

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
September 18, 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 September 18, 2014 to order at 7:01 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 Ron Anderson; Division Chiefs Henry Hollander and William Pernet; Training Captain Joe Noonchester; Business Manager Benita Williams.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the August 21, 2014 regular commissioners meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney 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 August was one hundred seven (107) fire related calls and one hundred seventy-four (174) medical related calls for a combined total of two hundred eighty-one (281) calls. Chief Anderson noted that the combined districts' responses have increased almost one hundred fifty (150) calls from this same time last year. There were fifty-four (54) overlapping incidents. The average fire response time was seven minutes fifty-seven seconds while the average EMS response was seven minutes forty-three seconds. The combined average response time minus mutual aid and auto aid incidents was seven minutes fifty-nine seconds. District 4 has a total dollar save rate for August of seventy percent (70%) while NWFR has a total dollar save rate of eighty-six percent (86%).

New career firefighter David Comp is enrolled at the State Fire Academy in North Bend and is expected to begin shift work sometime in October.

One shift lieutenant remains off duty since August with a non-job related injury. The lieutenant recently ran out of sick time and is relying on donated sick time until he can either apply for long term disability insurance through the union or return to work. At this time he is not expected to return until October 31, 2014.

Chief Anderson reported that due to the number of injuries both on and off duty ultimately causing a considerable rise in overtime, the district has made the decision to continue minimum staffing in order to stay within budget.

Chief Anderson reported that there are eight (8) volunteer fighters enrolled in the EMT class and seven (7) recruits attending the Whatcom County Recruit Academy. Chairman Salter applauded the staff for their work in recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Chief Anderson announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has notified the district that they have been selected to receive the 2013 Fire Act Grant. The grant has been reduced from the original \$168,158 to \$130,440 covering only the two vehicle exhaust removal systems for Blaine Station 61 and Birch Bay Station 63. The grant does not include the requested bunker gear extractors and drying cabinets. Additional bids will be collected to update the exhaust system at Blaine Station 61 and materials are on order to replace the exhaust system at Birch Bay Station 63. Chief Anderson and Chairman Salter recognized firefighter Blake Scott for writing the narrative section of the grant proposal.

The district will be discussing the future plans for Custer Station 64 at the upcoming retreat scheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2014.

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

The district concluded annual hose testing in September one week ahead of schedule. The crews tested over 58,000 feet of hose.

Chief Pernet reviewed the district's participation in events around the district including assisting the Lynden Fire Department with an assessment process for a lead firefighter, Camp Horizon fire truck demonstrations, Northwest Washington Fair Demolition Derby standby Lynden Tractor Show standby and Tsunami flyer distribution in Blaine and Birch Bay.

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



- 8/17/14: 3358 Haynie Rd
- 8/29/14: 8670 Harbor Dr

Chief Pernet noted that Britton Loop Station 12 was staffed with three (3) or more firefighters (including volunteer firefighters) twenty-five (25) of the thirty-one (31) days in August while Blaine Station 61 was staffed with three (3) or more firefighters twenty-six (26) days.

Chief Pernet reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for August. Five hundred three (503) hours of sick time, one thousand five hundred ninety-seven (1,597) vacation hours were utilized and volunteers worked a total of eight hundred forty-four (844) shift hours during the month of August.

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

The district completed an in-depth assessment process to hire a part-time data entry assistant to assist the training division who will begin Wednesday, October 1, 2014.

Career and volunteer staff spent eight hundred (800) hours on training in the month of August.

Lieutenant Kris Jorgensen and volunteer Diego Oliver have completed the most training hours during the month of August.

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

Chief Hollander noted that the Semiahmoo Marina's engineered plans for a complete standpipe system has recently been approved. The goal is to begin construction in the near future.

The Whatcom County Planning Commission is holding a public hearing on September 25 that will focus on the draft Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan for Whatcom County Facilities 2015-2020.

Chief Hollander reported that there has been no progress working with Whatcom County on updating our capital facilities plan. All meetings have been placed on hold until January when job and populations projections have been forecasted.

Chief Hollander advised the Board to make plans to revisit the Capital Facility Plan as it will need to be updated in 2015.

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

- Proposed Lincoln Park Retirement Center
- Edaleen Dairy
- BlueRidge Semiahmoo Point LLC
- Prestwick Village
- Processing Plant - 2252 Odell Rd
- North Bay Christ the King Community Church - 2748 Peace Portal Dr
- Stem Enterprises – 3210 Peace Portal Dr
- Can-Amer Freight – 1927 Boblett St

Seven (7) occupancy inspections were completed during the month of August.

