Thursday, Sept 14, 2023 / 6:00pm

## MINUTES

### I. CALL TO ORDER

- I. Pledge of Allegiance

### II. ROLL CALL

Board Directors Rosen (attended via zoom), Thorn, Medhurst (absent and excused), Hansen, and Lutz. Interim Fire Chief Jaques, Battalion Chief Bauer, Chief Friedrichsen, Chief Greer, Financial Director Gabe Buldra, Director of Administrative Services Jeff Dykstra, HR Manager Emily Pearson, BIS Travis Chapman, Cierra Will, and members of the public were present at the meeting.

### III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Director Lutz submits a motion to approve the agenda as presented, Director Hansen seconds, all "Aye". Approved.

### IV. REGULAR BOARD MEETING

#### I. Public Forum:

##### i. Public Comments

*This portion of the meeting is provided to allow the public to present comments or concerns not listed/related on the agenda. The public may speak on any agenda item during the meeting at the onset of the agenda item. The public comment period will be limited to three (3) minutes. Respectful communication is welcomed; outbursts, interruptions, and personal attacks will not be tolerated. Interaction with the Board of Directors is inappropriate. If further discussion is needed, the topic or concern may be placed on a future agenda.*

Public Comments –

Michelle Duda from the Town of Severance introduced herself as the new Town of Severance liaison. She will report on any news from Severance. They are working on Capital Projects to determine interest in projects for the next 10 years. The new library is fully in operation.

#### II. Consent Agenda – Discussion/Possible Actions:

*The Consent Agenda is intended to allow the Board to spend its time and energy on the important items on a lengthy agenda. Administration recommends approval of the Consent Agenda. Anyone may request an item on this agenda to be "pulled" off the Consent Agenda and considered separately. Agenda items pulled from the Consent Agenda will be considered separately under Pulled*



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*Consent Items. Items remaining on the Consent Agenda will be approved by the Board with one vote. The Consent Agenda consists of items of no perceived controversy and routine administrative actions.*

- i. August 10, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes

Director Hansen submits a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, Director Lutz seconds, all "Aye". Approved.

### III. Financial Report and Updates

- i. Discussion/Possible Action: Approval of August 2023 Monthly Financial Report/Bill Ratification

Financial Director Gabe Buldra recapped key points for August:

Total Revenue for August was \$451,421 which is \$109,143 over budget; Tax Levy Revenue for August was \$135,991, which is \$20,412 under budget driven by under collection for the month; Non-Tax Levy Revenue for August is \$315,430 which is \$129,555 over budget driven by increased value of investments and plan review fees; Total Expenses for August were \$834,044, which is \$147,476 under budget; Personnel Costs under budget by \$82,020, driven by regular and wildland wages; Vehicles & Equipment under budget by \$30,708 driven by less PPE and small tools/equipment; Travel & Training over budget by \$14,922 driven by FRFC Spring Academy; Total Revenue Year-to-Date is \$13,396,724, which is under budget by \$153,013; Total Expenses Year-to-Date is \$7,236,867, which is \$1,192,516 under budget; Total Cash is \$20,625,583, which is \$1,044,473 more than this time last year. Expenses: Personnel was at 80%, Operations at 12%, and Managerial at 8%; currently at 50% of budget through August with 50% remaining.

Director Thorn asked if we received the grants if we would have a larger variance. Gabe responded that the variance would not differ significantly. Director Hansen asked about a status update regarding current vacancies. Chief Jaques explained we have made offers to two candidates which will bring us into line with staffing minimums. Gabe said we want to see 50% utilization for part-time employees, and this will be addressed in next year's budget.

Director Lutz makes a motion to approve the August 2023 Monthly Financial Report/Bill Ratification, Director Hansen seconds, all "Aye". Approved.

