

**Whatcom County Fire District #21  
Station 61 – Blaine  
9408 Odell Street, Blaine WA 98230  
7:00 pm  
August 18, 2016  
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 August 18, 2016 to order at 7:01 p.m. at Station 61 – 9408 Odell Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Berkeley exited the meeting room during the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Attendees: Chairman Rich Bosman; Vice-Chairman Larry McPhail, Commissioners Dean Berkeley, John Crawford and Bruce Ansell; Fire Chief William Pernet; Division Chief Henry Hollander; Training Captain Joe Noonchester. District attorney Rich Davis also attended a portion of the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

**FIREFIGHTER OATH OF OFFICE**

Chief Pernet conducted the swearing in of Jeff Haley, David Hancock, Zachary Scott, Haley Urling-Ehinger and Levi Wigg.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Meeting Minutes
  - a) July 21, 2016 – Regular Meeting
2. Staff Reports - Chiefs / Operations / Training / Technical Support
3. Financial Report / Revenue - July \$494,406.50
4. Voucher / Payroll / Benefits
  - a) NWFR Employees Direct Deposit Payroll # 621-680: \$277,101.63
  - b) Volunteer Direct Deposit Payroll # 681-708: \$5,308.49
  - c) Non-Direct Payroll # 22-23: \$4,970.58
  - d) Benefits Vouchers # 84-94 : \$189,147.22
  - e) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers # 1417-1568: \$61,993.83
  - f) Monthly Expenditure Vouchers 2<sup>nd</sup> set # 1569-1573: \$78,962.00

**MOTION:** Commissioner Crawford moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman McPhail

and approved 4-0. Commissioner Berkeley abstained, stating that he had not seen the consent agenda.

## **FIRE COMMISSIONER MONTHLY REPORTS**

- **Blaine City Council Meeting:** Commissioner Ansell provided information regarding the meeting held on Monday, July 25, 2016.

Commissioner Ansell reported that during the audience participation portion of the meeting, a citizen who resides off of Hughes Avenue, spoke passionately about a recent three hour train crossing delay which rendered the area impassible. The delay was caused by the Haggis X-ray machine that trains must pass through when crossing the border. The Blaine City Council reviewed past efforts to deal with the issue, including clarification regarding back road access for emergency services. Chief Hollander noted that emergency crews are aware of the access road. Commissioner Ansell relayed that citizens living in the affected area are afraid that emergency services may not be able to reach them in a timely fashion during an emergency if the train is blocking Hughes Ave. Chief Hollander agreed to draft a letter reassuring the concerned citizen regarding emergency services response plans during the previously stated situation. Chief Hollander will also contact the developer of the subdivision as well as the City of Blaine regarding the agreement to install additional access roads in the future. It was further noted that the x-ray machine may be relocated in the future to avoid such long delays.

Commissioner Ansell voiced his concern regarding the approved City of Blaine's Comprehensive Plan and Hazard Mitigation update. The documents reference the fire district multiple times. Chiefs Pernet and Hollander will contact the City of Blaine to review the documents and discuss any possible ramifications for the district.

**Blaine City Council Meeting:** Commissioner Crawford attended the Monday, July 11, 2016 meeting. The majority of the meeting focused on the addition of mother-in-law suites to properties / structures in the community.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **Custer Station 64 Real Estate Contract Update:** Chief Pernet announced that a discussion regarding real estate prices will take place later in the meeting during an executive session.
- **Consultant Contract:** Chief Pernet provided information regarding two human resource (HR) consultant companies; Prothman and Human Resource Systems. Chief Pernet reported that Prothman is more expensive but all-inclusive, while Human Resource Systems is more in tune to the type of assistance the district requires and comes highly recommended as a consultant in the area. Chief Pernet aspires to utilize Human Resource Systems to design an assistant chief hiring process in the near future. Taking into consideration the needs and preferences of the district, Human Resource Systems can put on an assessment center which will

include all of the designing, scoring, and processing, with the district completing the other elements of the hiring process. The objective is for the process to bring to light those individuals who have the skills and abilities, meet the values of the organization and will be a good fit for the district.

