

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
May 15, 2014  
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 May 15, 2014 to order at 7:02 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Chief Anderson noted that the district is still in the process of selecting a Division Chief of Operations. Two of the three candidates who participated in the on-site assessment lab were in attendance and Chief Anderson invited both finalists to address the Board. The third candidate Chris Hunt from Albany, Oregon was unable to attend the meeting.
- William Pernet; Tucson, AZ: William Pernet stated that he has worked for a fire district in the Tucson area for the past twenty-four (24) years where he is currently a Battalion Chief. Mr. Pernet provided the Board with an overview of the Golder Ranch Fire District and surrounding geography. He finds the NWFR Division Chief of Operations position very interesting and believes he can equally learn from the district as well as provide his own valuable experience. Mr. Pernet and his wife Mary also find the Whatcom County very appealing.
- Joe Noonchester; Whatcom County, WA; Joe Noonchester is also originally from Arizona and has been the Training Captain for the district for the past four (4) years. He provided the Board with his reasons for applying for the Division Chief of Operations. Captain Noonchester has been advancing his leadership education and feels the operations department would be a logical next step in his career path.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the April 17, 2014 regular commissioners meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

## 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 April was sixty-five (65) fire related calls and one hundred sixty-six (166) medical related calls for a combined total of two hundred thirty-one (231) calls. District 21 is up over one hundred (100) calls from last year at this time while District 4's calls were slightly lower. There were forty-five (45) overlapping incidents. The average combined fire response time was seven minutes eighteen seconds while the average combined EMS calls was seven minutes forty-seven seconds. Due to a significant incident in their response area, District 4 had a total dollar save rate of fifty-one percent (51%) for the month of April while NWFR had a total dollar save rate of ninety-nine percent (99%). Chief Anderson noted mutual aid provided to Point Roberts (District 5) are medical calls that result in picking up a patient at the border and transporting them to Bellingham which can skew our average response times if not separated. The overall average response times minus mutual/auto aid incidents, was seven minutes twenty-eight seconds.

Chief Anderson reported that there has been no new information to report on the Fire Act Grant requesting funding for a vehicle exhaust system for Birch Bay Station 63 and two bunker gear extractors. The Board has already pre-approved funds in the 2014 budget to cover the exhaust system in the event that the grant is denied. The district is expected to move forward with this project sometime during the summer.

Chief Anderson provided information to the Board about an upcoming training on Fire Commissioner's Roles and Responsibilities, scheduled for Saturday, June 14 from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at Blaine Station 61. The district's attorney Frank Chmelik will be instructing the class. Chief Anderson noted that the fire commissioners are also required to complete training on open public meetings and public records every four (4) years. Chairman Salter, Vice-Chairman Whitney, Commissioner McPhail and District 4 Chairman Andrews have completed the required training at a recent Whatcom County Fire Commissioner Meeting held on Wednesday, May 14, 2014.

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

The district continues to work through the issues of implementing and streamlining a district wide electronic timesheet program.

Chief Anderson reviewed the most recent significant structure fires within the district's response area.

- 4/1/2014: 4600 Block of Noon Road in Bellingham
- 4/27/2014: Pier at the end of Marine Drive in Blaine

- 4/29/2014: 5300 Block of Starry Road in Bellingham

Chief Anderson reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for April. Six hundred fifty-two (652) hours of sick time was utilized and volunteers worked a total of one thousand one hundred ninety-nine (1,199) shift hours during the month of April.

- **Training Report:** Training Captain Noonchester provided a summary of the training report. Captain Noonchester noted that the training department spent a total of one thousand one hundred two (1,102) hours on training in the month of April.

A group of twelve (12) candidates are participating in the joint NWFR and Lynden Fire Department Fire Academy which began on Monday, March 5, 2014. Following the three (3) month long academy the recruits will follow state protocols for testing, complete a forty (40) hour hazardous materials training before beginning an emergency medical technician (EMT) course in the fall. Some of the candidates are designated to join the volunteers who respond from home to Northwood Station 72.

The career staff continues to take advantage of outside training whenever possible to further their education.

A Live Fire training burn was conducted on Saturday, April 12 on the Kline Road in Bellingham. The mobile home was donated by the Whatcom County Sheriff's Department. Captain Noonchester thanked Captain Ward and D Shift for their organization of the event. Many of the new recruits attended the training along with reporter Brandy Kiger from the Northern Light newspaper located in Blaine.

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

Chief Hollander introduced new Northern Light newspaper reporter Steve Guntli to the Board.

Chief Hollander provided an update of the anticipated building projects and upgrades around the district.

Chief Hollander reviewed the recent district apparatus and facility improvements.

Twenty-three (23) occupancy inspections were completed during the month of April.

There continues to be slow progress to report on the Harvey Rd. repeater site.

The Haulin' Axe 5K Run is scheduled for Sunday, May 19 and will begin at Haggens in Barkley Square and end at Bloedell Donovan Park.

Blaine City Manager Dave Wilbrecht has been invited to attend a future NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting.

## **FINANCE**

- **Fund Balances:** Benita Williams, Business Manager provided information regarding the District's current fund balances.
  
- **May Vouchers:**
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the May NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0430-0491 in the amount of \$254,543.13. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.
  
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the May Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0492-0538 in the amount of \$11,348.90. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.
  
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the May Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0539-0541 in the amount of 341.70. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.
  
  - MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the May Benefits Vouchers #0052-0064 in the amount of \$140,757.11. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 5-0.
  
