

**Whatcom County Fire District #21
Station 61 – Blaine
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230
7:00 pm
April 21, 2016
Joint Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

Chairman Bosman requested that all cell phones and pagers be silenced unless they were part of the “on duty” crew.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bosman called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #21 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for April 21, 2016 to order at 7:02 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

ROLL CALL

District #21 Attendees: Chairman Bosman; Vice-Chairman Larry McPhail; Commissioners Dean Berkeley, John Crawford and Bruce Ansell; Chief William Pernet; Division Chief Henry Hollander; Business Manager Benita Williams.

District #4 Attendees: Chairman Harry Andrews; Commissioner Mary Beth Neal; Board Secretary Kris Parks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Berge - Birch Bay, WA: Kathy thanked Chief Pernet and Chief Hollander for attending the recent Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce meeting. The meeting included an overview of the upcoming Cascadia Rising emergency management drill that will include a nine point earthquake and potential Tsunami in Birch Bay. Kathy noted that Birch Bay community continues to work on becoming more prepared to handle potential emergencies that may arise in the future. In addition, Kathy announced that the Tsunami warning siren will be erected in Birch Bay near the Beach Park vicinity by mid-summer. Kathy further noted that she is reassured to hear that North Whatcom Fire and Rescue is meeting regularly and cooperating with agencies across the border.

Commissioner Berkeley questioned how the siren was going to be erected. Kathy stated that Whatcom County Emergency Management is in charge of the project, ensuring that all the necessary permits are in order and the Phillips 66 Refinery has paid for the siren including the sixty-six (36) foot pole. The last step before completing the project is obtaining the proper permissions from the state.

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the March 17, 2016 regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the March 26, 2016 special meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

MONTHLY REPORTS

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

Chief Pernet reported that activity for both districts during the month of March was one hundred forty-two (142) fire related calls and two hundred twenty-three (223) medical related calls for a combined total of three hundred sixty-five (365) calls. There were one hundred eight (108) 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 nine minutes thirty-three seconds. NWFR has a year to date total dollar save rate of eighty-nine percent (89%).

Commissioner Ansell requested information regarding the volunteer station response times. Chief Pernet noted that Delta Station 68 and Haynie Station 65 provided a realistic volunteer response while the remaining volunteer stations reflect career responses.

Chief Pernet provided information regarding the upcoming county-wide disaster drill. Cascadia Rising will take place on June 6 and June 7 (36 hours) and will be based on a nine point zero earthquake hitting the west coast from California up to British Columbia, Canada. North Whatcom Fire and Rescue will be participating in the event (simulated drill and incident command) along with other agencies including our counterparts in Canada. The goal is to identify shortcomings that can be improved upon for better preparation for a natural disaster in the future. Chief Pernet will investigate and share information about opportunities for Board members to observe.

The new recruits have completed their orientation and will begin the state fire academy on April 28. Following graduation and after a couple weeks of training, the group will begin twenty-four (24) hour shift work. Chief Pernet introduced four (4) of the five (5) recruit firefighters; Jeff Haley, Zachary Scott, Levi Wigg and Haley Urling-Ehinger. Not present was David Hancock. The Board wished the group luck at the upcoming academy.

Chief Pernet provided an update on the Cross Border group. Initially the group was made up of fire chiefs from both sides of the border, however since its inception, customs, border patrol as well as law enforcement have also become involved. The Cross Border group continues to meet quarterly to develop cross border relationships. The group is currently planning future drills that may take place at the border. The group also hopes to implement memorandum of understanding (MOUs) in the future and are in the process of housing “go bags” at the border crossings which will consist of radios, chargers, maps, connections and appliances that can be used by cross border agencies.

Chief Pernet highlighted the meetings he attended this month including County Operations, County Chiefs, Automatic Aid, Officer, Labor / Management and Coffee with the Fire Chief.

- **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 quarterly training, volunteer training, medical physicals, blood pressure checks, station tours, and business inspections.

The operations division has been involved in many projects this month including new hire testing, Safety committee, burn tower testing, equipment in-service, annual appraisals and vacation scheduling.

Chief Pernet reviewed recent incidents within the district’s response area. Some incidents were due in part to the various wind storms that occurred in March.

- 3/6/16: Custer School Rd - residential structure fire
- 3/13/16: Cedar St – residential structure fire
- 3/21/16 Noon Rd – vehicle fire
- 4/6/16: Mutual aid Point Roberts structure fire (storage facility)

Chief Pernet announced that Lieutenant Tony Esser has successfully completed his probationary period as an officer.

