

Marysville / Arlington / FPD 12 Regional Fire Authority Committee

Meeting

Marysville City Council Chambers

August 24, 2017

5:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Tolbert called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and invited everyone to introduce themselves. She commented that Mayor Nehring was not present tonight as he had a family commitment.

Arlington Mayor:	Barbara Tolbert
Marysville City Council:	Steve Muller, Kamille Norton (alternate), Jeff Seibert
Marysville CAO:	Gloria Hirashima
Marysville Finance Director:	Sandy Langdon
MFD Finance Manager:	Chelsie McInnis
Arlington City Admin.:	Paul Ellis
Arlington Finance Director:	Kristin Garcia
Arlington City Council:	Marilyn Oertle, Jesica Stickles ¹
Marysville Fire District:	Tonya Christoffersen, Pat Cook
Marysville Fire Chief:	Martin McFalls
Arlington Fire Chief:	Bruce Stedman
Facilitator/Consultant:	Karen Reed

Review of Agenda and Goals

Mayor Tolbert thanked staff for preparing the binders. She reviewed the meeting agenda as contained in the binder.

Communication items

¹ Councilmember Stickles arrived at 5:30 p.m.

Marysville Fire District Commissioner Pat Cook informed the committee that Commissioner Bontrager had resigned as of Monday. The Fire District is in the process of finding an interim commissioner.

Arlington Fire Chief Stedman notified the board (committee) that this will likely be his last meeting as he has been offered the position as Fire Chief with South Snohomish County Fire & Rescue.

Approval of Meeting Summary of July

Motion made by Commissioner Christoffersen, seconded by Councilmember Oertle, to approve the July meeting minutes as presented. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Roundtable: Reflections on Year – 1 Service Levels/Avoided Costs Presentation

Fire Chief McFalls solicited feedback on last month's presentation.

- Councilmember Muller asked about overtime. Chief McFalls replied that there would be some overtime coverage. Karen Reed noted that the anticipated impact on the overall amount of overtime had not yet been evaluated, but that the Chiefs expect a reduction in overtime associated with training.
- Fire Chief Stedman commented that with him leaving his position as fire chief there will be an immediate annual savings of approximately \$200,000.
- Councilmember Oertle also indicated that she had been concerned about overtime.
- Mayor Tolbert stated she had been very impressed with the presentation last month.
- Commissioner Christoffersen commented that the level of service should only get better.
- Commissioner Cook commented that service levels should improve with shared equipment.
- There was consensus that the presentation was very valuable.
- Councilmember Muller asked if the cost impacts of reducing transports had been analyzed. Chief Stedman said that Arlington has done a cost analysis on it. The community paramedic program will reduce some of the calls. The Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) funding will also help.
- Mayor Tolbert commented that the state has capped the allocations. Fire Chief Stedman concurred and noted that the GEMT will make up some of that lost revenue. Mayor Tolbert commented that federal action related to health care is something that needs to be considered as they move forward.
- Commissioner Cook commented that the cities provide services at a lower rate than private providers and citizens are already paying the costs with their taxes. He commented on the lower level of service with private (for-profit) providers.

Discussion/Potential Action: Statement of Shared Values and Principles

Karen Reed solicited comments on this document.

Councilmember Muller referred to item 1 and recommended that the language should state that the RFA should operate "at least at the same" level. This would be more appropriate rather than mandating that they will be better even though efficiencies are expected.

Councilmember Seibert referred to item 3. He commented that having to raise the levy every few years doesn't make a stable financial model. He cautioned that they may not necessarily be able to raise the levy. Mayor Tolbert thought that item 2 covers this by stating that they will make data-driven decisions. Councilmember Seibert stressed the importance of recognizing that they are cutting off some of the funding mechanism by moving to an RFA because they would only rely on property tax.

Karen Reed commented that she would make the changes discussed and bring a revised version back to the next meeting.

Review/Discussion: Work Plan for September – December 2017

a. Sample RFA Plan

Ms. Reed reviewed the South Snohomish County Fire & Rescue RFA Plan.

b. RFA Plan Issues List

Ms. Reed explained that this list covers the main points that need to be addressed in creating an RFA plan.

c. Meeting Dates for September-December

There will be three meetings this fall, one each month in September, October, and November. The date for the meeting in October needs to be changed due to a conflict with the Fire District.

d. Draft work plan

Ms. Reed reviewed the work plan as contained in the binder which will help the Committee to meet its goal of being ready for an RFA election in the August 2018 primary. The plan is to start meeting twice a month from January through April.

