

OFFICER'S MEETING
Thursday, February 7, 2019
Station 63 – Birch Bay

Attendees: Chiefs Noonchester, Hollander and Van der Veen; Captains Jorgensen, Ahrenholz, Davidson and Ward.

INTERIM FIRE CHIEF

Division Chief of Operations Welcome

Chief Noonchester welcomed Chief Van der Veen to his first officer meeting as division chief.

W-2's

The corrected W-2's have been completed by an outside certified public accountant and will be sent out by inter-district mail as soon as possible. Another copy will also be mailed to each the member's home.

Timesheets

Kelly has worked hard on the daunting task of auditing the green timesheets against CrewSense, and the master calendar. One of the biggest errors found was the failure to input debit vacation days on the green timesheets which skewed vacation accruals. Other discrepancies included the new accounting software (BIAS), and inconsistent anniversary and step up dates. The correct accruals will be inputted into CrewSense in the near future.

In a recent phone conversation, union representative Kenneth Cunningham was also able to discuss timesheet concerns and questions with BIAS directly.

Going forward, all anniversary date step ups will be activated on the first of the hire date month, regardless of when during the month you were hired.

The district will continue to utilize green timesheets for checks and balances for the foreseeable future.

Captains will inform their crews that it is up to each individual to review their timesheets regularly (every shift). Lieutenants will also review their crews prior to the captains' review. Captains will review the green timesheets against CrewSense daily and make any necessary adjustments.

It was noted that only certain lieutenants have access to timesheets and if a captain is not on duty, those changes do not occur.

Chief Van der Veen will brainstorm with the captains to come up with a few options. In addition, Chief Van der Veen noted that he will contact the captains in the morning daily (prior to the end of shift), to verify personnel from the previous day.

It was noted that CrewSense has multiple features that may be utilized in the future. In addition, CrewSense has gone through some updates that effects how it currently inputs information into BIAS.

Chief Noonchester noted that is vital that the district's accounting system is accurate and dependable.

Medical Physical Options

Members can now choose how Kelly schedules their annual medical physicals. Members can choose to have their medical physicals on a day off and receive overtime. Overtime (short list) can be utilized to allow members to complete their physical on duty, or physicals can be scheduled for heavy days. It is expected that these options will work better for both the members and the community, allowing the district to maintain their minimum staffing of twelve.

Collateral Duties List

The group reviewed the current outdated 2017-2018 collateral duties list. Captains agreed that they are in charge of specific duties and delegate dependent on the assignment / willingness and proficiency of members.

Chief Van der Veen will meet with the captains following a meeting with Chief Noonchester before a decision is made regarding reassigning collateral duties.

Fire Engine Committee

The fire engines are aging and will need to be replaced in the near future. The fire engine committee will include Cpts. Davidson, Jorgensen and Ward and mechanic Elliot Courage. Chief Van der Veen will head up the committee.

Monthly Station Reports

Chief Noonchester passed out a modified version of the current station inspection reports. Each station is responsible for certain areas of their home station/apparatus as well as an outlying volunteer station.

With Chief Hollander's upcoming retirement and the new fire marshal position geared toward prevention, there was discussion regarding the best way to deal with more substantial station issues and how to streamline the process.

Chief Noonchester suggested that the district hire a part time civilian handyman who could make those small repairs and who also has connections to bring in contractors when necessary. The concept will be brought before the NWFR Board of Fire Commissioners for discussion during the upcoming February meeting. It was suggested that the captains provide their input to the chiefs prior to the commissioner meeting.

It was also noted that the monthly station inspection reports are not currently being reviewed by the Safety committee as required.

Chiefs Noonchester and Van der Veen will work together to update the 2017 Facility, Maintenance, Monthly Apparatus and Station Inspection list.

Vacation Payouts

Kelly has completed her exhaustive audit of the 2016-2018 vacation payouts. Following a meeting with Chiefs Noonchester and Van der Veen, the union and Kelly, an email was sent out regarding resolutions.

“I’m sure everyone is aware of the recent vacation buyout payments made to some members of the department. After a thorough accounting of hours done by Kelly Freeman a common thread was seen between all those affected. Admin and the Union met this afternoon to make sure that both parties concerns were addressed.

Starting next week those that were affected by this will be contacted. Kelly and I will sit down with each person to go through all documentation, answer any questions and (hopefully) bring this to a resolution.

I will send out a follow up email shortly that will explain the issue and what the overall resolution is when I can summarize it. Right now all I can think in is long form.

Thanks for your continued patience!”

It was noted that any overpayments cannot be taken out of the 2018 W2’s however, the paybacks will be reflected in the 2019 W2’s money earned (reduction in gross annual pay).

The fault lies with the district and they will work with those affected to ensure they do not suffer any hardship. Issues with the member’s pay who recently left the district, has already been resolved.

Chief Van der Veen requested that all member remain patient while the matter gets resolved.

Chief Noonchester noted that the district’s recent audit will result in a management letter regarding members taking vacation before it is earned. Moving forward, the district plans on putting a system in place to rectify the auditors’ concern.

District Openings

Chief Noonchester noted that there are currently three open positons in the district; two firefighter and one lieutenant. The district plans to promote one candidate from the lieutenant acting list once established and to possibly hire laterally for firefighter positions, from outside the district. The union and district are exploring all options. Due to the minimum staffing of twelve, and the pressure that puts on overtime and possible burnout, Chief Noonchester plans to fill two of the three positions in 2019.

Legislation Meeting

Chief Noonchester scheduled a meeting with Representative Luanne Van Werven in Olympia on Monday, February 4. He provided information regarding the fire service, how the district

operates, along with budgetary concerns. Chief Noonchester stated that it was a worthwhile trip and that Luanne Van Werven was very receptive.

