

**WEBER FIRE DISTRICT**  
**2023 W. 1300 N.**  
**Farr West, UT 84404**  
**BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES**  
**April 30, 2008**

Members present:	Blaine Holmes	Tim Shupe
	Scott VanLeeuwen	Mike Hancock
	Dennis Montgomery	Alan Clapperton
	Richard Noyes	Val Heiner

Excused members: Paul Skeen

Others present: David Austin, Fire Chief  
Paul Sullivan, Deputy Chief  
Ted Black, Fire Marshal

1. Board Chair Blaine Holmes, called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.

**2. Workshop: Battalion Chief Position.**

Board Chair Blaine Holmes prefaced the workshop by explaining the reason for the workshop.

Chief Austin provided an overview of where we are at on the Battalion Chief proposal. He stated that one of the reasons for the proposed Battalion Chief Job description and qualifications is because the District has not had Battalion Chiefs since 1998 or 1999. Therefore, we have not had any job description for the position and no clearly defined qualifications. We are asking for implementation of the position with the concept that it would not be filled for at least one year. We had put a 6 month provision in the proposal based on the possibility that the District would be awarded the SAFER Act funds that we have applied for. It would provide funding for the hiring of 9 more firefighters including implementation of the Battalion Chief positions. We have not heard yet one way or another on the grant. That is still good news. Since we have not had either the job description or the qualifications, no eligible candidates within the department know how to prepare for the position when it is implemented. With the approval of the Job Description and Qualifications, all of our eligible people can work towards achieving all of the qualifications of the position. This could possibly reduce the chance that the position would be opened to outside candidates. If we make the qualifications available, our department members will also assist in determining whether we stay inside or open it to the outside based on their efforts to prepare themselves and increase the number of qualified internal candidates.

We want to put out the qualifications to be fair to our members.

Chief Sullivan emphasized the need for the Battalion Chief position through references to National Fire Protection Association Standards, NIOSH Investigation Reports of Fire Fighter Deaths and their relation to Incident Command, and documents from fire service and related periodicals. He reported that his presentation was not that of his own opinion but that of the fire service professionals and standards nationwide. He provided

explanation of fire ground operations in reference to Strategic, Tactical and Task Levels and emphasized that the Incident Commander should not engage in the tactical levels and should only be focused on the Strategic level.

Further discussion placed emphasis on fire ground safety of firefighters through the required implementation of an Incident Safety Officer, Accountability System, Rapid Intervention Team (RIT), Personnel Accountability Report (PAR), and Air Management. He emphasized that he was not proposing that we implement the Battalion Chief position this year without the SAFER Act Grant funding.

Discussion among the Board and Administration consisted of how the Battalion Chief position would be funded, including the additional needs to hire firefighters; promote drivers and Captains; and continue to meet Engine Company staffing without robbing from "Peter-To-Pay-Paul". Further discussion included the original reasoning behind eliminating the Battalion Chiefs in 1998 and the current organization of the District. The creation of Shift Captains to fill some of the gaps created by not having Battalion Chiefs over the years and problems associated with such an assignment was also reviewed.

A consensus of the Board of Trustees following presentation and discussion is summarized as follows;

- The need for the Battalion Chief is recognized and is important.
- The Board would consider approval of the Battalion Chief Job Description and Qualifications at the May 13<sup>th</sup>, Board of Trustees meeting with the stipulation that the position would remain unfilled until adequate funding for the position and related costs for other promotions and required additional firefighter positions was identified by administration without a tax increase.
- Administration would remain focused on improving staffing needs in all of the Districts fire stations.
- Fire Officer II Certification training is made available to those eligible for consideration for promotion to Battalion Chief and those interested in such certification.
- Continued training on Incident Command to all officers of the department and those interested.

If any of the Board members has any concerns or recommendations for the Chief Officers on their final recommendation for the Battalion Chief Job Description or proposal to let them know.

Mr. VanLeeuwen stated that this is a change for us and he feels that we are doing the right thing.

Chief Sullivan recommended that the members of the Board do their own research also.

### **3. Adjournment.**

Meeting was adjourned by Chair Blaine Holmes at 7:38pm.

**Blaine Holmes**  
**Chairman**

**Alan Clapperton**  
**Treasurer**