

Special Meeting 08-23-2023 1

DOUGLAS OKANOGAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 15
APPROVED MINUTES

Ambulance Hall

Brewster, WA

A special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Douglas Okanogan County Fire District 15 was called to order by Chairman Chris Bailey at 6:00 p.m. at the Ambulance Hall.

IN ATTENDANCE: Commissioners Chris Bailey, Joe Kitzman, F. Eric Zahn, Secretary Kaylee Jensen, EMS Director Tonya Vallance, District Chief Bill Vallance, Brewster Station Chief Victor Vargas, Brewster Station Captain Austin Vargas, Firefighters John Goyne and Bruce Henne and QCHerald reporter Mike Maltais

REMOTE ATTENDANCE BY PHONE OR COMPUTER: Rocky Butte Station Chief Sal Rodriguez and Methow Station Chief Nolan Tonseth

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the District Chief position and to approve posting the advertisement for the District Chief position.

An employment package had been provided to Commissioners. The Chairman asked if all had a chance to review it and if anyone else had anything to comment.

Chief Victor Vargas would like volunteers to have a voice and the District Chief to be involved in the hiring process.

The Chairman agreed that is important and stated it was the purpose of the meeting to put an ad together and see what kind of response is received. A list of questions needs to be put together for the interview questions, so all candidates are asked the same questions. Media present at 6:05pm and a device was placed on the table in front of Commissioners to record the proceedings.

John Goyne stated there should be 5-7 people present in the Interview process and asked if there was a list of qualifications. Bill stated there is a job description and read the list of qualifications that is in the employment package the Commissioners received. Discussion held.

The Districts long-term goals were discussed, the District is coming to the end of a 5 year plan and a new 5 year plan will be developed with the new District Chief's input. The Methow Station addition and a Brewster Fire Station are already part of the Districts long-term goals. Chief Victor Vargas stated there are some brush trucks needing replaced at Brewster.

Commissioner Joe Kitzman stated he would like the salary to be on the higher end.

Commissioner Bailey stated there is a pretty good gap in the listed salary. Qualifications of candidates, the benefit package and budget must be factored into the decision.

The Secretary disclosed the District Chief 2023 salary set by the Employee Committee and approved by Commissioners which was less than the high-end number listed in the employment package. Annual leave is paid in addition to the salary for exempt employees of the District. The Secretary reported the salary exempt fulltime employee's currently receive \$800/mo toward medical plan and any difference is added to the \$100/mo VEBA benefit, Deferred comp is matched up to \$100/mo by District, and FICA Social Security and Medicare, a mandatory Admin Group \$100/mo is paid by the employee from their gross wages to VEBA for anyone in this salary position.

The Secretary asked whether the position would include a sign on bonus since the District offers \$2500 for Fulltime and \$1500 for part time EMT's. The Chairman stated the position would include a salary and benefit package only and no sign on bonus.

Commissioner Joe Kitzman stated the package answered a lot of questions but wanted to go over questions presented by Nolan Tonseth and the committee group that had met. Commissioners discussed the lists of questions and provided any answers that hadn't been answered already. The probationary period for the position will be 1 year.

The Chairman asked if the board wanted to consider a combined District Chief/EMS Director position with higher salary offered. Chief Victor Vargas stated that would be a lot to bear on one person coming into the new position. Discussion held. There wasn't support for a combined position and the employment package would need to be revamped if they chose that option. A combined position may be considered later depending on applicant qualifications.

The Chairman stated they need to agree on getting the ad out there. John Goyne stated there is a RCW requirement to list the job opening for 60 days.

Joe/Eric moved and seconded to direct the Secretary to find out how long the job needs to be open for and then set the dates in the ads to get it out there. Motion carried.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions from anyone before adjourning the meeting. There were none.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:51 PM.

Kaylee Jensen, Board Secretary

Chris Bailey, Chairman