

**Whatcom County Fire District #21
Station 61 – Blaine
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230
1:00 pm
June 20, 2019
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 June 20, 2019 to order at 1:01 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Chairman Rich Bosman; Vice-Chairman Bruce Ansell; Commissioners Larry McPhail, Dean Berkeley and John Crawford; Division Chiefs Herschel Rostov and Jason Van der Veen; Attorney Rich Davis.

OATH OF OFFICE

- Chief Van der Veen conducted the swearing of newly promoted lieutenant Blake Scott.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Meeting Minutes
 - a) May 16, 2019
 - b) May 30, 2019 SpecialStaff Reports – Chiefs / Operations / Training / Technical Support
2. Financial Report / Revenue
 - a) Total Revenue – May \$642,894.43
 - b) Total Expenditures – June \$724,048.61
3. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
 - a) NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll: \$305,901.01
 - b) Non-Direct Payroll: \$47,289.25
 - c) Benefits Voucher: \$275,180.14
 - d) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers: \$95,678.21

Commissioner McPhail noted that administration is doing an excellent job of managing the 2019 budget thus far.

MOTION: Vice-Chairman Ansell moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 5-0.

NW FIRE COMMISSIONER MONTHLY REPORTS

- **Traffic Congestion at Bell Rd:** Commissioner Berkeley announced that he expects to have some information regarding the train crossing and congestion at Blaine Road in the near future.
- **911 Peace Arch Memorial:** Commissioner McPhail announced that the four firefighters who will travel from New York City to participate in the upcoming September 11 event, will also take part in some way during a Seattle Mariners game.
- **Whatcom County Fire District 4:** Chairman Bosman announced that he had recently met with the District 4 Chairperson to discuss the renewal of the Interlocal Agreement for Fire and Emergency Medical Services. District 4's main concern is that they may not be able to continue to pay the twenty five percent (25%) in the future without depleting their reserve funds. The District 4 Board hopes that after the completion of the master plan, more opportunities will be revealed.

In addition, if a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is formed in the future, District 4 would like to have representation on the RFA committee. Attorney Rich Davis noted that they would be able to have three District 4 representatives on such a committee.

Chairman Bosman noted that the District 4 Board invited the District 21 Board to attend one of their upcoming meetings to have a planning session to further discuss the Interlocal Agreement for Fire and Emergency Medical Services. Chairman Bosman further noted that there is no pressure to have the meeting quickly since the master plan has not been completed and a new District 4 Fire Commissioner will be elected in the fall.

District 4 Fire Commissioner Andrews added that with the City of Bellingham continuing to annex portions of District 4, there is a potential to lose additional revenue. As a result, the District 4 Board continues to look for ways to increase

their income, such as charging the City of Bellingham for utilizing the Britton Loop training facilities.

Although the updated Interlocal Agreement for Fire and Emergency Medical Services containing one minor verbiage change has not been signed, the current Agreement will stay in effect for the interim.

Sweet Road and Hughes Avenue Road Closures: Commissioner Berkeley questioned if the Sweet Rd. and Hughes Ave. project is causing response delays for the district. Chief Van der Veen noted that the project is causing some delays and that the district was not adequately notified, nor were alternatives discussed regarding the extended road closures prior to the start of the project. The project is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Chief Rostov noted that as someone who responds out of Odell Station 61, it definitely affects his response times. Typically a fire marshal's office is notified of these types of projects and now that the district has a dedicated fire marshal, he expects to become involved in the process while keeping the best interests of the district and citizens in mind. In addition, Chief Rostov will be attending the City of Blaine Council meetings semimonthly and is involved with both the planning and engineering departments.

Chief Rostov will pursue having a lane open for first responders as needed. The project will be revisited during the July Board meeting.

Vice-Chairman Ansell offered to reach out to his contact at Ram Construction to see if they would open a lane for emergency response as needed. He will report his query to the fire marshal.

IAFF LOCAL 106 MONTHLY REPORT

- No report.

LEGAL ISSUES

- Rich Davis updated the Board on some legal information.

Chief Noonchester recently contacted Rich Davis regarding some modifications to the fire marshal services provided to the City of Blaine. Since Rich Davis's firm represents both the district and the City of Blaine, Chief Noonchester will contact Brian Snure of Snure Law Office to further discuss the matter. Rich Davis also plans to refer the City of Blaine to an outside agency.

