

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
July 17, 2014  
Regular Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-Chairman Whitney called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #21 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for July 17, 2014 to order at 7:01 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Division Chief Hollander introduced Blaine City Manager David Wilbrecht who provided an overview of his background as well as the some insight into the City of Blaine. Chief Anderson welcomed the City Manager and both look forward to continuing the good working relationship between the organizations.

**COMMISSIONER ABSENCE:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Chairman Salter's absence from the July 17, 2014 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 4-0.

**FIREFIGHTER RECOGNITION**

- Fire Chief Ron Anderson recognized retired volunteer firefighter Doug Stuit for his twenty years of service for Fire District #13 and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the June 19, 2014 regular commissioners 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 June

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was seventy-two (72) fire related calls and one hundred ninety-nine (199) medical related calls for a combined total of two hundred seventy-one (271) calls. There were forty-one (41) overlapping incidents. The average fire response time was eight minutes twenty-two seconds while the average EMS response was eight minutes twenty-eight seconds. The combined average for both districts was eight minutes fourteen seconds. District 4 has a year to date total dollar save rate of sixty-three percent (63%) while NWFR has a total dollar save rate for June of seventy-seven percent (77%). Some significant fires in June resulted in lower save rates for both districts.

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. Chief Anderson stated that the district is moving forward with obtaining bids for the vehicle exhaust system for Birch Bay Station 63 as this project was budgeted in our capital facilities budget for fiscal year 2014.

Chief Anderson noted that the district continues to strive to become more volunteer friendly and slow down the turnover rate. Recently several volunteers who had resigned have made the decision to rejoin the district. The district has recently completed a joint fire academy with the Lynden Fire Department and will be sponsoring some additional volunteers in the upcoming Whatcom County Fall Recruit Academy. Further discussion on volunteer recruitment and retention is expected during the district's retreat in September.

In addition, Chief Anderson discussed the importance of receiving credit from the Survey and Rating Bureau for having volunteers assigned to these stations. These volunteers must live within a five (5) mile radius of their assigned station and meet the district's requirements for training and incident responses. The district will continue to move this project forward and it is expected to be an ongoing topic of discussion for the foreseeable future.

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

The district's safety committee will be meeting on a quarterly basis to review safety issues and make recommendations on risk management and accident reduction. Chief Pernet noted that the group recently met to begin work on a district safety policy.

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

- 6/06/2014: 1300 Summerset Court
- 6/07/2014: 4324 Bridger Road
- 6/14/2014: 3324 Agate Bay



- 7/14/2014: 1424 Mount Baker Highway
  - Post incident analysis to be held on Wednesday, July 30
  - More details expected in August

Chief Pernet noted that Britton Loop Station 12 was staffed with three (3) or more firefighters (including volunteer firefighters) twenty-six (26) of the thirty (30) days in June.

Chief Pernet reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for June. Four hundred ten (410) hours of sick time, one thousand one hundred eighty-eight (1,188) vacation hours were utilized and volunteers worked a total of nine hundred sixty-five (965) shift hours during the month of June.

Chief Anderson noted that due to the recent resignation of Amanda Brassfield the district has made the decision to fill the position internally with a qualified volunteer member. The deadline for internal applicants to submit applications is Thursday, July 19 at 4:30 p.m. The district has received twelve (12) applications so far.

- **Training Report:** Training Captain Noonchester provided a written summary of the training report. The training department spent a total of nine hundred eight-seven (987) hours on training in the month of June. The majority of the training focused on engine type training.

Captain Noonchester recognized the company officers for their assistance with Monday evening volunteer training around the district.

Captain Noonchester announced that the joint firefighter recruit academy has concluded with recruit firefighters attending graduation on Friday, July 18 at 6:00 p.m. at Britton Loop Station 12. Everyone is invited to attend the event.

Captain Noonchester acknowledged Fitness Trainer Kelly Freeman's hard work and determination to keep all district members fit.

Captain Noonchester welcomed Division Chief of Operations William Pernet to the district.

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

Chief Hollander noted that the Semiahmoo Marina has submitted a set of engineered plans which the City of Blaine has sent out to a third party for review. The goal is to begin construction following Labor Day.

Chief Hollander continues to work with Whatcom County on updating our capital facilities plan.

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

Sixteen (16) occupancy inspections were completed and entered into the district's database during the month of June.

Chief Hollander reviewed recent apparatus and facility improvements. All fire apparatus pumps have successfully passed their annual pump tests.

