



**Thurston County Fire Protection District 8
Board of Fire Commissioners' Meeting
September 8, 2026**

MINUTES of the regular Board meeting held on September 8, 2026, at South Bay Station 8-1 and via Zoom. Commissioners Long, Kilpatrick, Hunter, Bivens, and Zvirzdys, along with Chief VanCamp, Assistant Chief LeMay, Administrative Assistant Hansen, Steve Brooks, Chief Schmidt, and several members were in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

Collaboration Update: Using a handout, Steve Brooks presented an update on potential next steps and a summary of issues and interests related to a merge with Lacey Fire District 3 (LFD3). Considerations were discussed, including financial sustainability, management of non-represented staff (executive and volunteer), seniority (carryover of longevity and time in grade), and role and wage scale equivalencies. Notably, District 8's Battalion Chiefs (BCs) would be affected by a net loss of income under the merger model. Commissioner Zvirzdys expressed concern with seeing loss for South Bay members and encouraged the exploration of more options. Commissioner Bivens concurred. Commissioner Kilpatrick suggested viewing the merger model as a whole, rather than focusing on the instances of loss. Commissioner Hunter emphasized that a consistent path forward cannot rely on an uncertain levy passage, which District 8 would depend on if the merger was not pursued.

Battalion Chief Brent McBride (representing South Bay union members) provided a statement against the proposed merger model, while acknowledging the pivotal point for the District and the need to explore other options (suggesting merging with a smaller district, forming a Regional Fire Authority (RFA), or proceeding to try for the levy). Several members expressed concern about BC demotions, probation intent (citing RCW 52.06.120), staffing requirements, and options for acting officers. The option to form an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) was also suggested.

Steve Brooks and Chief Schmidt provided clarification on topics of concern, explaining that the development of this merger model required a focus on building engine companies, maintaining reserve funds, and advantageous timing. Chief Schmidt also noted that other options (i.e. creating an ILA) come with more administrative and organizational challenges.

Further discussions took place, specifically on seniority, collective bargaining agreements, and work-hour reductions. Steve Brooks concluded that the merger model appears to be the simplest path forward, with potential to form an RFA in the future.

2027 Budget Policy Recommendations: Using a handout, Chief VanCamp shared his recommendations for the District's organizational and fiscal direction for two approaches: merging with LFD3 in 2027 (Plan A) or remaining independent (Plan B). Chief VanCamp specified that his biggest concern is for District 8 to lose the capabilities to serve effectively. While acknowledging the unexpected impact on BCs, Chief VanCamp advocated for Plan A in favor of his expectation for greater financial stability, stating that the other suggested options would not serve as feasible solutions. Chief VanCamp encouraged the Board and members to prepare for potential impacts on staffing and service if Plan B is pursued.

beginning at 5:30 PM. and will be held at South Bay Station 8-1. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM.

ATTEST:



Pamela Long, as Chair for TCFPD 8



Gloria Zvirzdys, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8



Douglas Kilpatrick, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8



Daniel Bivens as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Jake Hunter, as Commissioner for TCFPD 8

Heidi Stumpf, District Secretary for TCFPD 8