- ii. Information: 2024 Budget Preparations and Process



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Gabe said we have kicked off the 2024 budget process. He said that more time is needed before a draft budget is presented. A full draft should be ready to present at the October board meeting. He went over revenue sources. Assessed Value increased by 60.87%. The current Mil Rate equates to a tax increase of \$7.3m. Gabe believes it is highly likely that Pro HH is going to pass. The full impact is still unknown. He does not believe the impacts on revenue will be too significant in future years. The budget is planned for sustainability. There are not many pending grants upcoming, but a placeholder will be used in the budget. With our financials, we are not high on the candidate list for grants. Impact fees are restricted to capital needs for future development.

Director Hansen asked what our impact fee balance is. Director Rosen answered \$1.2M. Impact fees are set to be reassessed for next year, pending an impact fee study. Commercial growth has shown a spike between 2023-2024. Oil and gas growth has been volatile. We are currently at a high growth rate but expect to see a drop incoming based on past trends. Director Thorn expressed concern about the impacts of a decrease in oil and gas in combination with Prop HH. Gabe said this could be a transition where we begin to see legislation start to impact growth more in the future.

Gabe discussed significant expenditures. The largest is personnel costs. Emily is working on a holistic approach to pay using a market analysis approach. She will present the strategy and methodology at the October board meeting. Chief Jaques said 3 different positions will be proposed for the administrative level. The first is a Training Lieutenant. The workload has grown significantly. The lieutenant would come from the current line staff and may be a rotating position. They would be responsible for records management, FRFC liaison, training content delivery, and daily needs. The second position is a new Fire Inspector to keep up with growth in the commercial sector. The number of inspections has doubled since 2019. Business inspections have increased by 34%, as well as the addition of special permits, highlights the need for this position. The third position is an EMS coordinator. This role would be responsible for working directly with the medical director, handling EMS QA/QI, CME content delivery, certification management, CPR, and community initiatives including CPR and AED training. Internal position changes will be proposed as well at the October board meeting with job descriptions and further justification, as well as budget and financial impacts. Director Hansen asked if these positions would be unique to WSFR. Chief Jaques said they exist



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in other departments. Director Rosen asked if the rotating training lieutenant would have a different pay compared to operation lieutenants. Chief Jaques said that it would be different based on a 40-hour schedule but would have a pay differential to make it comparable to on-shift lieutenants. Director Rosen said that in PFA they had the same 3 positions, and it worked well. He also expressed the need to stay ahead of the curve as growth continues. Chief Greer said we lost 4-5 months of CME as UCH transitioned to a virtual CME platform. They now only offer virtual courses. The EMS position would provide in-person training.

FPPA increased by 0.50% contribution rate. Healthcare increased 3.5%. Inflation is still hovering around 3.5%. PPE & Repair contract is being added to inspect and repair turnout gear. IT infrastructure and software improvements are being proposed to update UPS and data switches. ERS reporting is also going away and will need to be replaced. Director Dykstra believes the end of life will occur in the next 1-2 years. ESO is currently offering incentives to move to their platform. UCH is also currently using ESO, which would allow WSFR to have easy collaboration with updates in real-time. There is also a feature that allows for the final report to come back to WSFR so that the final results can be accessed, and the effectiveness of care can be assessed. Director Hansen asked if we are confident will stay with UCH. Director Dykstra answered yes as they moved to it recently and incurred a significant investment to implement the software. Work is still being done to see if other modules may also be helpful to include a switch to ESO to minimize the amount of different software we use. Director Lutz asked if Thompson Valley may also move to ESO. Director Dykstra said he is not sure what they are using currently. UCH is the dominant provider for the district at approximately 95% of calls. PFA is currently using ESO. The scheduling software is becoming more complex as the organization grows. A new software is being considered that will only cost a few thousand dollars additional per year compared to the current software and will be much more efficient. Director Thorn asked if there is any volume benefit if more people in the area use ESO. Director Dykstra said no, but there may still be room to negotiate. Treasurer fees are increasing significantly based on the increase in tax revenue. Professional fees for Leadership & Organization Development will also be a focus for next year. The capital budget is continuing to be reviewed and developed. The biggest change is the updates for Station 1 and the addition of another staff vehicle as well as determining a timeline for