Chief Pernet reviewed the staffing and time off statistics for March. The district utilized one thousand two hundred three (1,203) hours of overtime, six hundred seventy (670) hours of sick time, one thousand one hundred ninety-seven (1,197) hours of vacation and volunteers worked a total of four hundred seventy-three (473) shift hours during the month of March.

- **Training Report:** Chief Hollander provided a summary of the training report.

Career and volunteer staff spent a total of eight hundred forty-five (845) hours on training during the month of March. The training division (Captain Noonchester and assistant) spent a total of two hundred ninety-six (296) hours on

administrative duties, meetings, HR management, emergency response, shared instruction and career development.

The new pilot program that will allow members to assist training with delivering hand-on drills is almost complete. Lieutenant Esser will be teaching pump operations while firefighter Bruch will provide instruction on firefighter survival.

Congratulation to our newest recruit firefighters, Jeff Haley, David Hancock, Zachary Scott, Haley Urling-Ehinger and Levi Wigg.

Chief Hollander announced that once the two outside doors are replaced, the newly remodeled Britton Loop Station 12 burn tower will be ready for training.

Chief Hollander recognized career firefighter Danny Jensen and volunteer firefighter Kailee Steele for completing the most training during the month of March.

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

Chief Hollander attended eight technical review meetings in March.

Chief Hollander presented draft copies of the capital facilities plan for review during the March meeting. Fire Commissioners were asked to contact Chief Hollander with any questions and/or concerns prior to the May meeting. The capital facilities plan will be brought before the Board for approval during the May meeting.

Ten occupancy inspections were completed in March.

Chief Hollander announced that both mechanics received their required Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) training and certification this month.

Chief Hollander reviewed recent facility improvements:

- Delta Station 68 – generator may need to be replaced. Chief Hollander is gathering estimates for repairs.
- Smith Rd Station 13 – a non-reported accident damaged the station sign. Crews have made the needed repairs.
- Smith Rd Station 13 – roof is in need of major repairs or replacement. Chief Hollander will be receiving bids for the project. Commissioner Ansell requested information regarding when the roof might be repaired. Chief Hollander noted that if it is determined that the roof does need to be replaced, it will be a District 4 capital item and must be approved by the District 4 Fire Commissioners.
- Northwood Station 72 – Risers will be added to the septic system to allow for easier inspections in the future.

- Britton Loop Station 12 Burn Tower – Two new metal doors have been ordered to replace the broken ones. Once installed the tower will have new locks installed for added security.
- The district’s new website is up and running.
- All district emails are in the process of being updated with public records / legal disclosure footers.

FINANCE

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

Chief Hollander noted that the mitigation deposit was due to a construction project that exceeded the SEPA threshold.

- **April Vouchers:**

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the April NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #293-347 in the amount of \$274,812.86. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the April Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #348-373 in the amount of \$6,450.21. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the April Non-Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers #6-8 in the amount of \$993.15. The motion was seconded by Chairman Bosman and approved 5-0.

Benita noted that benefit vouchers reflect higher health care costs as well as the first quarter Labor and Industries (L&I) payment. Commissioner Ansell requested information regarding whether or not the district carries stop gap insurance. Chief Pernet explained that the district is self-insured and if the health care bills surpass the set monthly amount, re-insurance is activated and a refund is provided for the excess.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the April Benefits Vouchers #36-48 in the amount of \$252,778.99. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansell and approved 5-0.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve the April Monthly Expenditure Vouchers #569-797 in the amount of \$54,982.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crawford and approved 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Custer Station 64:** Chairman Bosman reminded the Board that approximately two years ago the Board approved the motion to sell Custer Station 64. There was some discussion during the last meeting about whether that decision should be revisited. Chairman Bosman noted that in order to revisit the decision, a motion will need to be approved prior to further discussions.

MOTION: Commissioner Berkeley moved to revisit the decision to sell Custer Station 64. The motion was not seconded.

Chiefs Pernet and Hollander will investigate hiring a real estate agent to sell Custer Station 64 and will provide an update on their progress during the upcoming May 19 meeting.

- **County Wide EMS Levy:** Chief Pernet provided highlights of the joint Whatcom County Fire Commissioners and Fire Chiefs meeting held on Wednesday, April 20. NWFR Commissioner Ansell and District 4 Commissioners Andrews and Neal also attended the meeting.

Whatcom County Executive Jack Louws provided information regarding whether a possible future county wide EMS levy or a new jail would be put on the November ballot.

The proposed EMS Levy (.29) will provide stable funding for the next six (6) years and include the EMS 1 position, community paramedic, administrative position, BLS transport fees, county wide EPCR system and an additional ambulance. The Levy will be in addition to the current one tenth of one percent sales tax currently in place and the transport fees. The Levy will focus on wholly funding the system from the ground up including room for expansion.

