



## City Council

### Approval of Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee Appointments

**Agenda Date:** 6/22/2021  
**Agenda Item Number:** 4.J  
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**Type:** decision **Version:** 1 **Status:** Passed

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#### **Title**

Approval of Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee Appointments

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee.

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Move to appoint Councilmembers Jim Cooper, Lisa Parshley and Yến Huỳnh; Fire Chief Mark John and IAFF Union Representative Steven Busz to the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to appoint Councilmembers Jim Cooper, Lisa Parshley and Yến Huỳnh; Fire Chief Mark John and IAFF Union Representative Steven Busz to the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.

##### **Staff Contact:**

Jay Burney, City Manager, 360.753.8740

##### **Presenter(s):**

None - Consent Calendar Item.

#### **Background and Analysis:**

In 2019, the City of Olympia participated with the City of Tumwater and other local Fire agencies in a study to evaluate options for a Regional Fire Authority (RFA). A copy of the Study is attached.

The study looked at opportunities to improve emergency services in the Olympia and Tumwater communities and explored partnership opportunities to provide these services regionally. Findings from this study, which were presented at an elected official's workshop in November 2019, recommended further exploration of a Regional Fire Authority as Olympia and Tumwater share similar risk profiles, histories, and organizational structures, there may be a potential to control costs and improve service delivery, it would level tax rates across the region, provide greater equity, and leverages individual agency strengths, and minimizes weaknesses.

On May 18, 2021, the City Council authorized an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Olympia and the City of Tumwater which provides the framework for a planning process that looks at the viability of a Regional Fire Authority between the cities of Olympia and Tumwater.

The Interlocal Agreement with the City of Tumwater provides:

*Pursuant to RCW 52.26.030, the Parties agree to form a Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee (hereafter " Committee"). The governing body of each Party shall appoint three (3) elected officials to the Committee as voting members. The Committee shall also include four (4) non -voting members. Each governing body shall appoint its Fire Chief (or their designee) and one member chosen by its associated IAFF Local from its membership."*

The Committee will develop a schedule and timeline, but the Agreement commits them to completion of a recommendation within 18 months.

Councilmembers Jim Cooper, Lisa Parshley and Yén Huỳnh have expressed interest in serving as the City Council representatives. Fire Chief Mark John would serve, and the IAFF has indicated Local President Steven Busz would be the Union's representative.

The City of Tumwater has appointed Councilmembers Leatta Dahlhoff, Michael Althaus, and Eileen Swarhout; Acting Fire Chief Hurley and James Osberg representing Tumwater IAFF, to serve as their representatives.

**Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):**

A Regional Fire Authority may provide options to improve fire service delivery in the Olympia and Tumwater communities. An RFA planning process will engage both communities in this evaluation.

**Options:**

1. Appoint Councilmembers Jim Cooper, Lisa Parshley and Yén Huỳnh; Fire Chief Mark John and IAFF Union Representative Steven Busz to the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.
2. Modify the recommendation and appoint others to the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.
3. Do not appoint any members at this time, risking delay in the start of the process.

**Financial Impact:**

The cost of moving forward with a Regional Fire Authority planning process is estimated to cost \$150,000 (Olympia's share). Funding is available through 2020 Year End Savings.

**Attachments:**

2019 Fire Regionalization Study Agreement