

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
February 19, 2015  
Regular Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co Vice-Chairman Bosman called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #21 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for February 19, 2015 to order at 7:05 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

**ROLL CALL**

Attendees: Chairman Salter (via phone); Commissioners Rich Bosman, Larry McPhail and Dean Berkeley; Chief Ron Anderson; Division Chiefs Henry Hollander and William Pernet; Training Captain Joe Noonchester.

**FIREFIGHTER RECOGNITION**

Chief Anderson recognized volunteer firefighter Josh Bavaro for his five years of service with NWFR and District 4.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the January 15, 2015 regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Chairman Salter and approved 4-0.

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

- **Chief's Report:** Chief Anderson provided a summary of the chief's report.

Chief Anderson reported that activity for both districts during the month of January was sixty-eight (68) fire related calls and two hundred twenty-nine (229) medical related calls for a combined total of two hundred ninety-seven (297) calls. There were sixty (60) overlapping incidents. The average fire response time was nine minutes eighteen seconds while the average EMS response time was seven minutes fifty-two seconds. The combined average response time minus mutual aid and auto aid incidents was eight minutes ten seconds. NWFR has a January total dollar save rate of ninety-seven percent (97%) while District 4 experienced one fire that ended with a total loss of eighty five thousand dollars (\$85,000).

The district has completed work with Prospect on standardizing Fire Response Lists (FRLs). The FRLs are what dispatch uses to determine which stations and what apparatus are dispatched to the various types of calls. Prospect continues to meet with all fire departments within the county with the hopes of implementing the changes sometime in March. Chief Anderson noted that there will be many challenges due to the diverse makeup of fire departments within the county.

Chief Anderson announced that Tech Help has completed purchasing and installing the equipment necessary to back up all district emails as per state law. South Whatcom Fire Authority is sharing the software and equipment to reduce costs. Tech Help has set up the email server at a secure location and will begin the process of migrating a limited number of Gmail accounts over to Whatcom ES accounts for testing purposes prior to moving forward with a district wide switch. This project is expected to be labor intensive and is projected to be completed by the end of March.

- **Operations Report:** Chief Pernet provided a summary of the operations report.

Chief Pernet highlighted the district's non-emergency crew activities around the district including participation in Rescue 42 Strut training, Volunteer training, Annual SCBA Fit testing, EMS training, CPR training, Girl Scout Fire Aid class and Firefighter Survival training.

Chief Pernet reviewed the January meetings attended by the operations division including Burn Tower, Payroll process, County Fire Chiefs, Border Fire Chiefs, Contract Negotiations, Labor / Management and a Chief Lasky seminar.

The operations division has been involved in many projects this month including payroll / timesheets, overtime management, NWRC revised report, equipment in-service, annual ops report, L&I claims management and multiple ops directives.

Chief Pernet noted that there was only one major structure fire during the month of January. Chief Pernet reviewed a couple of recent incidents within the district's response area.

- 1/24/15:3525 Y Rd : Barn fire
- 1/20/15:7957 Carson Rd: Service call regarding an unknown water leak; firefighters provided excellent customer service.

Chief Pernet reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for January. One thousand two hundred twenty-four (1,224) hours of sick time, four hundred eighty (480) vacation hours were utilized and volunteers worked a total of six hundred ninety-three (693) shift hours during the month of January. Chief Pernet noted that currently the district has one firefighter vacancy and during the month of January seven members were out due to injury or illness. Chief Pernet announced that all but one member has returned to work which will reduce the amount of overtime in subsequent months.

- **Training Report:** Training Captain Noonchester provided a summary of the training report.

Career and volunteer staff spent a total of eight hundred five (805) hours on training during the month of January.

Probationary firefighter David Comp continues to work with crews at Birch Bay Station 63 on various skills including aerial truck familiarization.

Although there is no academy at this time, two (2) district volunteer firefighters are participating in the East County EMT School which is being taught by Bellingham paramedics.

The district has been training on the newly acquired struts used to stabilize vehicles during emergencies. All four first out engines at each career station will have some sort of strut kit that can be utilized quickly if necessary.

Captain Noonchester recognized firefighter Stefen Paige and volunteer firefighter Thomas McAuliffe for completing the most training hours during the month of January.

- **Technical Support Report:** Chief Hollander provided a summary of the technical support report.

Chief Hollander noted that the installation of the standpipe water mains at Semiahmoo Marina has been completed. A fire alarm company will begin pressure testing as per the fire code after the marina's faulty main water supply line has been replaced. It is anticipated that the remaining work will be completed in the near future.

Chief Hollander reviewed the upcoming projects in the county:

- Cascade Natures Gas Company – pressure regulator building close to Britton Loop Station 12
- Guru Nanak Temple Expansion – Guide Meridian and Pole Rd.

Chief Hollander noted that he was able to utilize a member on light duty to catch up on inspection data entry.

Chief Hollander reviewed recent apparatus and facility improvements:

- AP115 (A63): The Ford dealership completed all warranty work on A63. The district is responsible for additional costs not included under the warranty.
- AP 201 (T63): Following the discovery of a small amount of water in the oil, further investigation exposed a leak in the head. All repairs have been completed and T63 is back in service.

