

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
April 16, 2015  
Regular Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Salter called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #21 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for April 16, 2015 to order at 7:02 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

**ROLL CALL**

Attendees: Chairman Salter; Vice-Chairman Dean Whitney; Commissioners Rich Bosman and Larry McPhail; Chief Ron Anderson; Division Chiefs Henry Hollander and William Pernet; Training Captain Joe Noonchester; Business Manager Benita Williams.

Fire Commissioner Dean Berkeley was previously excused from this meeting.

**BERK'S TOWING RECOGNITION**

- Berk's Towing was unable to attend this meeting.

**FIREFIGHTER RECOGNITION**

- Chief Anderson recognized former career firefighter Lieutenant Doug Clark for his eight years of service to the district. Doug resigned from the district for medical reasons. Doug thanked the members for their support and the memorable years he had with the district. The attendees honored Doug with a standing ovation. Doug's wife Katie and daughter Lexie were also in attendance.
- Volunteer firefighter Juan Ocegueda who resigned after six years from the district to pursue other avenues was unable to attend this meeting.

**FIREFIGHTER LIEUTENANT PROMOTION**

- Chief Anderson announced that firefighter Tony Esser was recently promoted to the rank of lieutenant effective April 3, 2015. Chief Anderson recognized Lieutenant Tony Esser for his hard work and congratulated him on his promotion. Tony's wife Tawny and their daughter Adi were in attendance and participated in the pinning ceremony.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Joel Sellinger – 901 Alder St. Blaine, WA: Former district volunteer and career firefighter Joel Sellinger prepared a written statement that he read aloud to the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Joel was born and raised in Whatcom County and when he was hired as a fulltime firefighter in March, 2012 he thought that this would be the district that he would retire from. Joel stated that he takes great pride in this community and it was an extremely difficult decision to accept a position with Everett Fire Department.

Joel communicated his reasons for leaving the district with Chief Anderson in a recent exit interview which was in part due to the rumors of potential layoffs, staffing levels, finances and morale.

Joel concluded by stating that he will continue to reside in the Blaine area and plans on regularly attending future Board meetings.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the March 19, 2015 regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman 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 March was one hundred one (101) fire related calls and two hundred ten (210) medical related calls for a combined total of three hundred eleven (311) calls. There were fifty-eight (58) overlapping incidents. The average fire response time was eight minutes twenty-five seconds while the average EMS response time was seven minutes twenty-three seconds. The combined average response time minus mutual aid and auto aid incidents was seven minutes forty-three seconds. Chief Anderson reported that the district had a significant structure fire in March resulting in a (2%) two percent dollar save. NWFR has a year to date total dollar save rate of ninety-four percent (94%) while District 4 has maintained a year to date total dollar save rate of ninety-three percent (93%).

Chief Anderson reported he had recently had exit interviews with career firefighters D.J. Neyens and Joel Sellinger who have both been hired by the Everett Fire Department.

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 is meeting with the remaining fire departments within the county before any changes are implemented. Chief Anderson noted that due to major changes of the FRLs the implementation date has been rescheduled for sometime in June.

- **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 diversity raining, volunteer training, tender operations, EMS training, volunteer mask fit testing, vehicle driving rodeo, apparatus / hall maintenance, and personal protective gear inspections.

Chief Pernet reviewed the meetings attended by the operations division including Jasmine fire post incident report, communications seminar, Board meetings, County operations, personnel meeting, Labor / Management, Officer meeting and Professional Standards.

The operations division has been involved in many projects this month including MCS development, air monitor equipment, operational directives, light duty personnel, personnel management, life safety rope, annual appraisals and Narcan administration.

Chief Pernet reviewed recent incidents within the district's response area.

- 3/4/15: Two story residential structure fire – Jasmine Rd.
- 3/4/15: Entrapment – Male caught under a tree on an embankment

Chief Pernet reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for March. The district utilized two hundred three (203) hours of overtime, six hundred eighty (680) hours of sick time, five hundred eighty-four (584) hours of vacation and volunteers worked a total of seven hundred forty-six (746) shift hours during the month of March.

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

Career and volunteer staff spent a total of one thousand seventy-one (1,071) hours on training during the month of March. The training division (Captain Noonchester and assistant) spent a total of two hundred ninety-one (291) hours on administrative duties, meetings, HR management, emergency response and shared instruction.

As the weather has become warmer the crews have been involved in various outside drills including hose handling, vehicle extrications and driver qualifications.

Outside agencies have also begun utilizing the training grounds at Britton Loop Station 12.

Cross Border Mutual Aid meetings continue on a monthly basis. At this time the main focus is on learning how to better serve our communities by sharing resources across the border.

Captain Noonchester recognized firefighter Blake Scott and volunteer firefighter Jeff Haley for completing the most training hours during the month of March.

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

Chief Hollander noted that after approximately fourteen months the Semiahmoo Marina has completed pressurizing and fixing small leaks in their standpipe system bringing it up to code.

