

**YAKIMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT 4
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
May 21, 2007**

The meeting convened at 1900 hours at East Valley Fire Station 40. Those present were Commissioners Riel and McNulty, Chief Gay, District Secretary; Michelle Rosen, East Valley Fire District Personnel, and audience members.

Chairman Les Riel called the meeting to order and conducted the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There being no changes by either Commissioner, the agenda was approved.

INTERVIEWING OF PROSPECTIVE COMMISSIONER CANDIDATES BY THE BOARD AND FACILITATOR

Commissioner Riel noted that public input was not allowed and turned the floor over to Matt Fairbanks with the Dispute Resolution Center.

Matt reminded the audience that at the last Commissioner's Meeting, it was decided that the selection committee, in conjunction with the facilitator, would review applications, conduct interviews, and send the top three commissioner candidates before the Board at this Special Meeting. Matt asked the prospective candidates to respond to the following: •Describe their background and experience in regard to creating and managing budgets and finance. •Complete the statement "Leadership is. . ." •Describe their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the position of Commissioner. •Respond to the scenario of an irate firefighter calling a commissioner at home with a complaint about a fire department disciplinary matter against him or her. •Is the candidate aware that the appointment ends after the General Election and requires the appointee to file for office in June to stand for election in the fall, and is it their intention to stand for election in November. •Why does the candidate want to be an East Valley Fire District Commissioner.

Joseph Gendron was introduced and answered the interview questions accordingly: He indicated that he was a member of the Yakima Fire Department for 31 years, 20 of those years as a member of the executive board serving in various capacities including overseeing an annual budget of \$60,000-\$80,000. He also noted that he had a paint contracting business for 15 years where he was responsible and accountable for his debts. He has also been attending the fire district commissioner meetings with the current Board for 1 ½ years, including budget hearings and reviews and has become familiar with their line item budget.

Joe responded that leadership is to motivate individuals, and/or influence individuals to meet goals and objectives of a business or organization.

Joe's strength, he answered, is his background in the fire service. He has also served in this district as an interviewer and was involved in the assessment process for two promotions, including the selection of the new Chief. He has experience working with fully paid, partially paid and volunteer fire departments. Joe indicated that computers are not his forte; and that would be his weakness.

In response to the proposed scenario, Joe answered that his first question to the individual would be if the chain of command had been followed which he feels is an integral part of the fire service. If it had, there would be no conversation with the firefighter; the next step would be to call a meeting with the Chief.

Joe has the candidate filing packet and does intend to stand for election in the fall.

Joe feels that his experience and background in the fire service would be of assistance to the Board and he understands the needs the department is facing.

Matt introduced Jeff LaBrant as the next candidate.

Jeff has served on his church board which had a budget of .5 million dollars and is currently president of a local civic group that is responsible of a budget of over \$10,000. He has lived in this area for 25 years and served on the fire department for 12 years.

To Jeff, leadership is guiding, listening, and making hard decisions.

Jeff's strength is his 12 years of service to this department. He also recognizes the growth of the community and the varying needs of the three areas of the district. He indicated that he needs to learn all of the specific issues of the department that need to be solved. Issues should not be languished.

In response to the scenario presented, Jeff noted that he would refer the irate firefighter to the proper chain of command.

Jeff is aware of the length of the appointment and plans to file for office in June.

Jeff feels that his past experience in the fire department would be an asset to the Board.

Dick Start was introduced as the final candidate for the position.

For the past 40 years, Dick has been in direct management in the business arena. Within the most recent 15 years, he was a part of a sales department that generated over \$27 million a year and he needed to understand the direct expense and budget lines that went with it. He believes that in order to get a job done properly, sufficient staff must be available, and they must be looked after in manner that makes them happy to be in that job.

Dick feels that leadership the ability to have empathy and sympathy for the problems that will confront you. Leadership includes understanding people, what makes them tick, their needs, requirements, and their hardships and benefits.

Dick's strength is the 13 years he has been in business in the respective area and that he understands the make-up of various communities. Dick noted that his weakness would be learning and understanding all the requirements and needs of an East Valley Fire Commissioner. He indicated that he would take on this challenge and be a good supporter of those issues.

Dick's solution to the scenario presented would also be to refer the irate firefighter to the proper line of command and those directives. If the Chief was unable to resolve the situation, Dick feels that the issue would then be the responsibility of the Commissioners.

Dick does intend to file for the position in June and stand for election in the fall.

In closing, he feels he has a lot to offer the district. He has 30 years of fire training and has taught firefighting all over Washington, Oregon, California, and Nevada and would be a great support to the district.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Riel called for a 15 minute executive session under RCW 42.30.110(h) in order to meet with the selection committee members.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER

Chairman Riel called the meeting back to order following the executive session and relayed his thanks to all of the candidates and applauded their willingness to step in. He also expressed his gratitude to the selection committee members for their time.

Chairman Riel made a motion to appoint Joe Gendron to fill Position No. 3 as Yakima County Fire District No. 4 Fire Commissioner. Commissioner McNulty seconded the motion and the motion carried.

District Secretary Rosen administered the oath of office to Mr. Gendron.

Chairman Riel noted that the agenda for the next regular meeting needs to include the appointment of a Chairman and Vice Chairman. Once the appointment of the Chairman is made, the gavel will be turned over to that individual and he will call for nominations for the appointment of Vice Chair.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This is for discussion between the Board and Staff. Even though discussion takes place in an open public forum the public is precluded from making comment.

Chief Gay requested that the Chair consider reinstating the selection committee to serve as a stakeholder group for the strategic plan review. Chairman Riel and Commissioner McNulty agreed.

Chairman Riel thanked Matt Fairbanks for his assistance and timeliness in the appointment process.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Commissioner McNulty made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Riel seconded the motion and so ordered the meeting adjourned at 1938 hours.

ATTEST:

Commissioner

District Secretary

Commissioner

Commissioner