- AP114 (A69): The shop replaced the faulty emergency brake shoes discovered during regular maintenance inspection.
- All lawn equipment is currently being serviced by the shop intern. A new curved loading ramp has been purchased for the trailer that will keep the mower deck from being damaged during loading and unloading.
- Laurel Station 69: The new air compressor has been installed.
- Britton Loop Station 12 Burn Tower: The district is exploring options for updating the burn tower control system.
- Semiahmoo Station 62: The district continues to monitor a small roof leak that was reported. The crews recently cleaned the debris in the valley of the roof are monitoring the situation for further leaks.
- Custer Station 64: The roof is in need of replacement. The district is in the process of collecting estimates to possibly repair / replace the existing roof in the future.

Upgrading will continue on the old computer workstations as the budget allows. The mobile data computers are six years old and it is anticipated that they will need to be replaced in the not too distant future.

## FINANCE

- **Fund Balances:** Chief Anderson provided information regarding the District's current fund balances.
- **February Vouchers:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the February NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #98-157 in the amount of \$265,304.05. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Co Vice-Chairman Bosman moved to approve the February Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #158-196 in the amount of \$8,088.47. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the February Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #5-7 in the amount of \$4,874.17. The motion was seconded by Co Vice-Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the February Benefits Vouchers #014-025 in the amount of \$160,871.39. The motion was seconded by Co Vice-Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the February Monthly Expenditure Vouchers #202-403 in the amount of \$66,449.67. The

motion was seconded by Co Vice-Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the February Capital Projects Facilities Voucher #404 in the amount of \$18,982.75. The motion was seconded by Co Vice-Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.

- **Resolution 2015-01 Cancellation of Warrants:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2015-01 Cancellation of Warrants. The motion was seconded by Chairman Salter and approved 4-0.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Exhaust System Update:** Chief Anderson announced that the district has completed the installation of the vehicle exhaust removal systems at both Birch Bay Station 63 and Blaine Station 61. Due to some cost saving efforts, the district will be applying for the remaining funds to install a vehicle exhaust removal system at Delta Station 68. The district will be receiving bids in anticipation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) approval. Chief Anderson reiterated that the district is responsible to pay for the systems up front and then FEMA reimburses ninety percent (90%) of the total cost. The district has received reimbursement for both vehicle exhaust removal systems.
- **Purchasing Computers / Laptops for Fire Commissioners:** Chief Anderson reiterated that because of the updated records retention law which includes district emails, a fire commissioner's personal computer, if used for district business, could be confiscated for public records retrieval. Chief Anderson presented information on the various types of laptops and tablets available. There was consensus that the Microsoft Surface laptop will most fit the Fire Commissioner's needs. It was recommended that the Fire Commissioners review the district's current Information Management policy prior to receiving their tablet.
- **Cross Border Mutual Aid:** Chief Pernet reported on the most recent Fire Chiefs meeting held in Abbotsford Canada on Tuesday, February 17. The meeting was also attended by Chief Anderson, Captain Noonchester, and various British Columbia Fire Chiefs as well as B.C. Ambulance representatives. The meeting focused on EMS topics such as cross border mutual aid and mass casualty. Both sides are sharing resource lists and will continue to develop their relationship. The group toured the Abbotsford training facility and is discussing sharing training classes in the future. The next meeting is scheduled for April 7.

### **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **2014 Annual Report:** Chief Anderson presented the NWFR 2014 Annual Report. The report contains division reports, financial data, personnel information, maps, response statistics and community activities.
- **Commissioner Absence:** Commissioner Berkeley requested to be excused from the March 19, 2015 NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Northern Light picture: District oath of office
- Bellingham Herald re: Auto shop fire
- Blaine Christian Fellowship re: Thank you for services
- The Responder: District newsletter, January issue
- NWFR Press Release: Volunteer Career Fair

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Chief Anderson provided information regarding two recent Volunteer Career fairs held at Blaine Station 61 and Lynden Fire Department Station 75. Both districts are in the process of recruiting potential candidates for a joint fire academy that is scheduled to begin in April. An additional career fair is also scheduled for Saturday, February 28 in Lynden with the hopes of attracting additional interest.

## **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

- Exhaust Removal System FEMA Grant Request
- Custer Station 64 Roof
- Fire Commissioner Electronic Tablets
- Volunteer Firefighter Career Fair Update

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Co Vice-Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, per RCW 42.30.140 "*Collective bargaining sessions with employee organizations, including contract negotiations, grievance meetings, and discussions relating to the interpretation or application of a labor agreement; or... that a portion of a meeting during which the governing body is planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or grievance or mediation proceedings, or reviewing the proposal made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress.*"

at 8:05 p.m. for approximately fifteen minutes. Chief Anderson, Chief Hollander, Chief Pernet and District 4 Fire Commissioner Andrews remained for the executive session.

## **MEETING RECONVENED**

Co Vice-Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 8:38 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session.

## **SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Commissioner McPhail moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. The motion was seconded by Co Vice-Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.


Respectfully Submitted by:

  
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Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**

  
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Bill Salter, Chairman

  
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Rich Bosman, Commissioner

  
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Larry McPhail, Commissioner

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Dean Berkeley, Commissioner

  
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Chief Anderson, Board Secretary