Rich Davis discussed a recent Federal Department of Labor opinion regarding the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Employers can require employees to take their vacation and/or sick paid leave and FMLA (*up to 12 weeks*) concurrently. It is expected that the opinion by the Ninth Circuit will be debated further in the future. Rich Davis will keep the Board up to date as information becomes available.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Master Plan:** Chief Van der Veen reiterated that Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) has been hired to develop the district master plan. Administration has been divided into three groups (operations including training, human resources and fire marshal; finance and administration) that have begun the arduous task of compiling data requested by ESCI over the next couple of weeks. It is expected that a master plan will take approximately a total of six months to complete. The contract was initiated June 6, 2019.
- **Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program (GEMT) Update:** Chief Van der Veen pointed out the GEMT correspondence in the Board packet that discussed the per transport reimbursement increases for the next fiscal year.

A portion of the reimbursement funds are expected to arrive in late July. Rich Davis noted that other districts have received their reimbursements.

Chairman Bosman noted that the district will continue to update the Board as information becomes available.

- **Paramedic Consortium:** Chief Van der Veen noted that conversations with the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County EMS regarding the paramedic consortium are ongoing. The City of Bellingham has been helpful with keeping the district abreast of the upcoming paramedic training timeline.

The district has learned more information regarding how the district may be reimbursed for paramedics' time, both in class and working on county medic units. Another meeting has been scheduled for Friday, June 28, 2019. The district will continue to move forward with the idea that a couple members could be included in the upcoming paramedic program.

The City of Lynden is also interested in the program.

The labor organizations are working diligently to ensure there are no issues moving forward.

Chief Van der Veen will continue to gather information and update the Board about the program and the districts' involvement so they can make an informed decision in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Resolution 2019-02 Cancellation of Warrant:** Chief Van der Veen provided information regarding a vendor check that was destroyed in the mail.

MOTION: Commissioner Berkeley moved to approve Resolution 2019-06 Cancellation of Warrant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McPhail and approved 5-0.

POLICIES & PROCEDURE

- None

CORRESPONDENCE

- State of WA Health Care Authority re: 2018 average cost per transport
- Northern Light Article re: Chief Hollander's retirement
- Northern Light article re: John Swobody honored in Olympia
- Washington State Fire Chiefs Association re: Chief Noonchester's attendance at the 2019 WFC Conference
- Bellingham Herald article re: King Tut Terrace structure fire
- Blaine Primary PTO re: Lt LSmith participation in Read A Thon
- Anne Joubert re: Flowers sent for Jerry Joubert's memorial
- The Responder: District newsletter, June issue

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **July Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners are expected to attend the July 18 meeting.
- **Board Meeting Conflict:** Chairman Bosman noted that he has some meeting conflicts for the September, October and November meetings. There was discussion regarding rescheduling those meetings for a week earlier, however it may be too early for the business manager to complete the monthly financials. Having the meetings a week later was also discussed. A decision is expected at the July meeting following a discussion with administrative staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- Master Plan
- GEMT
- Paramedic Consortium
- Sweet Rd. and Hughes Ave. Road Closure
- Possible Reschedule of Board of Fire Commissioner Meetings
- Board Meeting Conflict

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for an Executive Session, per *RCW 42.30.140(4)(a)* “*Collective bargaining sessions with employee organizations, including contract negotiations, grievance meetings, and discussions relating to the interpretation or application of a labor agreement; or (b) that 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 proposals made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress.*”

at 1:36 p.m. until 1:50 p.m. Division Chief Herschel Rostov, District 4 Commissioner Harry Andrews and Attorney Rich Davis remained for the executive session.

Division Chief Jason Van der Veen was excused from the executive session.

MEETING RECONVENED

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 1:51 p.m. Action will not be taken as a result of the executive session.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: There being no further business Vice- Chairman Ansell moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:01 p.m. The motion was seconded by and Chairman Bosman approved 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Jennie Sand, Recording Secretary

ATTEST:

Rich Bosman, Chairman

Bruce Ansell, Vice-Chairman

Larry McPhail, Commissioner

Dean Berkeley, Commissioner

John Crawford, Commissioner

Chief Noonchester, Board Secretary