

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
1:00 pm  
July 18, 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 July 18, 2019 to order at 1:04 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 and John Crawford; Interim Fire Chief Joe Noonchester; Division Chiefs Herschel Rostov and Jason Van der Veen; Attorney Rich Davis.

Commissioner Berkeley was excused from this meeting.

**FIRE MARSHAL RECOGNITION**

- Chief Noonchester recognized Division Chief / Fire Marshal Herschel Rostov for successfully completing the Center for Public Safety Excellence’s (CPSE) process that awards the professional designation of “Fire Marshal” (FM). Chief Rostov becomes one of only 161 fire marshals with this designation nationally.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

- Chief Noonchester conducted the swearing of probationary firefighters Darioush Kazemi-Shirkadeh and Tye Thompson.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Meeting Minutes
  - a) June 20, 2019  
Staff Reports – Chiefs / Operations / Training / Technical Support
2. Financial Report / Revenue
  - a) Total Revenue – June \$98,892.17
  - b) Total Expenditures – July \$617,734.47
3. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
  - a) NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll: \$334,729.68
  - b) Non-Direct Payroll: \$3,005.61

- c) Benefits Voucher: \$207,665.50
- d) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers: \$72,333.68

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman Ansell 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:** Commissioner Crawford reported on the recent Whatcom County Fire Commissioners Meeting held on Wednesday, July 10, 2019.

Sandi Dalessandro will be retiring as the Whatcom County Fire Commissioner secretary at the end of 2019.

Recently retired Fire Chief Dave Ralston will remain on the FARS board until the end of the year while Chief Dean Crosswhite continues to gain more knowledge before taking over the position.

The Fire Commissioner's Fall Conference will be held on October 21, 2019 in Tulalip, WA. Various legislative items are expected to be discussed.

- **Cross Border Group:** Chief Noonchester reported on the recent Cross Border Group Meeting he and Chief Rostov attended on Tuesday, July 9, 2019. Members from both sides of the border meeting quarterly to network and share information.

Chief Noonchester noted that as a result of those discussions, the district will ensure that all line career staff have enhanced drivers' licenses, which will aid in crossing the border quickly during an emergency. The district will bear the cost of the added expense.

- **Contract Negotiations:** Vice-Chairman noted that a lead negotiator has been selected for upcoming contract negotiations. A preliminary management meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, July 23, 2019 for negotiations preparation. Both management and labor are expected to have their combined initial meeting in September. The Board will have further discussions during the executive session.

## **IAFF LOCAL 106 MONTHLY REPORT**

- None

## **LEGAL ISSUES**

- An updated bid law threshold applicable to fire protection districts, was included in the correspondence portion of the Board packet.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Master Plan:** Chief Noonchester noted that the admin staff has forwarded most of the required information to Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI). The information will be utilized to complete a district master plan.

ESCI will also conduct site visits to interview line staff, admin and commissioners, as well obtain community input.

Chief Noonchester plans to keep the Board updated.

- **Ground Emergency Medical Transportation Program (GEMT) Update:** Chief Noonchester is expecting a reimbursement check from GEMT in late July. Other agencies have already received their reimbursements. Chief Noonchester will contact the Board via email when the reimbursement is received.
- **Paramedic Consortium:** Chief Van der Veen provided an update regarding the paramedic consortium and the latest meeting held on Friday, July 12, 2019. The meeting further clarified the reimbursement and funding process. Whatcom Medic One, the City of Bellingham and NWFR continue to work on an interlocal agreement. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will also need to be drafted between the district and labor which will include a selection process and paramedic job description. Another meeting is scheduled for the last week in August which will include Whatcom County Emergency Medical Services Manager, Mike Hilley.

NWFR and the Bellingham Fire Department are the only agencies who desire to have members take part in a paramedic process at this time. NWFR has two positions reserved that can be utilized the following year if needed. The district will utilize the already established Bellingham Fire Department selection process. Preliminary classes will begin in late August, with the actual paramedic program beginning in January, 2020.

Chairman Bosman requested to be kept up to date on any new information.

**Sweet Rd. Hughes Ave. Road Closure:** Chief Rostov provided an update regarding the traffic congestion at Sweet Rd. and Hughes Ave. After discussions with the City of Blaine Planning Department, it was agreed to allow access for emergency response vehicles. There was a short delay for emergency responder signs to be posted and for road crews to complete some intricate work that involved removing potential harmful silica type materials.

The road will be closed to all while paving is completed the last week of July.

Chief Rostov further noted that all groups cooperated and worked well together and anticipates the same type of collaboration in the future.

Vice-Chairman Ansell also contacted Ram Construction to alert them to the concerns of the district regarding emergency response in the area.

- **Board Meeting Reschedule:** There was discussion regarding rescheduling the September, October and November Board meetings since Chairman Bosman will not be able to attend. It was decided to keep the meetings as planned. Chairman Bosman will be able to be contacted if the need arises.

It was noted that the Board will need to ensure they have a quorum in order to proceed with each of the meetings.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- None

### **POLICIES & PROCEDURE**

- None

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- SWFA Fire Chief Rod Topel re: Thank you for promotional exam assistance
- Anne Joubert re: NWFR's assistance during Jerry Joubert's memorial service
- Press Release re: Chief Rostov's completion of the Center for Public Safety Excellence Fire Marshal designation
- The Responder: District newsletter, July issue

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **August Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners present are expected to attend the August 15 meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

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

- Master Plan
- GEMT
- Paramedic Consortium

### **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 1:55 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. Action is expected as a result of the executive session.

### **MEETING RECONVENED**

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 1:54 p.m. Action will be taken as a result of the executive session.

**MOTION:** Vice- Chairman Ansell authorized Chief Noonchester to sign a contract with Kevin M. Taylor, who will act as the principal negotiator in the upcoming collective bargaining negotiations between North Whatcom Fire and Rescue and Local 106NW. The motion was seconded by and Chairman Bosman approved 4-0.

### **SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** There being no further business Vice- Chairman Ansell moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:06 p.m. The motion was seconded by and Commissioner McPhail 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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Bruce Ansell, Vice-Chairman

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Larry McPhail, Commissioner

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John Crawford, Commissioner

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Chief Noonchester, Board Secretary