The district plans on attending a future hearing opposing BNSF's request to permanently close Valley View Road at the railroad tracks between Creasey and Arnie Roads. A date for the meeting has yet to be set.

Chief Hollander continues to work on a draft capital facilities plan with the Whatcom County Planning Department. Chief Hollander has requested that the Planning Department update the Board at an upcoming meeting.

Chief Hollander provided an update of the anticipated building projects around the district including:

- American Fisheries
- Grace Harbor Farms
- Rover Stay Over
- Duty Free America
- Blaine Boys and Girls Club
- Smith Ridge Estates

Three occupancy inspections were recorded in March.

Chief Hollander reviewed recent apparatus and facility improvements:

- The ambulance donated by BP has been registered and updated
- AP517 (E12) – updated Fire-Com intercom; found cracks in rotors which required a brake job.
- Britton Loop Station 12 Training Tower – The district continues to explore options to update the burn tower control system.
- The outdated stove at Birch Bay Station 63 has been replaced
- Three bids have been collected for the roof replacement at Custer Station 64.

## **FINANCE**

- **Fund Balances:** Benita Williams, Business Manager provided information regarding the District's current fund balances.

- **April Vouchers:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the April NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #297-353 in the amount of \$237,441.42. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the April Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #354-393 in the amount of \$8,685.41. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the March Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Reissued Warrant Voucher #11 in the amount of \$4,671.85. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the March Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #12-16 in the amount of \$13,231.74. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 4-0.

Benita Williams noted that the L&I quarterly payment is included in the April benefits voucher making it higher than usual.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the April Benefits Vouchers #038-051 in the amount of \$202,874.95. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

Benita Williams noted that the yearly dispatch fees are included in the April monthly vouchers making it higher than usual.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the April Monthly Expenditure Vouchers #628-796 in the amount of \$94,483.79. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 4-0.

- **Resolution 2015-03 Cancellation of Warrant:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2015-03 Cancellation of Warrant. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 4-0.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Exhaust System Update:** The district continues to wait for approval from FEMA to use the remaining grant funds to install a vehicle exhaust removal system at Delta Station 68. Chief Hollander noted that the district has received the Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation (EHP) approval which is also required.

**District Email Update:** Chief Anderson noted that the email migration project is nearing completion although some difficulties have slowed down the process. The project consists of changing all district email addresses and backing them up for public record. The district has partnered with South Whatcom Fire Authority and Fire District 8 is also interested in sharing the costs of the archiving equipment and software to back up their emails. Chief Hollander hopes to have the entire project completed by Friday, April 24.

**City of Bellingham Proposed Annexation Update:** Following some lengthy research Chief Anderson was able to ascertain that state law may require a city who annexes over sixty percent (60%) of a fire district's response area to take over the entire fire district if the district chooses. An inter-local agreement between the City of Bellingham, District 8, District 4 and District 2 (SWFA) signed in 1997 more clearly defines how the sixty percent (60%) is calculated. Currently, the City of Bellingham has annexed only twenty-nine percent (29%) of District 4's assessed valuation since 1994 and it remains doubtful whether sixty percent (60%) will be reached in the next twenty (20) years.

In light of this information Chief Anderson suggested that the NWFR and District 4 Boards arrange a meeting to discuss a full merger in the near future.

- **Fire Commissioner Electronic Tablets:** Chief Hollander continues to compare prices on tablets before a final decision is made.

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- None

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Staff Vehicle Price Quote:** Chief Hollander presented price quote information for a staff vehicle replacement. The replacement apparatus has already been approved in the 2015 budget as a capital request.

## CORRESPONDENCE

- Bellingham Herald article re: MVA Badger Rd. and Guide Meridian
- Lynden Tribune article re: MVA Berthusen and Birch Bay Lynden Rd.
- Chief Russell, Fire District 7 re: Mutual Aid
- Blaine Primary School re: Firefighter visit
- The Responder: District newsletter, April issue

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- None

## AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- Exhaust Removal System - FEMA Grant Request
- District Email Backup
- County Comp Plan Update
- Custer Station 64 Roof

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Salter 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 8:06 p.m. for approximately thirty-five minutes. Chief Anderson, Chief Hollander, Chief Pernet and District 4 Fire Commissioner Andrews remained for the executive session.

## MEETING RECONVENED

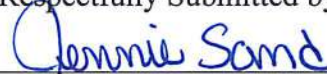
Chairman Salter called the regular meeting back into open session at 8:47 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session.

## SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

## ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** There being no further business Commissioner McPhail moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

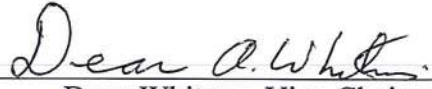


Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**



Bill Salter, Chairman



Dean Whitney, Vice-Chairman



Rich Bosman, Commissioner



Larry McPhail, Commissioner



Chief Anderson, Board Secretary