



MINUTES  
Mid- Columbia Fire and Rescue  
Special Board Meeting  
In Person / Virtually Held  
1400 W 8<sup>th</sup> Street, The Dalles, OR 97058  
July 29, 2024

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

President Jacobs called the Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue Special Board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Jacobs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Directors Present: David Jacobs, Diana Bailey, Dick Schaffeld, Corey Case. Walter Denstedt arrived at 5:32 p.m., after the meeting had convened.

Staff Present: Chief Bob Palmer, Division Chief Jay Wood, Division Chief Josh Beckner Division Chief Adam Cole, and Office Manager Stephanie Ziegler. Assistant Chief David Jensen was on vacation.

Others Present: Gordon Sletmoe with SDAO and Attorney Mark Sandri standing in for Andrew Myers.

**4. AGENDA CHANGES**

None.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**6. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

a. None.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a. None.

**8. MINUTES**

None.



## 9. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Information Sheet – Fire Chief Job Description and Selection Process along with Succession plan for Chief Jensen. President Jacobs opened the floor for discussion on Version 3 of the job description. Director Bailey stated that she thought the job description was too long, needs to be more concise. Director Case felt the same way. Also, the wording “may set policy” needs to be changed. The Board sets the policies. Director Case asked if other fire chiefs job descriptions are as long as this one. Gordon Sletmoe from SDAO addressed the issues the Board noted. Sletmoe stated he had reviewed the draft job description and agreed some reorganization was needed. He stated there are 3 steps to follow.

1. Set standard for hiring.
2. Evaluate the fire chief once a year making the job description part of the employment agreement.
3. If a situation arises where the Board and fire chief need to part ways for any reason, you go back to the job description.

The consensus was the draft job description should be more concise. Legal Counsel Sandri stated that the job description and the job contract need to be similar. The Board provided direction for Sletmoe to reorganize and clean up the current job description. Sletmoe will work on the job description and will have it back to Chief Palmer by the week of August 12<sup>th</sup>. He stated it would be ready to go for the August 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

- b. Succession Plan – Chief Palmer included a succession plan in the agenda packet. Chief Palmer noted that Assistant Chief Jensen has expressed an interest in the Fire Chief position. The attached succession plan reflects what has been accomplished in preparing Assistant Chief Jensen for this opportunity. President Jacobs stated he would like the Board's input into the recruitment process. He added the Board could directly appoint to the position or could interview other in-house candidates who qualify and apply for the position. There was considerable discussion as to whether the Board should just have internal candidates or go external and advertise. Sletmoe explained the process if the Board decided to go external which could take up to 6 months. The following steps will be necessary:

1. An updated job description
2. Development and approval of the job posting
3. The Chief's salary may need to be updated within employee handbook.

He added that an advertisement could be launched in late August and would need to remain open for 4 weeks. The applications would go to SDAO (Sletmoe) who would



review and enter them into a spreadsheet. He would compare the applicants to the job description and then contact them to set up interviews. The Board would then interview and make a decision.

Sletmoe stated the new chief would likely start in mid-January or early February if this is the direction the Board decided to take. Director Schaffeld made comment that he would like to stay internal and not go outside. Director Case stated he did not want to just appoint someone; however, he would be open to just going internal. Director Denstedt stated he was open to either way. President Jacobs felt they should give the internal candidate a chance to prove they are qualified. Director Bailey would like to interview the internal candidate and hear what his vision is for the fire department. President Jacobs asked for a motion addressing whether to stay internal or to go external.

Director Schaffeld made a motion to conduct an internal recruitment process for fire chief. Director Case seconded; however, he would like more discussion before the vote. After considerable discussion, the Board voted on the motion. The motion passed with 5 Ayes, 0 Nays. Additionally, the job description must be completed, and the Board will need to review fire chief's salary for job posting.

Sletmoe stated that there needs to be an in-house ad or announcement stating anyone can apply for the fire chief position if interested. Sletmoe added there were 4 questions that needed to be determined.

1. How long will the job be posted for? The Board decided 2 weeks.
2. How will applications be processed? The Board decided if there are multiple applications, they will decide if the applicant is qualified for the position.
3. Will the process include an assessment center process or Board interviews. The Board decided an interview process would be most appropriate, not assessment center.
4. Will it be the Board only or will there be stakeholders panel that will interview the candidate first, then the Board interviews? The Board decided on a 5-10-member stakeholder panel that will interview the candidate first, then the Board will conduct a second interview process.

President Jacobs asked if SDAO had interview questions the Board can use. Gordon stated that they had 30 questions that the Board can choose from. The Board can have their own bank of questions to ask each candidate, however they ask the same questions to each individual.



It was decided that the Board will vote on the job description and the process to proceed at the Monday, August 19, 2024, Board meeting. The job description will be included in the agenda packet.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

President Jacobs adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

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Board President

Secretary/Treasurer