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other vehicle replacements. Director Thorn asked if Station 5 is still being considered. Gabe said that land acquisition is being planned for 2024, with building occurring potentially in 2027-2028. Financial goals for the future include creating a balanced budget while meeting the operational needs of the community, management of increases in expenditures, and growth of operating and capital funds. From now until October, there will be meetings with program managers to refine the budget. At the October board meeting, the first official draft of the budget will be presented. Between October and November, the budget will continue to be refined. In December the final budget will be presented and approved for adoption. If Proposition HH passes, the statutory timelines will be delayed. Work Comp costs do not typically come until November or early December. Director Thorn thanked everyone for their hard work putting the budget together.

#### IV. District Update

##### i. Reports

##### 1. WSFR Monthly Response Report

Chief Jaques said the trends for call processing and travel have not fluctuated much and are looking good. Call volume has dropped just a little bit but is trending at a 10% increase from this time last year and 26% over 2021. Last year this month we were at 363 calls, this year we are at 412. We are currently on track to reach 4,400 calls this year. There was a significant fire recently in Severance. Lessons were learned regarding situation volatility. Severance PD was on the scene as well as the drug task force. No warrant was obtained by PD to search the scene further. We provided a high level of service and there were no injuries. Director Rosen said he appreciated the increase in mutual aid and thanked the efforts put into the back end.

##### a. Semi-Annual Strategic Plan Report Update

Travis Chapman presented the strategic plan report update. 45 objectives in 2022 have been assigned, 32 completed, 11 in progress, 2 on hold. 2023 objectives, 32 have been assigned, 10 completed, 16 in progress, 3 not started, 3 on hold. 3 are set to be started in Q4. The 3 on hold are due to a need to balance workload as well as define the intention of objectives or the need to put other systems in place prior to starting. 4 objectives are assigned to 2024. 42 total objectives are completed, 27 are in process, and 8 are on hold. Several objectives are tied to



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accreditation objectives. Some delays may occur as certain objectives are connected to each other and require the completion of one before another. With the current status of the organization and completion of the plan, Travis proposed extending the plan through 2025 to provide enough time to complete the objectives to meet their fullest intent. Chief Jaques believes with the changes in the organization, our focus has been pulled elsewhere and also supports extending the plan by 1 year to complete the objectives with the attention and dedication needed. Director Thorn asked if any of these objectives are tied to a timeline. Travis said no, they are not tied to a hard timeline. Director Thorn said he understands that with the change in leadership, there would be changes in the plan. Director Dykstra said that there needs to be an emphasis on end dates for these objectives. Chief Greer stated that most fire departments have 20-25 objectives over the course of 5 years. Director Lutz asked what the next strategic planning session would look like if the plan is extended. Chief Jaques stated that many of the objectives will be addressed with the proposed additional staff and that many of them build off each other. Director Hansen said he is used to the strategic plan being assessed and revised annually. Director Thorn suggested making a list of the top priority objectives. Director Rosen is in favor of extending the plan and asked if extending the plan will affect accreditation. Director Dykstra said no, but accreditation does require a 5-year plan and that should be considered for the next plan. The Board agreed that the plan may be extended.

### 2. WSFR Division Reports

Chief Greer said that Auto Aid training with Loveland Fire will kick off tomorrow with live burns. They will discuss radio designations and truck tours to understand each other's response capabilities. This will occur for the next month. The search block training is still outstanding due to weather and calls. Confined space training will occur over the next few weeks thanks to a partnership with Carestream. The year will wrap up with extrication training.

