

**Whatcom County Fire District #21
Station 61 – Blaine
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230
1:00 pm
September 20, 2018
Regular Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bosman called the regular Whatcom County Fire District #21 Board of Fire Commissioners meeting for September 20, 2018 to order at 1:02 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Chairman Rich Bosman; Commissioners Larry McPhail, Dean Berkeley and John Crawford; Fire Chief William Pernet; Assistant Chief Joe Noonchester; Division Chief Henry Hollander; Attorney Rich Davis.

Vice-Chairman Ansell was previously excused.

FIREFIGHTER RECOGNITION

Chief Pernet recognized former volunteer Tom Morell for his thirty-one years of service with District 13 and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a) August 16, 2018
2. Staff Reports – Chiefs / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report / Revenue
 - a) Total Revenue –August \$82,130.63
 - b) Total Expenditures – September \$604,301.18
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll: \$315,078.92
 - b) Non-Direct Payroll: \$141.61
 - c) Benefits Voucher: \$175,447.73
 - d) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers: \$78,741.85
 - e) Capital Projects Voucher: \$31,403.43
 - f) Capital Projects Facilities: \$3,487.64

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

NW FIRE COMMISSIONER MONTHLY REPORTS

- **Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Meeting:** Wednesday, September 12. Commissioner Crawford reported that the new countywide Image Trend software will be implemented in the near future. In addition, the project to relocate a repeater site from the water tank in Blaine to the J tower on Valley View Road is in progress.
- **Communication Concerns:** Commissioner Berkeley expressed his concern regarding some communication he received regarding the loss of some district firefighters. Commissioner Berkeley suggested the possibility of an open meeting with the Chiefs, Board and some union members to discuss concerns.

Chairman Bosman noted that if the union desires a meeting, he encouraged them to follow the proper procedures and contact the Board Chair and Fire Chief.

IAFF LOCAL 106 MONTHLY REPORT

- None

LEGAL ISSUES

- None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Northwood Store – Lane Brennick: Lane Brennick noted that his contractor had mistakenly carved a path from the Northwood store to the front of the Northwood Station 72 apron. Mr. Brennick’s proposal includes maintaining all the station grounds and parking lot, including snow removal, in exchange for use of the parking spots.

The Board will discuss the Brennick proposal for the Northwood Station 72 easement in more detail during the executive session. Chief Pernet provided pictures of the station’s easement so the Board will have a better understanding of the proposal. At this time, Mr. Brennick has striped the parking spaces and added landscape.

- **District Consultant:** Chief Pernet noted that during last month’s meeting, the Board had requested additional consultant pricing information along with some examples. That information was sent out to the Board members and included in the Board packet.

To complete a district long range master plan, Emergency Services Consulting International’s (ESCI) base price with the member discount is approximately

\$40,710.00. The Board concurred that the sample Pasco Fire Department report completed by ESCI was very comprehensive and impressive. Commissioner McPhail was impressed by the financial portion of the report.

Commissioner Crawford requested information on how much time it would take to compile a similar report. Chief Pernet predicted the report could take six months and will investigate Commissioner Crawford's request.

Chief Pernet was unable to get the same type of report from Citygate Associates, which is based out of California.

Chief Pernet reported that mitigation funds cannot be utilized for consultant fees however, monies can be used to acquire capital items identified in the report.

Commissioner McPhail reported that at a recent Lynden Council meeting, they were warned that the current financial "bubble" will not last and predictions for the future should not be based on the present economy.

Commissioner Berkeley agreed and further noted that he remains skeptical of consultants and thinks monies can be better utilized to benefit firefighters and staff.

More discussion will take place during the upcoming budget study session. The Board may direct Chief Pernet to employ a consultant to develop a long range master plan in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Resolution 2018-13 Cancellation of Warrant:** Chief Pernet noted that a check issued to the Pacific Building Center was lost in the mail.

MOTION: Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2018-13 Cancellation of Warrant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 4-0.

- **Resolution 2018-14 Adopting a 457 Deferred Compensation Plan:** Chief Pernet provided some background information regarding the district's deferred compensation plan.

