

Pleasant Hill Goshen Fire & Rescue
Pleasant Hill Rural Fire Protection District
Goshen Rural Fire Protection District
Joint Board Work Session/Zoom Meeting
March 22, 2022

Call to Order

The hybrid Joint Board Work Session was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Fire Authority Board President Willie Bronson.

Attendance:

Pleasant Hill Board Members: President Terry McDiarmid, Vice President Todd Anderson, and Board Member Kevin Flory. Absent: Secretary/Treasurer Rhett Green and Board Member Darrell Shoemaker.

Goshen Board Members: President Willie Bronson, Vice President Rose Reinertson, Secretary/Treasurer Cameron Saxon, and Board Member Tom McClellan.

Pleasant Hill Goshen Fire & Rescue Board Members: President Willie Bronson, Vice President Terry McDiarmid, and Secretary/Treasurer Tom McClellan. Absent: Board Member Darrell Shoemaker.

Staff: Fire Chief Andrew Smith, Captain Riley Moore, and Executive Assistant Haley Meshnik.

Guests: GT Miller, Bob Schutte, Jake Shaffren, Mica McOmber, Aaron Lake, and Volunteer Firefighters Lacie Perkins, Rob Ueda, and Katie Mayer.

Zoom: Zoom was open and available, but there was nobody in attendance.

Chief Smith opened explaining that this meeting is to plan for the upcoming Town Hall meeting. Assign who is the spokesperson, printed flyers, and the layout of the room.

Chief Smith explained the additional documents presented to the Board.

- Town Hall Meeting – Fire Chief Presentation Outline
 - 4 Sections
 - Who We Are.
 - What We Do.
 - How We Are Funded.

- What Are Our Options.
- Conclusion
- Public Comment & Questions/Answers
- Mapping of the territories that would/could be annexed in.

**The Board reviewed the documents provided by Chief Smith. These were attached as addendums and are available on file.*

The goal is to be as transparent as possible and have the spokesperson lead the Q & A. Chief Smith said his goal is to keep the presentation to an hour or less so there is time for Q & A. But if there is a huge turnout that may not be possible. In addition, there is a comment card to reach anyone who may not want to speak up in the meeting or have the opportunity to do so. We will make board members' contact information available. Both Town Hall meetings are going to mirror each other, the presentation will be the same material.

Chief Smith shared that there are two guests attending the work session tonight who are from the unprotected Firland Blvd. area and are very interested in the opportunity to have fire protection and be annexed in. It would be a huge benefit for these homeowners to be annexed in. Guest Mica McOmber shared that Eugene will not annex them in nor do a long-term service contract, and up to this point they cannot get a contract with Goshen Rural Fire Protection.

Chief Smith shared that we went to the building where the Town Hall meeting will be held, and we organized how the room will be set up. We want both boards to be sitting up front to show unification. We plan to have the presentation printed as a handout so that residents can review them at home, after the presentation.

Willie Bronson asked the Chief to table the salary study discussion until the next board meeting to allow all the necessary time to plan for the Town Hall meeting.

Todd Anderson volunteered to be the spokesperson. Kevin Flory and Terry McDiarmid agreed that Todd Anderson would be a great spokesperson. Terry McDiarmid asked that the response time maps with and without a staffed Pleasant Hill station would be posted for people to see.

Todd Anderson shared that it will be important that we show the mutual benefit to both Pleasant Hill and Goshen. Chief Smith agreed and shared that the \$0.27 tax increase in Goshen will solidify the 24/7 staffing. Pleasant Hill is clearly funding their own station through their tax increase. Kevin Flory added that we are looking ahead 20-25 years ahead. Chief Smith shared that operationally we will duplicate the current model so that there are two fully staffed stations. The funding will be there July of 2023 to allow this staffing upgrade to happen. Chief Smith shared that the hope is that we put off the need for any more measures besides this for many years to come, unless something changes in the community, but that is not something we are predicting to happen. Kevin Flory said that we know that call volumes are going to get more and more demanding and that we need to be proactive, not reactive.

Tom McClellan added that it is common for fire districts to have levies and he wondered if there are any examples of an operations levy that did not pass. Chief Smith said he was not aware of any, in Lane County, that have not passed, but he said that we are about to find out, because Dexter is asking for a \$1.00 per \$1,000. Outside of Lane County, in Marion County, their levy did not pass, and they had to lay off quite a few firefighters and a battalion Chief. Chief Smith added that once you have a levy you need to try and convince your public to keep it. Tom McClellan shared that we would be in a lot better situation if we could convince the voters that reformation was the way to go.

It was suggested to add a box on the comment card for residents to check if they are interested in volunteering as a firefighter or want more information. Chief Smith reiterated that these Town Hall meetings are to deliver the facts.

