



REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY PLANNING COMMITTEE September 25, 2014

Present:

Denis Law, Mayor	Ray Barilleaux, KCFD #25
Jay Covington, Chief Admin Officer	Kerry Abercrombie, KCFD #25
Marcy Palmer, Renton City Council	Myron Meikle, KCFD #25
Armondo Pavone, Renton City Council	Dorian Waller, Consultant
Ed Prince, Renton City Council	Mark Peterson, Fire Chief
Iwen Wang, FIT Administrator	Chad Michael, Deputy Fire Chief
Nancy Carlson, HR_RM	Julie Bray, KCFD #25 District Liaison
Lt. Steve Winter, Local 864	

1. Mayor Law made his opening remarks and explained that in order to create a Regional Fire Authority (RFA), it would have to be:
 - Better for the citizens
 - Affordable
2. Iwen gave a brief overview of the reasons for creating a Regional Fire Authority (RFA).
 - Financial reasons will drive the final decision. Right now, the Fire Department uses 19% of the City's general fund and 60% of the property taxes.
 - Fire District #25 is currently collecting \$1.50/\$1,000 AV. During the recession, it was necessary to reduce the staffing at Fire Station #16.
3. Chief Peterson explained how RFAs are created:
 - According to RCW 52.26, it takes a minimum of 2 entities to form a separate taxing district. The RFA would be the sole taxing authority.
 - District #25 would still remain a District unless the Board voted to dissolve it.
 - The District would no longer have taxing authority and would have to go to the RFA for funding.
4. Chief Peterson explained the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Committee:
 - Essentially, the Planning Committee will develop a business plan on how the RFA is run.
 - Their role would be to create efficiencies that will serve the citizens well.
 - If the plan is adopted, the department would have to put the Service Benefit Charge (SBC) on the ballot every 6 years. They will need 60% approval on the initial vote, after that it would be a simple majority.
 - The RFA and the SBC would be together on the ballot and would be considered one vote.
 - The SBC shifts the tax burden to riskier businesses. For example, a single family household would pay significantly less than a business without sprinklers.
 - Commissioner Barilleaux asked what would happen if the citizens in the City approved the vote, but the citizens in the District rejected it? It would be a combined vote of both entities. If the Commissioners felt that an RFA wasn't desired in their District, they would be allowed to pull out of the process.

5. Chief Michael gave a very brief overview of what the Steering Committee has done so far:
 - The Committee is comprised of Locals 2170 & 864, the City and the Fire Department.
 - They participated in a stakeholder mapping exercise designed to consider the interests and concerns of the stakeholders that will be impacted by the RFA.
 - Chief Schneider (Fire Chief of the Kent Fire Authority) was invited to share the challenges they faced while they were in the process of forming their Fire Authority.
 - The group has worked on sections of the RFA Plan and had some initial discussions on Sections 2 & 3.
 - They have held 4 meetings; their next one is tomorrow, the 26th.
6. Chief Peterson discussed the timeline:
 - Discussion followed on when to place the RFA & BSC on the ballot - April of 2015 is possibly the soonest. Mayor Law reminded the committee that the state-wide radio measure will be on that ballot; however, there will always be competing interests.
 - Lt. Winter informed the committee that their members are already ramped up for next year; but he is concerned about having the radio measure and the RFA & BSC on the same ballot. He also reminded the committee that when Kent formed their RFA, they had a dedicated full-time person work on it.
 - Commissioner Meikle was concerned that they needed a final cost before they can take it to their District.
 - Jay will have his staff put together example timelines. Council Member Prince requested that the timelines be sent out as soon as they are available.
 - Council Member Palmer requested that any materials that were going to be discussed at the meetings be sent out prior to the meetings so they will have time to properly review them.
 - Chief Peterson asked for a volunteer to serve as Chairperson; Council Member Prince volunteered.
7. Mayor Law informed the committee that KCFD #20 was very interested in joining in the process.
 - KCFD #20 only has one station; Renton is finding itself backing them up often which leaves Renton short-staffed. This might require rethinking our Mutual Aid agreement.
 - Deputy Chief Michael explained the maps and the boundary lines for each jurisdiction.
 - Lt. Winter informed the committee that Skyway Firefighters Local 3740 is not interested in combining two separate bargaining agreements.
 - The suggestion was made to write the plan in such a way that Districts #20 & #40 would be able to join at a later time.
8. Chief Peterson asked for names for a possible Citizen's Advisory Board:
 - The Board would solicit feedback from the community and bring it back to the Planning Committee.
 - Chief Peterson recommended Tom Tasa; he requested the other members email him with suggestions for others.

Commissioner Meikle asked for dates for the next meetings. He also requested the dates for the Steering Committee. Chief Peterson asked him to forward his schedule so they can schedule the meetings around his schedule.

The next Planning Committee meeting will be held October 23rd at 1400 hours in the Conferencing Center.

Recorded by:
Julie Bray, District Liaison