When the City of Blaine Fire Department along with Districts 3 and 13 merged in 2007, there were multiple deferred compensation plans under Hartford. Hartford merged with MassMutual at which time they noticed that there were two accounts under District #13 and District #21. Even though there is no member utilizing the plan, the district must merge the two accounts before ultimately being cancelled.

MOTION: Commissioner McPhail moved to approve Resolution 2018-14 Adopting a 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. The motion was seconded by Chairman Bosman and approved 4-0.

- **Bunker Gear:** Chief Pernet reviewed the Lavender Ribbon Report “*Best Practices for Preventing Firefighter Cancer*”. Chief Pernet presented a proposal for purchasing a second set of bunker gear to further prevent firefighter exposure to carcinogens.

The district has already purchased additional personal protective equipment (PPE) laundry machines and commercial drying cabinets, purchased and issued a second Nomex hood, approved a new PPE policy that covers gross decontamination, sent out an operational directive 18-001 with PE specifications and purchased decontamination skin wipes.

Chief Pernet noted that when a firefighter’s gear gets contaminated with combustion products, they perform gross decontamination at the scene. Gear is doffed and placed in a garbage bag to isolate until cleaning can occur back at the station. Gear is then cleaned in a PPE specific washer / dryer. Currently members whose gear is being cleaned will share gear with a member that is off duty which can be problematic for various reasons.

The NFPA recommends that bunker gear be replaced every ten years. The proposal includes purchasing a second set of bunker gear in 2018 for employees with the oldest turnouts (8 sets that are five years old). Each subsequent year, a second jacket and pants will be purchased for those firefighters with turnouts that are five years old. This will result in purchasing each firefighter a set of gear every five years instead of ten.

Chief Pernet noted that he will budget for extra sets of gear as well as look for revenue from grants and other sources to assist with purchasing gear in future years.

Commissioner Crawford requested information regarding the turnaround time for bunker gear. Chief Pernet noted that the total amount of time from getting a representative to the district to take measurements to receiving the gear could take as long as four months.

MOTION: Commissioner Crawford moved to approve the use of reserve funds in the amount not to exceed \$18,000.00 to purchase bunker gear in 2018. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

POLICIES & PROCEDURE

- None

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bellingham Herald article re: Birch Bay grass fires
- Northern Light photograph re: City of Blaine 'Roadeo'
- Northern Light article re: City of Blaine development
- Northern Light article re: 9-11 Peace Arch Ceremony
- City of Blaine Public Works re: District participation in 'Roadeo'
- The Responder: District newsletter, September issue

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Semiahmoo Station 62 Roof:** Chief Hollander reported that the roof project at Semiahmoo Station 62 is complete. The company did a good job and cleaned up after themselves. Overall the district is pleased with the results.
- **Budget Work Session:** Commissioners present with the exception of Vice-Chairman Ansell are expected to attend the October 13 meeting. The meeting was rescheduled by Chairman Bosman for October 18 Board following the regular Meeting.
- **October Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the October 18 meeting.
- **State Audit October 18 – November:** Chief Pernet announced that the district will send documents off site for the upcoming audit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- Northwood Store – Lane Brennick
- District Consultant
- Board Room Additional Screen

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, per RCW 42.30.110(1)(c) “to consider the minimum price at which real estate will be offered for sale or lease when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of decreased price” at 1:36 p.m.

Chairman Bosman indicated that the executive session would last until approximately 1:55 p.m. Chief Pernet, Assistant Chief Joe Noonchester, Division Chief Henry Hollander and Attorney Rich Davis remained for the executive session.

MEETING RECESS

Chairman Bosman called a recess at 2:05 p.m.

MEETING RECONVENED

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 2:13 p.m. No actions were taken as a result of the executive session. Chief Pernet did not attend the remainder of the meeting.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business Commissioner Crawford moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:20 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Rich Bosman, Chairman

Larry McPhail, Commissioner

Dean Berkeley, Commissioner

John Crawford, Commissioner

Chief Pernet, Board Secretary