Rose Reinertson and Kevin Flory shared that they are interested in a new name for the newly proposed district. The boards decided that they would be open to opinions and feedback on the matter. Chief Smith added that there are pros and cons to changing the name and he liked the idea of getting feedback. Kevin Flory added that he thinks we need to emphasize that the reason we are doing this is because we care about what the community members want. We want to know their input and we are asking for their questions. We do not want them to feel like we are doing anything without them having a voice in it. Chief Smith applauded the boards for doing the Town Hall and explained that this is a big deal so that there are no surprises at the ballot. He shared that we are more or less laying the cards on the table as to what our thought process is.

Chief Smith shared that we want to be transparent about our staffing model, what our tax rates are, what our potential costs are, what our call volume is like, and show that the board has been looking at a LOT of options over the past 10 months.

Todd Anderson suggested it would be important to talk about the tax compression and how the Pleasant Hill Community is not close to compression. Chief Smith agreed and said it is also important to reiterate that their tax rates are not doubling, but their fire protection rate is going up. Kevin Flory liked that idea to dispel any rumors that the tax bill is doubling. It was agreed that we want to stay away from any conversations referring to us verse them.

Terry McDiarmid shared that he thinks that the dual calls should be brought up. Rose Reinertson thinks the redundancies of the audit, budgets, and administrative staff should be mentioned. Chief Smith shared that we have reduced the redundancies in the fleet, Pleasant Hill has not replaced a fire engine they lost in 2010, because they do not need to in the current model. Chief Smith addressed the public comment that mentioned how many times the Goshen bay doors open and close. Chief Smith explained that the wear and tear/repair on the bay doors would be funded by the Fire Authority.

Chief Smith added that he does not think many people know how much our equipment costs and how short their expiration dates are. 20 years is the NFPA standard for most of apparatus' life span and we have an engine at 30 years. SCBA's expire in 10 years, and they are a \$150,000- \$200,000 project. Chief Smith does not think many people realize how much it costs to run a business like this if we are going to follow standards. Chief Smith said that we heard loud and clear that people want a 24/7 crew in

Pleasant Hill. He said the Fire Authority had to decide between having 24/7 staffing at all times or two 40-hour week staff members at each station. Rose Reinertson asked Chief Smith to make a poster that shows what the replacement costs are and how often that has to be done.

Haley Meshnik suggested that the boards plan a message for any Goshen residents who shows up to the Town Hall meeting questioning why they did not get a postcard about the Town Hall meeting. Willie Bronson said they should tell those individuals that we are planning to have a meeting for the Goshen Residents soon. The boards agreed that they would plan a Goshen Town Hall meeting in May. Terry McDiarmid added that if they wonder why their Town Hall Meeting is later, we can tell them that we had to judge the census of the Pleasant Hill because it is a larger tax change for them.

Haley Meshnik also suggested mixing up the board members along the table at the Town Hall meeting to not have a distinct division between Goshen and Pleasant Hill. To show that they are unified. In addition, Haley said they will print out a packet with the PowerPoint slides. In addition, she suggested that the cover letter of the packet/hand out be a letter written by Terry McDiarmid, the Pleasant Hill president, thanking people for attending and offering contact information to invite people to reach out and give feedback. Chief Smith suggested the board consider writing the letter from both presidents to show that they are working together. The boards liked that idea. Terry McDiarmid liked the idea and will write the letter for Willie Bronson and him to sign.

The board decided that the comment cards could be filled out and dropped off in a basket by the door on their way out. It was suggested to have name tags for the staff and board members.

Terry McDiarmid said that we should add that the boards in the last 10 months have looked at a lot of different options and they are very unified in the opinion that this is the most cost-effective way to achieve our objective. Willie Bronson added, why build a school if you cannot put teachers in it. Kevin Flory agreed that the boards have worked very diligently and explored the most cost effective and service maximizing way to build a station in Pleasant Hill, staff it, provide operational costs for both Pleasant Hill and Goshen, as well as having fund for in the future to replace apparatus and other capital needs or emergency funds for other needs.

Chief Smith applauded the route the board is taking to get the information out to the public ahead of the measure showing up on the ballot. He believes that a lot of the general public has no idea, or they have misinformation or lack of information. Chief Smith thought that this presentation might be overwhelming because the board members have had 10 plus months to chew over the information and the public will just have an hour or so.

Tom McClellan suggested to clarify who the new board members will be with a dissolution and reformation of the districts. Chief Smith said he will address that at the Town Hall meeting and clarified that the board election will be done at the same time as the measure. He added that if the measure failed the board election would be a moot point.

Chief Smith suggested that the work session before the April board meeting be dedicated towards budgetary feedback and discussions. Chief Smith shared that the budget packet needs to be completed

in April so a work session dedicated to the budget will help provide feedback he needs to complete the packet and what he is working with.

Chief Smith and staff will work on:

- A flyer that shows the replacement cost of turnouts, radios, SCBAs, and other important equipment.
- PowerPoint for Town Hall meeting.
- Make name Tags
- Add a check box on comment card for those interested in volunteering.

Willie Bronson adjourned the meeting at 7 :05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Haley Meshnik

Recording Secretary

Approved