Chief Hollander reviewed recent apparatus and facility improvements. The new van has been put in service and if the Board agrees Chief Hollander will begin the process of surplusing the old white Suburban (AP 312).

Chief Hollander announced that the work on Birch Bay Station 63 to install the vehicle exhaust removal system has been scheduled for October 15, 2014.

The Harvey Rd. repeater site is in its final testing stage and it is hopeful that the 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.
- **September Vouchers:**

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the September Benefits Adjustment Voucher #0103 in the amount of \$110,325.04. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the September NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0862-0923 in the amount of \$255,572.75. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the September Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0924-0969 in the amount of \$9,713.44. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.



**MOTION:** Commissioner Bosman moved to approve the September Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #0970-0971 in the amount of \$260.43. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Whitney moved to approve the September Benefits Vouchers #0104-0116 in the amount of \$149,028.27. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the September Vouchers #1644-1833 in the amount of \$48,371.79. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the September Capital Projects Apparatus Vouchers #1834-1836 in the amount of \$1,385.38. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McPhail moved to approve the September Capital Projects Vouchers #1837-1838 in the amount of \$108.25. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Whitney and approved 5-0.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **9-11 Memorial Ride Update:** Chief Hollander provided an overview of the 2014 9-11 Memorial Ride, Service and Barbeque. Commissioner Berkeley, Chiefs Anderson, Pernet and Hollander, Captain Noonchester and numerous district members participated in this years' event.

Members of all emergency services, border officials and military personnel from the United States and Canada rode on motorcycles and emergency vehicles to the Peace Arch Park to take part in the Memorial Ride and Service to honor those brave souls that lost their lives in the horrific attacks in 2001.

While historically there has been more participation on the Canadian side a committee was formed to increase involvement on the American side. The Swinomish Resort and Casino in Anacortes provided breakfast at 0600. The USA ride began at 0800 from the Swinomish Resort and Casino and ended at the Peace Arch Border crossing in Blaine. Fifty-eight (58) people participated in the USA ride. Following the memorial service everyone was invited to a barbeque on the Canadian side of the park. Commissioner Berkeley requested to work with Chief Hollander at next years' event.

Chief Hollander specifically thanked Whatcom County Fire District 7 and Division Chief Dean Crosswhite for their assistance with the event.

Chief Anderson recognized Chief Hollander for his involvement in spearheading the organization of the 9-11 Ride on the American side. Other departments have pledged additional involvement in the event next year and it is expected to continue to grow in the coming years.

- **Labor Negotiations:** Chief Anderson announced that the first contract negotiation meeting was held on Tuesday, September 16, 2014. Although the term of the current agreement is from January 1, 2014 until December 31, 2016 both parties agreed to revisit Article 20 Sick Leave subsection 20.8 Medical Expense Reimbursement Plan and Article 23 Wages within twelve months of signing the original agreement. NWFR Fire Commissioner Rich Bosman and District 4 Fire Commissioner Mary Beth Neal are both participating in the negotiations. Chief Anderson will keep the Board updated on the progress of the meetings. Chief Anderson will be providing a budget presentation at the next meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 25, 2014 and a representative will be discussing Variable Employee Benefit Accounts (VEBA) during a subsequent meeting.
- **Annual District Retreat:** The annual joint NWFR and District 4 annual retreat has been scheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2014 to be held at Semiahmoo Cannery Lodge at 8:30 a.m.

#### **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- None

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Northern Light article re: 9-11 Memorial Ride
- Bellingham Herald article re: 9-11 Memorial Ride
- The Responder: District newsletter, September issue

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Commissioner Whitney announced that he may need to be excused from the October 16, 2014 meeting.

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

- Exhaust System Update
- District Retreat
- Labor Negotiations



**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Salter recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, per RCW 42.30.110(i) *“to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.”* at 7:55 p.m. for approximately fifteen minutes. Chief Anderson, Chief Pernet, Chief Hollander and District 4 Fire Commissioner Andrews remained for the executive session.

**MEETING RECONVENED**

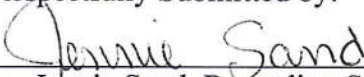
Chairman Salter called the regular meeting back into open session at 8:22 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session.

**SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Commissioner McPhail moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bosman and approved 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**



---

Bill Salter, Chairman

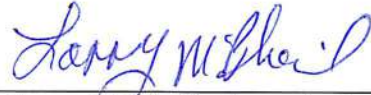
---

Dean Whitney, Vice-Chairman



---

Rich Bosman, Commissioner



---

Larry McPhail, Commissioner



---

Dean Berkeley, Commissioner



---

Chief Anderson, Board Secretary