



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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S.E. Thurston Fire Authority begins planning for needed facility upgrades
Public encouraged to attend meetings as capital plans discussed

YELM, Wash.— As Southeast Thurston Fire Authority (SETFA) discusses long-term facility needs, residents are encouraged to attend meetings of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

The Board meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m. at Station 21 (709 Mill Rd. SE, Yelm). All meetings are open to the public—both in person and online—and include opportunities for comment.

In addition to reviewing next year's operating budget, the Board is considering capital improvements for the first time in more than 30 years. Priorities include adding firefighter quarters at some stations to allow for 24-hour staffing, developing a local training ground so personnel can meet certification requirements without leaving the district, upgrading equipment to support firefighter health and safety, and replacing aging apparatus. Each of these improvements is critical to maintaining reliable response times as call volumes—already exceeding 4,000 per year—continue to rise.

With the estimated cost of these projects exceeding the agency's current revenue, fire commissioners are exploring funding options to move the plan forward. SETFA manages a balanced budget and has a long track record of fiscal responsibility. State auditors have repeatedly given the agency clean reviews for how it handles public funds.

“We're facing rising challenges, and we need to be ready,” said Fire Chief Mark King. “The investments we're discussing would strengthen local fire and emergency medical service now and for years to come.”

Meeting information is available at www.sethurstonfire.org. Contact SETFA at 360-458-2799 or info@setfa.org with questions.

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Southeast Thurston Fire Authority provides emergency response for fires and emergency medical service to 30,000 people over 120 square miles, including the cities of Yelm, Rainier and surrounding unincorporated

areas. SETFA relies on full-time and volunteer emergency personnel to respond to more than 4,000 calls per year. Learn more at www.sethurstonfire.org.