Chief Friedrichsen said there were two significant fires in Severance



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since the last board meeting. We were awarded a regional grant from FEMA to get all new Knox boxes in all of our rigs and change out business Knox boxes to have electronic keys and increase accessibility for the crews. They use e-keys which can hold up to 150 codes in a single key. The e-keys will replace the current keys. The rigs will be changed first, followed by the businesses in town. The metro Denver area was awarded this grant a few years ago and was very successful in its program. Director Thorn congratulated the Life Safety Division on earning the grant and asked how long it would take to implement. Chief Friedrichsen believes it will only take a year and has a goal to have every rig and business done by the end of next year. Director Lutz asked how many boxes this would equate to. There are 623 occupancy boxes, 9 large boxes, and 7 vehicle boxes. 1,897 boxes total will be switched over in the region. This is the first FEMA grant awarded to Colorado this year. Director Lutz asked if there is any risk of us or the rest of the region not completing the project on time. Chief Friedrichsen said the grant is awarded as a whole, and an extension could be requested if needed. Reports are submitted every quarter and the grant recipients are assigned a manager to submit reports and receipts to for reimbursement. The boxes are easy to change and will primarily be completed for the District by the Life Safety Division. The vehicle boxes will be changed by professionals.

### ii. Personnel

#### 1. FRFC 2023-2 Academy Started

FRFC is currently in week 5 of academy. New recruit, Christian Morrison, is doing well and received 100% on his most recent test. Chief Friedrichsen taught fire suppression systems yesterday. A couple WSFR Engineers are also teaching as well. The next academy is set to occur in February. Director Thorn asked about the expense of this academy. WSFR pays \$14,250 per recruit that gets sent to academy and payment is required at the end of academy.

Chief Jaques shared that 2 offers were made for career firefighter positions. One has accepted and the other is still pending. Chief Jaques commended the interview panels as well as Emily and Cierra for coordinating the process.



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Chief Greer passed the Fire Officer II test. Chief Jaques and the Board congratulated him on the incredible accomplishment.

Director Dykstra shared that Ruthie has submitted her notice of resignation. She will be kept on as a remote employee on a trial basis. Her in-person end date will be sometime in the beginning of October. Director Dykstra and Gabe are working together on some of the financial processes such as credit card statements. Payroll will remain the same. Bill processing may change slightly. Director Dykstra is working through the process of having an employee in Wyoming and the implications of having an out-of-state employee. Some factors to consider are worker compensation and employee taxes in another state. Ruthie wants to stay with WSFR if possible, but she is aware there is no guarantee. An employment contract will be drawn up. Director Thorn asked if there is a policy on remote work so that it is administrated consistently. In this scenario, Ruthie will be unable to do board meeting minutes remotely. Director Dykstra said that per Board bylaws, it is the secretary's job to record minutes and implored the Board to consider how meeting minutes should be done, whether that is through having the secretary take them, using another staff member, or hiring a third party contractor. Ruthie will continue to be a liaison for the board. Director Hansen said insurance may need to be considered. Ruthie may need to carry liability insurance, but that will need to be researched further. Emily spoke to a contact with Employer's Council and received a checklist of factors to consider with having a remote employee.

### iii. WSFR Activities and Events

#### 1. Severance Days

There was a parade, fireworks, a concert, and vendors in the park. It was well-received.

#### 2. Harvest Festival

Occurred over two days and included a parade, fireworks, and vendors in the park. Community Risk Reduction Manager Hayley Carson headed the booth at the park along with crews. There was a large rainstorm, but no significant incidents.

#### 3. MDA Fill the Boot

Approximately \$3,900 was raised for MDA Fill the Boot at the Harvest



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Day parade and WSFR booths.

#### 4. Fire Prevention Month

October is the beginning of Fire Prevention Month. Pre-K/1<sup>st</sup> grade/3<sup>rd</sup> grade will be involved. Almost all schools have confirmed, only waiting on 2.

Director Lutz asked if there were any issues or concerns with the change in parade route for Harvest Days. Chief Jaques said that crews were planted on each side of the parade and the event was planned for. He believes that the new route was better for access compared to previous years. Chief Friedrichsen said there was less congestion. Due to new construction on 7<sup>th</sup> street, there is little chance that the parade route will return there.

