



## - Press Release -

The Board of Fire Commissioners for Lacey Fire District reacted with disappointment after notification the City of Lacey has moved forward with a lawsuit against the District.

“We are deeply disappointed that the City has chosen to walk away from both our joint committee discussions and the proposed mediation of this issue,” remarked board chairman Frank Kirkbride. “The District proposed mediation with an intent toward problem solving and without preconditions or fixed parameters. The City obviously was not open to that approach and, by virtue of the court-filed documents, has been preparing for this for some time.”

The District is on record as believing that mediation will foster resolution, is a better option, and also pledged to maintain current service levels during mediation. “I would much rather spend our limited resources on delivering service as opposed to litigation,” said Commissioner Skip Houser.

Without exception, Fire District # 3 views this situation with concern for all of its citizens and has attempted to prepare for this outcome. In November of 2005, the District and the City agreed on a funding problem statement that reads:

*The Fire Commissioners for Lacey Fire District 3 and the Lacey City Council have determined the District will not be able to maintain current levels of emergency services in the future as a result of ongoing revenue limitations and a rapid increase in demand for services.*

“For over four years, we have been telling everyone we could – including City officials – that, without a different funding strategy, the time was coming where we could not continue the expected level of services,” said Kirkbride. “That time is now here; reductions must be accomplished and service restructured to best serve the entire community.”

Every member of Fire District # 3 – Commissioners, Fire Chief, and our Firefighter/EMTs – are dedicated to protect the health and property of our entire community. While the City and Fire District try to resolve these issues and differences, the District continues to undertake its tasks with the highest degree of professionalism, training and experience available. “We continue to



provide the citizens of our full service area, both Fire District # 3 and the City of Lacey, the best emergency services possible within operational and fiscal constraints.” Kirkbride stated.

Fire District call volume has steadily increased; over the last several years, calls for medical, fire and rescue services have increased by 20 percent while revenue has increased by 12 percent. The District must operate within current revenue and now has no other option than to reduce our response staffing and adjust service expectations.

Fire District # 3, which covers 70 square miles and serves more than 80,000 residents in the City of Lacey and northeast Thurston County, faced insufficient funding for 2009. In the absence of both a tax levy lid lift and supplemental funding from the City, the District is now unable to continue previous levels of on-duty response staffing. Effective January 1, 2009, the District further reduced both administrative staff and firefighter positions, thereby cutting minimum daily staffing to 12 firefighters per day.

To learn more about the District’s budget, contact District headquarters at 491-2410. Information on this matter and District operations may also be reviewed via the District’s website at:

[www.laceyfire.com](http://www.laceyfire.com)

The public is also invited to attend upcoming Board meetings and offer input. The Board meetings are held at District Headquarters, 1231 Franz Street SE in Lacey and convene at 7:00 p.m. Regular meetings occur on the first and third Thursdays of each month.

For further information, please contact:

Jim Broman, Fire Chief, at 491-2410 or via e-mail at [jbroman@laceyfire.com](mailto:jbroman@laceyfire.com).

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