

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
July 20, 2017  
Fire Commissioners Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bosman called the Whatcom County Fire District #21 and Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for July 20, 2017 to order at 7:02 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

Chairman Bosman requested a moment of silence for the passing of retired District #8 Fire Chief Gary Crawford. Condolences were expressed to Commissioner Crawford for the loss of his father.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

Attendees: Chairman Rich Bosman, Vice-Chairman Larry McPhail, Commissioners John Crawford and Bruce Ansell; Assistant Chief Joe Noonchester; Attorney Rich Davis.

Commissioner Berkeley was excused for the next three meetings due to medical issues.

**TRIBUTE TO FALLEN FIRE CHIEF ROBERT SPINNER**

Chief Noonchester noted that Chief Spinner was a big part of North Whatcom Fire and Rescue as well as the Lynden Fire Department. Chief Noonchester pointed out Chief Spinner's involvement throughout the fire service including training events; training curriculum; Test Control Officer for the State of WA; participation in our district duty officer rotation for Battalion 76. Chief Spinner was always willing to support our district in a variety of ways. Chief Noonchester noted that Robert Spinner was a good friend and he will be missed by many. Chief Noonchester provide an overview of the many events due to a Line of Duty Death. The memorial service will be held on Saturday, July 22 at 1:00 p.m. at the Washington State Fairgrounds in Lynden. Several of the Fire Commissioners will be attending.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Meeting Minutes
  - a) June 15, 2017 – Regular
2. Staff Reports - Chiefs / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report
  - a) Total Revenue –June \$52,121.63

- b) Total Expenditures –July \$621,942.08
- 4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
  - a) NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll #499-556: \$275,908.16
  - b) Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll #557-574: \$3,227.86
  - c) Non Direct Deposit #6-7: \$3,322.49
  - d) Benefits Voucher #65-77: \$263,033.59
  - e) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers 978-1208: \$75,942.98

2. Staff Reports - Chief Noonchester pointed out that that the third career firefighter position has been filled by former North Whatcom Fire and Rescue volunteer Steven Latham.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ansell moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman McPhail and approved 4-0.

#### **NW FIRE COMMISSIONER MONTHLY REPORTS**

- Nothing to report

#### **IAFF LOCAL 106 MONTHLY REPORT**

- Nothing to report

Chairman Bosman noted that he has been in contact with the City of Lynden Officials as well as the Lynden Fire Department. Chairman Bosman expressed their appreciation for North Whatcom Fire and Rescue's and the Local's support during this difficult time.

#### **LEGAL ISSUES**

- Rich Davis provided an update regarding some revisions to the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) that will go into effect in the near future. Changes include new training requirements for the public records officers, charging for providing electronic records, documenting records requests and clarification requiring a definitive time frame for providing records or reasons an extension is required. In addition, charges for a custom search is warranted if technical assistance is necessary to create a customized document.

Rich Davis noted that the changes bring the Act more in line with the modern way that agencies retain records, although there is still much work to be done to prevent public records request abuse.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Washington State Rating Bureau (WSRB):** Chief Noonchester announced that the WSRB has provided a preliminary report and the district is now officially in a review period. Chief Noonchester noted that preliminary ratings remain similar for the City of Blaine and District #4 however, District #21 showed some

deficiencies that were not seen during the previous re-rate. Both the district and WSRB representative are meeting to review and clarify data. The review process will take from four to six months to complete before an official report will be released. Chief Noonchester noted that overall the report will provide the district with some good forward planning.

- **Brennick Agreement Update:** Chairman Bosman noted that the sale of the strip of land at Northwood Station 72 continues to move forward.
- **District #4 Annexation Update:** Both Chief Noonchester and District #4 Fire Commissioner Harry Andrews attended the recent annexation meeting held on July 6, 2017. Representatives from Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham along with the owner of the property provided information regarding the annexation. The owner intends to build condos on the property. The meeting was well attended by neighbors who will be affected by the annexation. The annexation may take up to two years to go into effect.

The annexation is approximately sixty five acres which begins on the south side of the Mt. Baker Hwy, goes all the way to Britton Rd, covering the Hillside Estates and other property to the west.

The City of Bellingham could end up paying the district to continue to respond to the annexed area since they may not have the equipment or manpower. At this time the district has no auto aid agreement with the City of Bellingham for this area.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Inter-Local Agreement for Fire and Emergency Services:** District #4 Fire Commissioner Steve Ness was not in attendance to discuss potential Regional Fire Authorities (RFA).
- **New Firefighters:** Chief Noonchester announced that three new career firefighters have been offered and accepted employment with the district and will be attending the three month Washington State Fire Academy in North Bend on August 10, 2017. Chief Noonchester will provide additional information regarding their graduation in the near future.

Two of the three recruits have fire service experience.

Congratulations to Zackary Balonick, Steve Latham and Sean Roberts.

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURE**

- **0400.0320.00 Hearing Conservation:** Chief Noonchester provided information regarding the draft Hearing Conservation policy. Chief Noonchester stated that hearing loss in firefighters is very common. The district recognizes that although firefighters are exposed to potentially damaging noises throughout their career,

the hope is to maintain hearing into retirement. The policy follows the WAC 296-817 Hearing Loss Prevention, OSHA Hearing Conservation Program and Washington State Labor and Industries Occupational Hearing Loss guidelines.

Chief Noonchester noted that because of the importance of communication on the fire grounds, firefighters cannot protect their hearing at all times. The policy addresses how and when protection is applicable. In addition, firefighters are required to have hearing checks during their yearly physical exams. If issues are detected a course of treatment will be determined.

Commissioner Ansell questioned if a procedure will accompany the policy. Chief Noonchester further noted that an annual required training component will be completed by all firefighters.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ansell moved to approve Policy 0400.0320.00 Hearing Conservation as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crawford and approved 4-0.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

- From Bill Hewett; Vice-President WCFCA re: Fallen Fire Chief Robert Spinner
- Bellingham Herald Article re: Lynden structure fire
- Northern Light article re: Accident on SR543
- Northern Light article re: Blaine structure fire
- Bellingham Herald article re: City of Blaine firework laws in effect
- Northern Light article re: Blaine development projects
- Bellingham Herald article re: Tweed Twenty structure fire
- Northern Light article re: County burn ban
- Northern Light article re: Drayton Harbor development
- From: John Shamper re: Thank you for service
- From Harry Sharp re: Thank you for service; donation
- The Responder: District newsletter, July issue

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **August Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the meeting. Commissioner Berkeley has been excused for medical reasons.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

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

- Brennick Update

## **SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Commissioner Ansell moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman McPhail and approved 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

**ATTEST:**

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Rich Bosman, Chairman

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Larry McPhail, Vice-Chairman

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John Crawford, Commissioner

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Bruce Ansell, Commissioner

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Chief Noonchester, Acting Board  
Secretary