#### iv. Facilities & Apparatus

Director Dykstra said there are no updates to facilities.

Travis Chapman said a VIN number confirmation has been received for the new Tender. A final inspection in Canada will occur in February and the final truck is expected to be delivered in April. We have a pre-build slot in Pierce's engineer line. We expect an April 2025 delivery for the next Engine. Final pricing for a new command car has been received and will likely be delivered by Q3 of 2024. The motor for the next engine has been submitted, but we did not receive the motor. We contracted for the 2027 emissions standard motor instead.

#### v. Other District Related Matters

1. PDC Donation of \$10,000 – Gas Monitors for Reserve Engines and Electrical Hot Sticks for Reserve Engines, BC2, DC, Chief Vehicles

Chief Jaques said that the \$10,000 has been used for industry specific tools equipment, and training based on current needs. It will be used to outfit the reserve engines. BC2, DC, and Chief Vehicles will be outfitted with Electrical Hot Sticks, which are used to determine if items carry electrical current., such as downed power lines. The gas monitors are leak detection monitors that allow us to do more work prior to the arrival of a gas company on incidents.



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### V. Staff Items

- i. Discussion/Possible Action: Adopt Resolution 2023-04 Establishing Service Fees and Charges

Chief Friedrichsen presented an update to service fees and charges for permits. This will put WSFR in line with other departments in the area. Research was done based on the International Building Code. It benefits contractors who are used to seeing this method and includes dynamic pricing for different-sized jobs. It will go into effect January 1 if approved. Impact fees are not currently included as they will likely change following the results of the pending study. A few fees have been added for CO2 systems and mobile food vendors. There is an agreement with the library district that they will only be charged 50% on fees. There are a few other agreements in the works. Director Thorn as if there are any fees that will be put into place for excessive nuisance alarms. Chief Friedrichsen said those provisions are in a separate policy and are not currently being proposed to change.

Director Lutz submits a motion to approve Resolution 2023-04 Establishing Service Fees and Charges, Director Hansen seconds. Roll Call, all "Aye". Approved.

- ii. Discussion/Possible Action: Adopt Resolution 2023-05 Amend 2021 Fourth Amended IGA of LETA

Chief Jaques requests approval of the resolution to amend the fourth amended IGA of LETA. They are asking us to approve LETA to add Jackson County to their current load. Chief Jaques was part of the work group and believes LETA has the capacity and does not foresee any impacts to WSFR's response.

Director Lutz submits a motion to approve Resolution 2023-05 Amend 2021 Fourth Amended IGA of LETA, Director Thorn seconds. Roll Call, all "Aye". Approved.

- iii. Discussion/Possible Action: Approve Fifth Amended IGA of LETA

Director Lutz asked if the town has to sign on this amended IGA as well. The Mayor for the Town of Windsor listed on the IGA is incorrect. Chief Jaques will



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alert LETA to amend prior to signatures.

Director Lutz submits a motion to approve the Fifth Amended IGA of LETA, Director Hansen seconds. Roll Call, all "Aye". Approved.

- iv. Discussion/Possible Action: Approve Auto-Aid Closest Unit Dispatch IGA with FRFR

Chief Jaques said this is similar to the IGA discussed last month with Greeley. This brings all of the agencies into alignment with closest unit dispatch. The goal is to have closest unit on all calls, starting with structure fires, vehicle fires, large vegetation, and Echo medicals. Eventually, Loveland and Fort Collins will join as CAD systems become interoperable.

Director Lutz submits a motion to approve the Auto-Aid Closest Unit Dispatch IGA with FRFR, Director Hansen seconds. Roll Call, all "Aye". Approved.