OPERATIONS

Chief Van der Veen requested patience as he assimilates to his new position.

City of Bellingham Auto Aid Agreement

Chief Van der Veen reviewed an email sent out prior to the captain's meeting.

"I know there have been a lot of questions about the new automatic aid agreement we have with Bellingham Fire that started January 1. Many of you are aware that units from 69 and 12 are responding into the city on a more frequent basis, and concern has been raised that first due areas for the affected stations are being left uncovered or are seeing a delayed response. I am aware of these issues and intend to address them.

Unfortunately this will take some time. Due to the fact that multiple agencies are involved we are not able to meet with Prospect until 2/27 to review the run cards for the 69 and 12 area and make adjustments as needed.

Company officers, if you become aware of a gap in coverage that seems as it should be covered by units from BFD please take note of the date and incident number, type up a quick description what seemed wrong and email it to me. I will compile them and we will look at each incident when we meet.

Thanks in advance for your ongoing patience. I will keep you informed as we move towards a resolution."

Chief Noonchester noted other variables regarding district operations. These variables include station orders, FRLs, AVL, fire blocks, radio frequency and auto aid, will also be discussed during an upcoming February 27 meeting with dispatch and the city.

Chief Van der Veen noted that the auto aid agreement remains and work in progress and he plans to keep everyone updated through emails. *"Communication is paramount."*

Captains requested clear guidelines to follow when they are the district's last available resource, so they can pass the information on to their lieutenants. It was further noted that the last resource will need to notify B76. Further discussion is expected.

The City of Bellingham is working on ensuring the district has the appropriate keys to areas within the city.

The captains requested additional City of Bellingham map books.

There was also brief discussion regarding tender tones. Captains have the authority to add tenders to any call as needed.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Image Trend

Chief Hollander noted that he is currently focused on working through issues with CrewSense and Image Trend. Captain Ward commented that in many cases Image Trend patient reports can be completed prior to returning to the station. Captain Ahrenholz noted that there was not enough training prior to utilizing the program and there remain questions. Captain Jorgensen stated that there will be a county wide manual available in the future and requested patience while the County works through some issues.

There was additional discussion regarding how reports are audited by lieutenants and captains. There needs to be clear guidelines and consistency regarding what is expected with regards to how to fill out the reports appropriately. There are multiple ways to enter information and no clear guidelines as to what the district expects. Chief Van der Veen will send out an email with expectations in the near future.

It is imperative that the mileage is accurate on the reports in order for Systems Design to bill properly.

Other

The police chief of Blaine has resigned after just over one hundred sixty days.

The Everson assistant fire chief has resigned after only one week.

A county communications director for both police and fire will be filled in the near future. This is a new position.

TRAINING

ResQHub

Captain Jorgensen requested that any questions regarding ResQHub be directed to him. Most members have caught on how to enter the appropriate information. Captain Jorgensen is currently working on creating form fillable documents to make it more user friendly in the future.

Insurance Provided Training

Captain Jorgensen thanked members for their honest feedback regarding the recent insurance provided training. He will not be scheduling this type of training in the near future as he did not find it beneficial to the district.

Training Accountability

Captain Jorgensen noted that members need to be held accountable for completing OTEP, EMT recertification. It was noted that this is a requirement of their job with NWFR. Chief Noonchester noted that it is up to company officers to maintain the integrity of their crews.

There was discussion regarding the best way to change our culture moving forward. It was agreed that the culture should be instilled from the first orientation of all new hires.

It would be a good opportunity and beneficial to the district to provide leadership training during the quarterly “all officer” meetings in the future. The training may also include a formal review of the chain of command.

Chief Van der Veen encouraged company officers to have their senior firefighters mentor their junior firefighters with regards to the servant leadership fire service culture.

Module 1 Training

The five probationary firefighters have successfully completed their module 1 training and will begin module 2 training. Probationary firefighter Warne still needs to complete 2 skills sheets in her module 1 before she receives an official confirmation of module 1 successful completing.

Pump Operations Academy

The five probationary firefighters have completed the classroom portion of the pumps ops training however, due to the recent inclement weather, the remainder of the training has been postponed until later in the month. Firefighter Troy Freeman will be teaching the practical portion of the training.

Volunteers

Two volunteers will be attending EMT class while two others will be pulling shifts in the near future. Captain Jorgensen will coordinate their shift work with Chief Van der Veen.

A Shift

Nothing to report.

B Shift

Captain Davidson noted that it would be beneficial and easier to schedule a short list overtime if an annual physical scheduled during work hours is included in the note section of CrewSense one day prior to the appointment.

C Shift

Not represented.

D Shift

EMS / Trauma Kit Layouts

Captain Ward noted that an email was recently sent out regarding the new EMS (orange) and Trauma (red) kit layouts. The layouts should prove to be more efficient. Currently the kits are being tested at Birch Bay Station 63 D shift and will be distributed to all stations in the near future. D Shift plans to remove the old kits at the same time the new ones are distributed. Good work John Hollstein!

Personal Flootation Device (PFD)

The PFD's have been dispersed to the first out aid units. There is some concern that the devices may not fit all members. Captain Jorgensen continues to work on options. Captain Ward stated that the procedure is still being fine-tuned.

Cintas

There was discussion regarding the amount of work Mike Ross has put into ensuring that Cintas delivers acceptable uniforms. Issues include billing problems, stains, and poor quality. It was noted that orange tags stating the reason, name and station, must be placed on uniforms not meeting the district standards. Members need to email Mike Ross with any Cintas concerns.

There was discussion regarding the district purchasing uniforms and having the members take care of their own uniforms in the future. It would take the district approximately two years to break even if they chose to purchase the uniforms in lieu of paying a service. No decision was made.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 7 (All Officer)