

OLYMPIA TUMWATER REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING

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CONVENE: 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair/City of Tumwater Councilmember Leatta Dahlhoff, Tumwater Councilmember Michael Althaus, Olympia Councilmember Jim Cooper, Tumwater Councilmember Eileen Swarthout, Olympia Councilmember Lisa Parshley, Tumwater Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Olympia Interim Fire Chief Todd Carson, and Olympia Fire Union Representative/Firefighter Steven Busz.

Staff: Tumwater City Administrator John Doan, Olympia City Manager Jay Burney, Olympia City Attorney Mark Barber, and Tumwater Fire Department Administrative Assistant Erika Stone.

Others: Karen Reed, RFA Consultant; Neil Blindheim, FBC Consultant; and Bill Cushman, Fiscal Analyst

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW: Chair Dahlhoff welcomed everyone to meeting.

Chair Dahlhoff reported the purpose of the meeting is to consider a resolution to appoint members to committees FOR and AGAINST Ballot Proposition 1 to create a Regional Fire Authority and approve its plan for governance, operations, and financing including a benefit charge as required by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 29A.32.280. The meeting is being held virtually via Zoom with an in person location at Tumwater Fire Station T-1 located at 311 Israel Rd. SW. in Tumwater.

On December 6, 2022, the City Councils of the City of Olympia and the City of Tumwater separately adopted a joint resolution after determining it would be in the best interest of each city and its residents to submit a ballot proposition to the voters for a special election on April 25, 2023 on whether to create a Regional Fire Authority and approve its plan for governance, operations, and financing including a benefit charge pursuant to RCW Chapter 52.26. The joint resolution of the City Councils of Olympia and Tumwater authorized the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee to continue operating on an as-needed basis and specifically assigned to the Planning Committee, the task of appointing members to committees to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval of the measure and advocating voters' rejection of the measure.

RCW 29A.32.280 provides that committees be appointed to prepare statements For and Against each local ballot measure of persons known to support or oppose the ballot proposal. The committee shall consist of not more than three individuals each comprised of persons known to favor or oppose the ballot proposition.

Members of the Planning Committee include three elected City of Olympia Councilmembers and three elected City of Tumwater Councilmembers. Olympia Mayor Cheryl Shelby is the newest replacement for the City of Olympia and is

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excused from the meeting. The Planning Committee also includes ex-officio and non-voting members of Olympia Interim Fire Chief Todd Carson, Tumwater Fire Chief Brian Hurley, and union representatives of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 468, Steven Busz, and IAFF Local 2409, James Osberg.

The only order of business is to appoint up to three persons known to support and oppose the ballot proposition to create a Regional Fire Authority. Chair Dahlhoff invited a motion to appoint members to the committee in support of the ballot proposition to create a Regional Fire Authority and impose a benefit charge.

MOTION: **Councilmember Parshley moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to appoint Cheryl Shelby, Laurie Dolan, and Pete Kmet to the committee in support of Ballot Proposition 1. A voice vote unanimously approved the motion.**

Chair Dahlhoff invited a motion to appoint members to the committee in opposition of the ballot proposition to create a Regional Fire Authority and impose a benefit charge.

MOTION: **Councilmember Cooper moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to appoint Jim Lazar and Larry Dzieza to the committee against Ballot Proposition 1.**

Councilmember Cooper asked whether the appointment of two members rather than three members to the committee against the proposition requires the Thurston County Auditor to appoint a third member. City Attorney Barber advised that the appointment of a third member is at the discretion of the Thurston County Auditor. The statute is clear that the committee shall be comprised of no more than three members.

MOTION; **A voice vote unanimously approved the motion.**

Chair Dahlhoff advised that she would execute a resolution as Chair of the Planning Committee consistent with the motions to appoint committee members to the FOR and AGAINST Committees as provided by RCW 29A.32.280. The information will be submitted to the Elections Division of the Thurston County Auditor in accordance with Office of Administrative Rules. There is no other anticipated business for the committee prior to the April election.

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Chair Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 6:06 p.m.**