### VI. Board of Directors Items

- i. Discussion/Possible Action: Fire Chief Search Process

Director Dykstra said that the salary range and job description need to be finalized prior to the posting. The recommended range was \$185,000 - \$205,000. Director Thorn said that at the 75% quadrant, it was approximately \$182,000. He proposes \$182,000 - \$215,000. HR Emily Pearson said that this range is proposed based on a market analysis. Director Thorn based his justification based on other metrics such as the number of stations managed, number of staff, geographic area covered, and budgets. Emily said that this would be a deviation from the pay philosophy that will be used for the rest of staff. Director Thorn said that the Chief role may need to be considered differently compared to the rest of staff due to differing nature of the job. Director Dykstra said that while this approach may work for 2024, it would need to be consistent moving forward. Emily recommends that a similar process is used for all positions so that it is not inconsistent from year to year. Director Thorn asked if a Chief's role is as market sensitive as other positions or it may be more variable due to district size. Director Thorn is concerned that the median will continue to go up with only a market analysis compared to using the other metrics. Emily said that a healthy peer group of 9-10 will offset swings and that salary needs to be competitive to other agencies. Director Thorn asked where a new Fire Chief would be brought on in the



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range. Emily said that most Fire Chiefs do not follow a step plan, but are hired on at a certain point in the range and raises are awarded in response to performance instead of a step model. Emily proposed the board consider if the step plan model is still effective for our organization. Director Thorn agreed that a performance management system needs to be in place. Director Hansen came up with a midpoint using the current step range. He came up with a range of \$173,000 - \$211,000. Emily said that we may lose talent if the range is below the 50% median. Based on the market, the current pay range is too low. Director Dykstra explained that with the current step system, the position salaries become skewed. Director Hansen asked what the previous Chief was listed at. Emily said he was at \$191,200. \$182,000 is the midpoint of the current pay plan. Director Rosen said that \$185,000-\$205,000 is appropriate considering the market and current Fire Chief openings in the area. Chief Greer said that using the size of department as a metric is not a viable metric and argued that larger districts may have an advantage with more staff to assist with the workload. Emily said that with Front Range and Platte Valley being outliers, they skew the data. Currently, the personnel budget is approximately 78.3%, and with the proposed budget the percentage would be around 79%. Director Lutz is comfortable for \$180,000 - \$205,000.

The board advises the pay range to be \$185,000 - \$205,000. The benefit package will remain the same as all other staff. A relocation package may be negotiable. The board needs to determine what the cap and conditions are prior to the process.

The job description needs to be finalized. Director Thorn said that guidance is needed on the reasonable expectations for a candidate to having a master's degree as opposed to CFO or EFO. Director Hansen asked if the job description needs to be completely redone. Emily said that the job description does need to be revised, but it is a good starting point and that a job description serves as a legal document in the event an employee is not performing. The job description should not be task oriented, but should be responsibility oriented. Director Rosen asked for guidance on some of the details of the job description, including the education component. The ideal candidate committee recommended Bachelor's required, Master's preferred, 7 years' experience in a chief officer role, and CFO or EFO preferred. Director Thorn asked if NIMS should be required upfront or if it should be obtained in a period of time. Director Dykstra said that it is likely that nearly every Chief



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Officer will have it, but that they are easy to obtain online.

Chief Jaques recused himself from the meeting at 9:29pm due to his possible interest in the Fire Chief position.

Staff continue to have discussion with the board to finalize job description for submission to Prothman.

Director Lutz submits a motion to delegate to Director Dykstra approval of the final job description to be provided to Prothman as approved by Director Rosen, Director Hansen seconds. All "aye". Approved.

### V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- I. Possible Vote to go into Executive Session pursuant to C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(b), for the purposes of receiving legal advice from the District's counsel on specific legal verbiage on a position statement from the Board.

Executive session is not needed.

### VI. RECONVENE INTO PUBLIC SESSION

- I. Discussion/Possible Action relating to the position statement from the Board.

Executive session not needed.

### VII. ADJOURNMENT

Director Lutz submits a motion to adjourn the September 2023 Regular Board Meeting. Director Hansen seconds. All "aye". Approved.