

FIRE & EMS PLANNING COALITION

Special Meeting Minutes March 18, 2019 – 5:30 PM City of Dallas Civic Center 945 SE Jefferson St, Dallas, OR 97338

Present: Paul Trahan, Jennie Rummell, Frank Pender, Rick Mishler, Chris Greenhill, Scot Breeden, Rod Watson, Tammy Heidt, Dennis Rogers, Gary Brooks, Denis Graver, Brice Ingram, Roy Whitman, Larry Briggs, Bill Hahn, Michael Schilling, Jackie Lawson, Ken Woods Jr., Kelly Gabliks, Keith Moore, Bob Davis, Fred Hertel, Todd Brumfield, Greg Ellis, Lane Shutterly, Ashley Harlow and Audience Members.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER at 5:34pm

Dallas Mayor Brian Dalton called the meeting to order for Dallas City Council, and the fire districts of SW Polk, West Valley and Sheridan.

FLAG SALUTE

INTRODUCTION OF COALITION MEMBERS by Scot Breeden

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Each member introduced themselves.

Presentation on Fire & EMS Coalition

Brian Dalton introduced the two speakers there; George Endicott and Tim Moor of Redmond. The meeting was then opened for questions from any board or city council members.

Tim loves to share how their annexation went. He made the disclaimer that no two annexations are the same. He was asked what drove them to a new fire district. He answered by saying that the City was growing, and they could not keep up financially. Redmond had city limits, then Deschutes RFPD surround the City. Their first need was to get the governing bodies on the same page. They needed everyone on the same page.

Kelly Gabliks

Q: Did you do a feasibility study first?

A: They got the governing bodies on board. Afterward, they did a revenue assessment. The key component on a city's tax side were indicated the indirect fees. It is important to do a financial analysis to determine if it is feasible. Typically, one would hire a consultant. In his opinion they didn't need a consultant. "Nobody knows your operation better than you".

Bill Hahn

Q: Did you know your consultant (TVFNR)?

A: They helped for a while, but were not hired to do the study.

Kelly Gabliks wanted to state that Deschutes and Redmond were already working together. They knew each other's operations already. This was confirmed. When starting, the only thing the City owned was the station and one fire truck. The district owned two stations and several apparatus. They hired a polling firm to see if the community would support the annexation. It was not successful. Redmond was afraid that if the tax rate would reduce, it would go back up later. They had not trust in the government. They agreed that the fire department would no longer be a part of the city, and that the taxes would not be increased without the vote of the people.

Rick Mishler

Q: What is the population?

A: around 28,000 in the city. They outsourced certain things, and kept maintenance within the City.

Kelly Gabliks

Q: What were some of the negatives?

A: Having the cash to stay afloat. One has to make sure you have enough in the bank. The fire district is a lot different though.

Q: Would it have been different if the tax rate was going up?

A: Probably. One of the bumps for these districts (West Valley, Sheridan, SW Polk and Dallas) is that the tax rates would all go up.

Jackie Lawson

Q: Explain the elections for the new Board.

A: They were governed by status 478. They were four year positions. They have had empty seats before. The Board had appointed someone. They have not had any issues with this process.

Kelly Gabliks

Q: How long did the process take?

A: About two years. At least half of this time was spent on analysis. The other half was campaigning.

Jim Williams

Q: How did it affect the response times?

A: None. It is the same fire district. They were already working almost as one. Through time, they were able to make decisions quicker.

Chris Patoine

Q: Do you think you would have gotten support if the taxes were raised?

A: It would have been harder.

Jenny Rummell

Q: Are you staff or volunteer?

A: t is a combination. Primarily career staff. They started at 20% career, and then hired until it is around 80% now.

Larry Briggs

Q: What were the negatives for the City?

A: The deliberate charter change.

Scot Breedon

Q: Is the district still functioning at 1.75 tax rate with no levies or bonds?

A: Yes, but they have run out of funds. They are looking for a solution. When you get the opportunity to consolidate, make sure the rate will work for many years.

Bill Hahn

Q: How many Square miles is the district? And how much staff do you have?

A: Approximately 322 square miles. They have 14 FF/Par. 2 BLS, and reserves.

Dennis Rodgers

Q: How many volunteers are there? Are the staff a part of the union?

A: There were about 14 volunteers, but it has gotten lower. The staff is part of the union.

Chris Greenhill

Q: How many manned stations are there?

A: Four

Jackie Lawson

Q: Are you still doing recruiting for volunteers?

A: Yes, but not aggressively.

Rod Watson

Q: Tax Clarification

A: \$1.75 for the district, \$4.41 for the City

Rick Mischler

Q: West Valley is trying to get a levy. Should they be stabilized going in or no?

A: Whichever way stabilizes the organization best.

Open to the floor for questions or comments.

Eriks Gabliks

Q: What would you do if another district wanted to be the providers?

A: They don't know how they could since Redmond surrounds the City.

Rocky Losli

Q: One issue with TVFNR is that they have a large assessed value. Not everyone is. We need to continue with volunteers. Is this not an option?

A: Moving on is necessary due to the nature of society.

Chris Greenhill states their biggest issues with volunteers are that they have no license or they can't pass the drug test. This has become a major issue.

Dennis Unger

Q: It is time for Dallas to upgrade. It is hard to see how twenty miles away can improve response from so far away.

A: It depends on which station needs to provide to what location. You need to build a leadership organization that can help.

Scot Breedon

Q: Have you ever tried to change back?

A: No. They only changed the governance model. At the end of the day, the people determine the service level with a vote. There aren't any two consolidations that will be alike.

Eriks Gabliks

It is getting hard to find volunteers. With such a high call volume, it will be going to career staff soon enough. There are a lot of decisions to be made when it comes to who will respond.

Brian Dalton thanked the speakers for coming and answering questions.

**CLOSING COMMENTS
ADJOURNMENT at 6:45pm**