

## **Regional Partnerships Feasibility Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date:** 4/27/2026 8:30 AM

**Location:** Lacey Fire District Headquarters

**Participants :** Commissioners Hetzler, Pierce, Long and Kilpatrick; Chiefs Schmidt, VanCamp, Hurley and Crimmins; Labor Reps Greene and McBride; Admin Staff Kirkwood, Henson, Stumpf; Facilitator: Brooks

### **Focus Areas:**

Service Levels

- Operations
- Labor
- Admin/Finance/Legal
  - Consolidate budgets into one and determine long-term impacts/concerns
  - What does making regionalization financially stable look like
- Governance/Executive
  - Consolidation and reduction of merged Boards

### **Other elements to consider:**

- **District-Level Advisory Group(s)**

### **Options/Steps:**

Contracts (ILAs) - East Oly & Lacey currently

- Mergers \*\*\* this is the area of focus \*\*\*
  - Merging & merger districts
  - Need to check with legal on the timing of placing a merger on the ballot - need to wait 180 days after the boundary committee has reviewed? - Check with legal
- Annexations
  - Primarily available for inclusion of cities within districts
- RFAs

- Separate vote to dissolve the base districts - underlying districts can remain, if desired
- Not on the table with Lacey/South Bay/East Oly - may come into play with Tumwater in the future

### **Need to evaluate cultural alignment of all involved agencies**

#### **Current WSRB Ratings:**

- East Oly - 3 & 5
- Lacey - 3 & 5
- South Bay – 3 & 5
- Tumwater - 3

#### **Services (key pieces):**

- Culture - the way we do "it" here
  - What are the core things that are uniquely yours?
    - Response and arrival times - improve if possible
    - Alternative response/Value-added response
    - Volunteers considered and maintained
    - 3-person engine company/3-person crews (staffing levels)
    - Specialty services (technical rescues)
    - Community partnerships (CRR)
    - Emergency Management - assume some of the duties of the County, if possible
    - Level of service request - working with members that have larger call volume (personal touch)
    - Legislative involvement
    - Merged mission and standards to work under (consistency) - common philosophy

- Operations
  - Training - initial & ongoing
  - Facilities/Station Placement
    - South Bay - two fire stations staffed 24/7
      - Purchased property on 63rd - won't build until they can consistently staff the station
    - East Oly – two fire stations with staffing-dependent reductions
      - Station 62 - well problem currently, may not be feasible to keep
      - Station 65 - small footprint - may not have room to be fully staffed
  - Apparatus/Equipment review and assessment to be completed
  - Competencies need to be assigned
  - Staffing model and shift alignments required
  - Compatibility (i.e.: radios, SCBAs)
- Labor
  - Contract alignment
    - Rank structures
    - Deployment models (shift schedules)
    - Assignment (geographic areas)
  - Benefits
  - Promotional Opportunities/Processes
  - Hiring practices & standards
    - May need to develop new job descriptions
  - Specialties: opportunities, related selection processes and compensation
  - Volunteers: long-term roles, training, coordination and sustainability
  - Health/Wellness: key area of focus for all agencies and desire to enhance

- Positive Labor Management Relationship
- Admin/Finance/Legal
  - IT: systems, infrastructure
  - Finance: reporting, payroll, AP/HR
  - Logistics
  - Human Resources
    - Hiring Practices, Policies, Procedures, SOGs
  - Legal review and alignment
  - Funding Mechanisms and Long-term Sustainability
- Governance/Executive
  - Incumbents all remain with reductions via resignations and election reductions to current maximum of 5 Commissioners
  - Legal counsel involved in reviewing the proper steps
- Timelines
  - Sub-committees (two meetings prior to end of June):
    - Labor
      - Reps & Chiefs (Local 2903 and East Olympia) - Tumwater invited to be present
    - Administrative
      - Admin Staff & Chiefs (all functions & roles)
      - Separate group for Lacey & Tumwater evaluations
    - Merger(s): No sooner than February or April 2027; could be single or multiple Districts at the same time
    - Larger Consolidations: TBD, but no earlier than 2028

**Next full meeting: End of June**