



NEWS RELEASE

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(Fire Station Groundbreaking Amid Fire Calls)

The ceremony to break ground for a new Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVF&R) fire station on Walnut Street in Tigard took place on time – barely! Two fire engines, one scheduled to be the backdrop for the groundbreaking ceremony for Fire Station 50 and the other carrying the captain of the future station and the man scheduled to emcee the event were both dispatched to an apartment fire Tuesday, just forty minutes before the scheduled noon event.

“It’s just part of the job,” said Captain Kelly Bach, currently the ranking officer at the West Slope Fire Station 65 and the scheduled new captain of Tigard’s new Fire Station 50. Bach and his crew finished up their firefighting duties at a small fire in a Tigard apartment and hurried to the 12585 SW Walnut Street construction site where he calmly took command of the ceremony.

The second TVF&R crew, Engine 50, dispatched to the same fire, was parked as a backdrop for the groundbreaking. “We can claim to be the first engine to respond to a fire from the site of the new fire station,” said Lieutenant Bob Mueller, Engine 50’s officer. Engine 50 was cancelled while en route to the incident and returned in time to regain its spot behind the City of Tigard and TVF&R officials who turned the first shovels of dirt.

“This is the first fire station we have added to Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue in ten years,” said Fire Chief Jeff Johnson. “And, it addresses lengthy response times we have had in serving this neighborhood.” The Fire District’s response time target is to reach emergency incidents within six minutes of being dispatched. “Additionally, we’ll be building the new station to meet the [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) Green Building Rating System gold level to save energy,” Johnson added.

“The station not only serves the community for fire and emergency medical services,” said TVF&R Board President Clark Balfour, “it provides a focal point for the community for safety events and information.” Balfour added that the station also doubles as a meeting place for homeowner and neighborhood associations. The meeting room was expanded from original plans and the excess land not used by the fire station will become part of the City of Tigard’s Jack Park.

“We have partnered with TVF&R on many safety programs over the years and we’re pleased to partner again on this project,” said Tigard Mayor Craig Dirksen. “The community room will have windows looking out

onto Jack Park allowing citizens to keep tabs on their kids outside. This is truly a win-win project for the City, TVF&R and for the citizens of the area,” Dirksen added. Dirksen, Tigard Councilor Gretchen Buehner, TVF&R Board President Clark Balfour and Fire Chief Jeff Johnson all took part in turning the first shovels of dirt to commence construction activities.

Actual construction of the 11,800-square foot, \$2.74-million fire station will begin with a few weeks. The station is slated to be completed in nine months. Funding comes from \$77.5-million dollars in bond that voters approved for the Fire District in 2006. Architects for the project are [Peck Smiley Ettlin](#) of Portland. The station will be built by [First Cascade Corporation](#) of Lake Oswego.

Photo caption:

(l to r) Tigard Councilor Gretchen Buehner, Tigard Mayor Craig Dirksen, TVF&R Fire Chief Jeff Johnson, and TVF&R Board President Clark Balfour turn the first shovels of dirt to officially commence construction of the new Fire Station 50 on Walnut Street in Tigard. The 11,800-square foot facility should be completed in nine months.

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