The Whatcom County Executive has recommended that the jail be included on the upcoming November 2016 ballot in lieu of the EMS Levy. The EMS levy would be voted on during a future election. The Whatcom County Council will make the final determination. In the meantime, the County Council has requested that the various organizations sign resolutions in support of the EMS levy.

Commissioner Ansell provided information regarding the current King County EMS Levy. This nationally recognized system includes an infrastructure that includes administrative, planning and training (BLS/ASL).

There was further discussion regarding how to educate the public with regards to funding the ALS/BLS system including sales tax, an EMS levy, as well as transport fees.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- **0700.0002.00 New Equipment (Fire or EMS) In-Service Procedure:** Chief Pernet provided information regarding the New Equipment In-Service policy developed by members in the field. This policy will allow for better control of new equipment as it is integrated into the district (training, documentation, and inventory). Commissioner Ansell questioned whether the policy was too specific and encompassed any and all equipment or if there was a size limit definition. Chief Pernet explained that this policy is a guideline to address past issues and will be applicable to particular pieces of new equipment. Chairman Bosman noted that polices are revisited and updated as needed.
 - **MOTION:** Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve 0700.0002.00 New Equipment (Fire or EMS) In-Service Procedure. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Addition of Consent Agenda:** Chairman Bosman reiterated that recently the Board discussed adding a consent agenda to the monthly Board meetings. The monthly Board packets will include the consent agenda items for review two days prior to the meeting. The consent agenda will include financials, meeting minutes, chiefs' report and vouchers and be approved at the beginning of each meeting. Items may be removed from the consent agenda on the request of any Board member. Items not removed may be adopted by general consensus without debate. Removed items may be taken up either immediately after the consent agenda or placed later on the agenda at the discretion of the Board.

MOTION: Commissioner Berkeley moved to progress with a consent agenda which will include the minutes, financials, vouchers and chiefs' report beginning Thursday, May 19. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman McPhail and approved 5-0.

MEETING RECESSED

Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for a five minute break at 8:10 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into session at 8:17 p.m.

- **Inter-Local Agreement for Fire and Emergency Services:** Chief Pernet provided a presentation which included pertinent information regarding the current Inter-Local agreement between North Whatcom Fire and Rescue and Whatcom County Fire Protection District #4.

Chief Pernet noted that goal of the presentation was to show both Boards where they came from, where they are today and potential for the future. Although no

decision is expected during this meeting, Chief Pernet hopes to get the conversation started about moving forward in a collaborative manner.

The Board members were asked to consider the following alternatives along with potential effects:

- Disillusionment
- Continued operational consolidation
- Full consideration / merger
- Regional Fire Authority (RFA)

There was further discussion regarding the steps and timeline for a full consolidation / merger. Both Boards agreed the timeline to put a merger on the upcoming November ballot was tight but not impossible. More discussion is expected.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Berge - Birch Bay, WA: Kathy expressed her concern regarding the approved consent agenda. If there is no discussion regarding some of the reports included in the consent agenda the public may not be properly informed. Chairman Bosman noted board packets are subject to open public records and the Board will evaluate the consent agenda forum following the May 19 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Whatcom County Review Board re: Lynden annexation (80 acres)
- Northern Light article re: Lincoln Park Senior Community
- Bellingham Herald article re: Structure fire east of Ferndale
- Bellingham Herald article re: Point Roberts fire
- Bellingham Herald article re: EMS levy postponed in favor of new jail tax
- Jan Claussen re: Thank you for services
- Carol Macmillan, Secretary, Friends of Blaine Library re: Thank you for displaying Bob Milne piano concert information on Birch Bay Station 63 reader board
- The Responder: District newsletter, April issue

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- All Board members will be available for the regularly scheduled NWFR Fire Commissioner meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 19, 2016.
- There is a Special Meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 7 at 0900 to be held at Odell Station 61. The meeting has been scheduled to review, discuss and approve the NWFR 2016-2021 Strategic Plan.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- Capital Facilities Plan
- Concurrency Mitigation Fee Program
- Custer Station 64 Listing Update
- Fire Commissioner representation at external meetings procedure
- Meeting Date Attendance Query – 06-16-16

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, 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 9:15 p.m. for approximately sixty minutes.

MEETING RECONVENED

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 10:30 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Rich Bosman, Chairman

Larry McPhail, Vice-Chairman

Dean Berkeley, Commissioner

John Crawford, Commissioner

Bruce Ansell, Commissioner

Chief Pernet, Board Secretary