Semiahmoo Station 62 is scheduled to have their parking lot resealed on Thursday, July 17.

There continues to be slow progress to report on the Harvey Rd. repeater site. The hope is that the eventual completion of this project will resolve the radio frequency difficulties in this area.

## **FINANCE**

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

- **July Vouchers:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the July NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0653-0710 in the amount of \$244,823.44. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the July Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0712-0748 in the amount of \$8,939.47. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the July Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0749-0753 in the amount of 7,085.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 4-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the July Benefits Vouchers #0077-0088 in the amount of \$176,230.51. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 4-0.



**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the July Vouchers #1275-1458 in the amount of \$66,853.61. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Real Estate Update:** Chief Anderson announced that the sale of Lynden Station 71 is complete. Chief Anderson noted that the real estate agreement for Custer Station 64 has recently expired after a six month extension. With no potential offers on the horizon Chief Anderson reviewed additional options that could be pursued. The Board agreed not to renew the listing and to have more in-depth discussions about various options at the upcoming retreat which will be held on Saturday, September 20. A final decision regarding Custer Station 64 will be made at an upcoming regularly scheduled NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting.
- **Cross Border Mutual Aid:** Chief Anderson recently met with Kent Gatlin from the Whatcom County Division of Emergency Management (DEM) to discuss ways to gain easier access across the border for mutual aid. Kent Gatlin has scheduled a meeting to be held in August with the Border Patrol, U.S. Customs and our fire service counterparts in Canada to discuss getting resources back and forth across the border in times of emergency. Prior to the multi-agency meeting, Chief Anderson will be reaching out to the fire services in Canada and will provide additional information at the NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting in August.

In addition, Chief Anderson announced that the Border Patrol has scheduled a meeting with the district to discuss options available to shorten the time trains block intersections, specifically during emergencies.

### **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- **0500.0007.00 District Travel Policy:** Chief Anderson provided information about the proposed district travel policy. The Board and various other groups will review the draft policy and propose any changes prior to the policies' formal adoption in August.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Tsunami Education:** Chief Anderson announced that the district has been working with the Birch Bay Emergency Planning group and the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) to develop emergency plans in case of a Tsunami. These plans include:

- Repurposing obsolete district fire call sirens into Tsunami early warning sirens
- Printing and posting Tsunami evacuation route signs

- Providing public education regarding Tsunami evacuation routes and pre-planned assembly areas and designated shelters
- Stockpiling sandbags at Birch Bay Station 63

Chief Anderson distributed a Tsunami informational brochure that will be distributed around the City of Blaine and Birch Bay areas.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Northern Light re: Semiahmoo Marina Update
- Northern Light re: Whatcom County EMS Services
- Northern Light re: Increased train traffic
- Bellingham Herald re: Blaine house fire
- Bellingham Herald re: Mutual aid structure fire in Ferndale
  - One of NWFR volunteer firefighters has been displaced
- Bellingham Herald re: Fireworks ban reduced related incidents
- Bellingham Herald re: Motor home fire
- From Royal Family re: Firefighter association donation
  - One recipient of the Haulin' Axe Run/Walk
- The Responder: District newsletter, July issue

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The joint NWFR and Lynden Fire Department Recruit Academy graduation will take place on Friday, July 18 at 6:00 p.m. to be held at Britton Loop Station 12.
- Commissioner Bosman will be participating in the Ragnar Relay Series held Friday, July 18 – Saturday, July 19. Ragnar is an overnight running race from Blaine, WA to Langley, WA.
- Birch Bay Discovery Days will be held Saturday, July 19 - Sunday, July 20. NWFR will be participating in the Discovery Days parade.
- Chief Hollander briefly outlined the proposed upcoming 911 Memorial Ride. He will be presenting a formal outline of the event during the upcoming NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting in August.

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

- Cross Border Mutual Aid
- 0500.0007.00 District Travel Policy
- 9-11 Memorial Ride

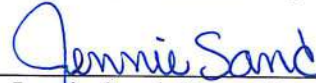
### **SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

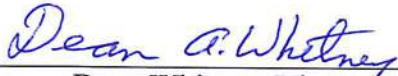
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Respectfully Submitted by:



Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**



Dean Whitney, Vice-Chairman



Rich Bosman, Commissioner



Larry McPhail, Commissioner

Dean Berkeley, Commissioner



Chief Anderson, Board Secretary