Chief Pernet's goal is to hire an assistant chief by January 1, 2017. Although currently there is no line item budgeted for consultant fees, there is monies available due to the vacant position.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ansell moved to give Chief Pernet the authority to enter into a contract with Human Resource Systems for \$6,500.00 not to exceed \$7,500.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Berkeley and approved 5-0.

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- **0100.0003.00 Fire Commissioner Guidelines for Conducting Meetings and Official Duties:** This policy was introduced during the last regularly scheduled NWFR Fire Commissioner Meeting held on Thursday, July 21. Chairman Bosman encouraged the Board to bring forth any additional questions, concerns or comments regarding the policy for discussion.

**MOTION:** Vice-Chairman McPhail moved to approve Policy 0100.003.00 Fire Commissioner Guidelines for Conducting Meetings and Official Duties as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crawford and approved 4-0.

Commissioner Berkeley abstained, stating that he had not seen the policy and had no comment. He further stated that the Board was alerted two months ago that his district laptop was not working. No one recollected any communication from Commissioner Berkeley regarding the working condition of his district laptop.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Board Meeting Attendance Query:** All Commissioners are expected to attend the NWFR Fire Commissioner Meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2016, with the exception of Commissioner Ansell who remains tentative about his attendance at this time.
- **Budget Planning Work Session Attendance Query:** All Commissioners are expected to attend the Budget Planning Work Session scheduled for Saturday, September 24, 2016, with the exception of Commissioner Ansell who remains tentative about his attendance at this time. The meeting will be held at Britton Loop Station 12 at 9:00 a.m. The District 4 Fire Commissioners are also expected to attend the meeting.

Chief Pernet requested that Commissioner Berkeley drop his district laptop off at Britton Loop Station 12 so it can be sent to the districts information technology

(IT) support company for repairs prior to the next meeting. Commissioner Berkeley stated that he had already taken the laptop to an undisclosed repair shop for repairs.

Chairman Bosman inquired as to why Commissioner Berkeley did not alert someone that he had not received a board packet. Commissioner Berkeley stated that no one returns his calls. Commissioner Berkeley further stated that he had received the district newsletters via his personal email and questioned why the board packet is not sent likewise. Chief Pernet noted that district business is not sent to commissioners via their personal email account. Commissioner Berkeley further stated that he frequently travels out of country and is unable to log on to his district email account in Canada. Chief Pernet offered to have a hard copy of the board packet available for Commissioner Berkeley at future meetings.

Commissioner Berkeley stated that before January 1, 2016, all commissioners had the freedom to contact the administrative office to request information; that liberty has since ceased. Commissioner Ansell stated that it is Commissioner Berkeley's responsibility to ensure that he stays on top of district business. Commissioner Berkeley reiterated that he has left personal emails and no one has contacted him regarding the laptop issue. He further noted that he has documented those attempts. Chairman Bosman questioned why Commissioner Berkeley did not deposit the district laptop at the administrative office for repairs once the difficulties arose. Commissioner Berkeley stated that he was traveling.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- Bellingham Herald article re: Mobile home fire near Wiser Lake
- Bellingham Herald re: Lynden Tribune re: Car chase fatality
- Sleasman Family: Thank you for service
- Coltart Family: Thank you for service
- The Responder: District newsletter, August issue

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The 2016 Washington Fire Commissioners Conference will be held in Yakima from October 27-29. Commissioners interested in attending need to contact Administrative Assistant Jennie Sand as soon as possible.
- Chief Hollander handed out a 9-11 Peace Arch Memorial flyer. A barbeque fundraiser to help with the cost of bringing five 9-11 firefighters from New York will be held on Saturday, September 10 on Thornton Rd. in Ferndale.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- None

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

- Custer Station 64
- Consultant Contract
- Letter addressing issue on Hughes Avenue

- City of Blaine Comprehensive Plan

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Bosman recessed the meeting for an Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (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 7:46 p.m. for approximately fifteen minutes. Chief Pernet, Chief Hollander and District 4 Fire Commissioner Andrews remained for the executive session.

**MEETING RECONVENED**

Chairman Bosman called the regular meeting back into open session at 8:04 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 8:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ansell and approved 5-0.

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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Dean Berkeley, Commissioner

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John Crawford, Commissioner

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Bruce Ansell, Commissioner

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Chief Pernet, Board Secretary