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the May Vouchers #0850-1018 in the amount of \$44,094.87. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.
  
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the May Capital Projects Voucher #1019 in the amount of \$95.17. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.
  
- **Resolution 2014-06 Cancellation of Warrants:**
  - MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2014-06 Cancellation of Warrants. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Real Estate Update:** Chief Anderson noted that the sale of Lynden Station 71 is progressing and set to close on Friday, May 30, 2014. All district equipment located at Lynden Station 71 has been relocated and the Sheriff's Department will vacate the station by the agreed date. Money generated from the sale of the station will be used to pay off two (2) District 3 bonds. At this time there has been no serious inquiries regarding the sale of Custer Station 64 even with the price reduction.
- **Semiahmoo Marina Real Update:** Chief Hollander reported that the district continues to work with Semiahmoo Marina with the goal of installing an approved standpipe system. A temporary system has been put in place and engineer plans for an approved standpipe system has been submitted to the City of Blaine and the district for permit review and approval. The final approved standpipe system project will begin in September 2014. The crews continue to train on the temporary system.
- **Division Chief of Operations Position Update:** Chief Anderson reviewed the Division Chief of Operations process. Twenty-five (25) candidates applied for the position; A selection committee consisting of union, volunteer, management and elected representatives narrowed the pool of applicants; Eight (8) Skype interviews were conducted; Four (4) candidates were invited to participate in an assessment lab process held on Wednesday, May 14 and Thursday May 15 where they demonstrated their skills and abilities in exercises including conflict resolution, strategies and tactics, drafting a whitepaper and oral presentation. One of the four candidates was offered a position elsewhere and did not participate in the assessment lab process. Approximately twenty-five (25) people from inside and outside the district participated as facilitators, evaluators, or role players during the assessment lab and provided valuable input which will be an important factor in the final decision.
- **Inter-Local Agreement for Fire and Emergency Services:** Chief Anderson noted that both NWFR and District 4 Board of Fire Commissioners had given the Chairs permission to meet with Chief Anderson to review and update the five (5) year inter-local agreement for fire and emergency services. Chief Anderson provided both Boards with the modifications to the inter-local agreement:
  - Fee Schedule for years three (3) and four (4)
  - Number of Chief Officers
  - Substantial budget increase or decrease provisions

District 4 will vote on the modifications at their next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 11, 2014.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the Inter-Local Agreement for Fire and Emergency Services with Whatcom County Fire Protection District 4 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Resolution 2014-07 Basic Life Support (BLS) Fees Schedule:** Chief Anderson reiterated that the Emergency Medical Oversight Board (EOB) which is part of the Whatcom County Emergency Medical System (EMS) is suggesting that all that all transport fees be standardized throughout the County. A few Whatcom County agencies have already adjusted their transport rates and others are expected to follow suit. Proposed changes include increasing the base rate from \$450.00 to \$590.00 and mileage from \$12.00 per mile to \$15.00 per mile.

- **MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve Resolution 2014-07 Basic Life Support (BLS) Fee Schedule. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Dean Whitney and approved 5-0.

- **Resolution 2014-08 Surplus Electronic Equipment:** Chief Anderson reviewed the list of old electronic equipment.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2014-08 Surplus Electronic Equipment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

- **Resolution 2014-09 Surplus SCBA Equipment:** Chief Anderson reviewed the surplus SCBA fit testing equipment that the district is paying to maintain needlessly. Another agency has expressed an interest in purchasing this equipment once the district declares it surplus.

**MOTION:** Vice- Chairman Whitney moved to approve Resolution 2014-09 Surplus SCBA Equipment. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail Bosman and approved 5-0.

- **Fire Chief Employment Agreement:** Chief Anderson reviewed the updated Fire Chief Employment Agreement. The agreement has been extended for an additional three (3) years with no pay increases unless all members of the district see an increase.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the Fire Chief Employment Agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Bellingham Herald article re: Blaine pier accident
- From Michael Davis re: Thank-you for emergency services
- Email from Lt. Leslee Smith re: Community Meals Program
- Northern Light Article re: Wheelchair ramp built by Local 106 Firefighters
- Northern Light Article re: Kline Rd. training burn
- Former Volunteer re: donation
- The Responder: District newsletter, May issue

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The Board discussed the upcoming Whatcom County Fire Commissioner Saturday Seminar to be held on Saturday, June 7, 2014 in Lake Chelan.

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

- Division Chief of Operations Update
- Semiahmoo Marina Update
- Real Estate Update
- District 4 and NWFR Inter-local Agreement For Fire and Emergency Services

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Salter recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, per RCW 42.30.110(g) *“to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee.”* at 8:23 p.m. for approximately fifteen minutes. Chief Anderson and District 4 Fire Commissioner Harry Andrews remained for the executive session.

### **MEETING RECONVENED**

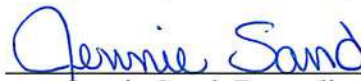
Chairman Salter called the regular meeting back into open session at 8:46 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session.

### **SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Commissioner McPhail moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

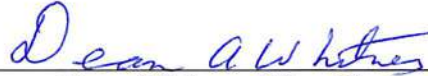


Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**



Bill Salter, Chairman



Dean Whitney, Vice-Chairman



Rich Bosman, Commissioner



Larry McPhail, Commissioner



Dean Berkeley, Commissioner



Chief Anderson, Board Secretary