Motion made by Councilmember Stickles, seconded by Commissioner Cook, to approve the Draft Work Plan. **Motion** passed unanimously.

e. Draft Communications Plan

Ms. Reed recommended consistency in posting information and keeping the public informed about the status of the RFA Committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Cook, seconded by Councilmember Oertle, to approve the proposed Draft Communications Plan. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Reed asked if the Committee would like to allow time to each agenda for union members to make comments. This is something the Lynnwood/Fire District 1 did in their RFA process. Commissioners Cook, Christoffersen, and Councilmember Oertle spoke in support of providing time for union member comments in order to be inclusive.

RFA Planning Committee formation issues

Ms. Reed noted that legal counsel has advised her that the Committee is duly formed. One question which needs to be considered is whether or not Arlington would like to provide an alternate member in the event that one of their members isn't able to attend.

Review/Discussion: Draft Planning Committee Charter

Ms. Reed reviewed the Draft Planning Committee Charter.

- If everyone wants to have an alternate, that should be included in the Charter.
- Commissioner Cook pointed out a correction under Membership.
- There was consensus to not have conference calls be an option for those who cannot attend.
- Councilmember Muller raised a concern about the 2/3 approval requirement for the final plan. There was consensus to allow a proxy vote for the final plan if there is no alternate available.

Governance Briefing – options and issues

Ms. Reed reviewed the Issue Paper contained in the binder regarding Governance scope of issues and basic rules.

There was discussion surrounding EMS levy voting details and the sequence of events. Commissioner Cook pointed out that Fire District 12 doesn't have to go to a vote of the people for a levy lid lift because of banked capacity. Finance Manager Chelsie McInnis concurred and explained that Fire District 12 would maintain the same capacity in the EMS levy if the District isn't dissolved.

Councilmember Stikles referred to the composition of Board and asked if anyone ever moves to all elected members after the RFA. Ms. Reed explained that Lynnwood did that. They are starting with all appointed members, but will replace out members gradually until they have seven board members – five from districts and two at large.

After discussion around possibilities for size and composition of the Board, there was consensus to consider a size of 5 to 7 members.

Ms. Reed asked about philosophical issues surrounding the composition of the Board.

- Councilmember Stikles spoke in support of moving to a directly elected model over time because it would offer better representation for the whole region rather than just the individual entities.
- Councilmember Seibert thought it should just be Councilmembers to avoid having the cost of two separate elections. He noted that citizens already recognize the City Council as leaders. It could get confusing having another group of elected officials.
- Councilmember Norton thought it would be better to have Councilmembers because they would be better able to look at the issues in a holistic way and understand the impacts on the taxpayers.
- Councilmember Muller spoke in support of having the Council at the beginning, but then moving toward appointments.
- Ms. Reed pointed out that all appointed Board members need to be elected officials of component jurisdictions.
- Commissioner Cook spoke in support of eventually opening this up to other community members to serve on the Board because there are many interested people who are extremely capable.
- Councilmember Seibert expressed concern about opening it up to at large members due to potential conflict of interests.
- Commissioner Cook spoke in support of having the most highly trained people on the board in order to provide the best service for the citizens.
- Councilmember Oertle spoke in support of having appointed elected officials to start and possibly opening it up later.
- Mayor Tolbert spoke in support of having appointed elected officials at the start and then moving to elected board members in order to allow the Council to focus on city issues. She suggested that phasing to an elected board would depend on the comfort level of the appointed board.

Expected Growth in property taxes versus other costs

Ms. Reed reviewed the RFA property tax summary, property tax growth vs. expenditure growth, and RFA models for sustainable funding.

Template for defining sustainable services assumptions: building baseline costs

Ms. Reed referred to the RFA Issues List and explained that staff would bring back options for each of these as needed to create an RFA Plan.

Final Comments

Steve Muller stated that it was good to give comments. He feels they are going in the right direction. He still has questions about sustainability. The assumption that they will be raising taxes every few years is scary.

Tonya Christoffersen expressed appreciation for the outline and the work plan. She would like to see more efforts to keep the public informed with news stories and information on the website.

Marilyn Oertle agreed with Tonya Christoffersen about getting the public up to speed as she feels this is the biggest hurdle.

Jessica Stikles spoke to the value of the work plan schedule.

Paul Ellis said he appreciated hearing all the discussion on this so staff knows how to proceed.

Next steps/Next meeting

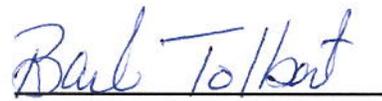
September 28 is the next meeting.

Adjournment

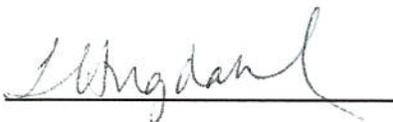
The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.



Jon Nehring
Chair



Barb Tolbert
Chair



Recording Secretary