

OFFICER'S MEETING
Thursday, April 4, 2019
Station 61 – Blaine

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

FIRE CHIEF

Fire Marshal

Chief Noonchester welcomed Chief Rostov to the district.

Board of Fire Commissioners

Chief Noonchester continues to communicate with the Board Chairman on a regular basis.

Entry Level Firefighter Recruitment Process

The district is in the midst of a hiring process. Verifications are being made and a speed interview has been scheduled for Monday, May 6. Twenty-five candidates have been notified.

Human Resource (HR) Assistant

The district continues to work on defining the HR position responsibilities. A draft job description is in process. There is continued discussion regarding whether the position will have some type of fitness component. Kelly has multiple fitness trainer credentials that the district would like to maintain for the future.

There was further discussion regarding the possibility of a future peer fitness trainer program and a coordinator to oversee the program. Further discussion is expected.

Levy Lid Lift

The Board of Fire Commissioners is entertaining the idea of asking the public for a levy lid lift in the future. Currently NWFR's levy is \$1.32. The district can request up to a total of \$1.50. A levy lid lift would help the district continue to grow. The Board will continue to explore their options.

Paramedic Consortium

Chiefs Noonchester and Van der Veen along with Captain Jorgensen have met and will continue to meet with other fire districts and the City of Bellingham regarding a county wide paramedic consortium in the future. Discussions are in the preliminary planning stages. The next meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, May 9. Up to twelve NWFR individuals may be interested in testing for the upcoming paramedic training, scheduled to begin in September.

Pending questions include:

- How to fund?
 - Paramedic program
 - Backfill positions while in school and rotating
 - Disparity of wages (FF vs Paramedic)
- How to rotate district paramedics into medic units?

- It is anticipated that members who become paramedics will remain district employees.
- How to properly tap EMS levy to sustain program in the future?
- Union buy-in regarding wages

District 7 stated that they are not interested in having an additional paramedic unit, possibly leaving the door open for NWFR to become an ALS / BLS department.

The district will send out a memo when the time is right asking for a response from those interested in the paramedic program. Additional information will be disseminated as it becomes available.

NWFR Master Plan Update

The district has received requests for qualifications information from two companies who are interested in assisting the district with developing a master plan. Once a company is chosen it is expected that the process will take approximately six months.

The master plan will include evaluating a continued consolidation with District 4, other potential mergers and consolidations, as well as station and apparatus placement. Ultimately the district expects to create efficiencies.

Chief Rostov has been involved with a strategic plan led by ESCI in another district and was impressed with the process as well as the outcome. Chief Noonchester stated that ESCI has developed a district facility and capital needs assessment in the past, which may in part still be relevant today.

More information is expected at the June all officer meeting.

OPERATIONS

Bellingham Fire Department (BFD) Response / Auto Aid

Chief Van der Veen continues to have discussions with both Chiefs Hewitt and Comfort regarding the impacts to the district of responding into the City of Bellingham. The group is working on implementing some changes (fire blocks, station orders, south end criteria) to alleviate some of the burden. The hope is to see a response that is fair and equitable for both departments.

Questions remain including Knox box key transfer, training and response coordination. Chief Van der Veen continues to encourage officers to reach out to their counterparts.

Once the BFD chiefs are enlightened regarding the lack of additional resources at NWFR when responding into BFD's area, it is expected that BFD meetings and trainings that take them out of service will be scheduled more meaningfully in the future.

In addition, there was discussion regarding having station orders put directly onto the fire blocks on each large map at both Laurel Station 69 and Britton Loop Station 12. Presently, the same information can also be found on CAD.

While the process continues to slowly move forward, any questions and concerns regarding auto aid can be directed to Chief Van der Veen.

Resignation

Mike Ross has resigned from the department effective Friday, May 3. A memo will be sent to all members regarding the resignation.

Major Incidents

It was requested that any information regarding major incidents that include a fatality, be routed to the chiefs, specifically Chief Van der Veen. The chiefs want to ensure crews are handling difficult calls and receiving assistance when necessary. The media also routinely contacts the chief officers when major incidents occurs within the district.

Best Practices

The captains continue to work on the district best practices operational document. The document will include multiple procedures. Chief Van der Veen expressed his appreciation to the captains for all the hard work to date on the document.

Collateral Duties

The group reviewed the updated collateral duties list. Copies will be provided to each station.

Chief Hollander hopes to replace the outdated touch key pads at both Birch Bay Station 63 and Odell Station 61 before the end of May.

Injuries / Accidents

There were no reported member injuries / accidents during the month of April. Chief Van der Veen requested that the captains pass along his appreciation regarding how rigs responded during the month of April.

Versaterm Update

Currently, Chief Van der Veen is the district representative who attends the county Versaterm meetings. At the last meeting, there was discussion regarding how to update the current MDCs. It was noted that the change would need to be agreed to by all the county agencies. An upcoming county wide meeting is scheduled to be held sometime in July.

Chief Hollander will contact Tech Help who may be able to adjust the bright function on the district MDCs. It was unclear if the MDC engine mounts could be changed to mirror that of our previous MDC placement.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Fire Marshal Position Overlap

It is expected that Chief Hollander will continue to transition some of his duties over to Chief Rostov during the month of May.

Northwood Station 72

Chief Hollander noted that the Northwood Store located beside Northwood Station 72 is growing. In addition to their grocery store, there is also a coffee shop and bar. Due to their growth, the owners purchased an easement from the district. They are also able to take advantage of the additional parking on station grounds provided they keep a clear pathway for responding apparatus. In addition they have also agreed to take care of the grounds.

The station signage still needs to be erected and some gutter replaced.

Volunteer Station Maintenance / Grounds

Semiahmoo Station 62 – B / A Shifts

Haynie Station 65 – C Shift

Delta Station 68 – C Shift

Smith Rd Station 13 – A Shift

Wiser Lake Station 70 – A Shift (maintenance only)

PREVENTION

Introduction

Chief Rostov provided some background information regarding his fire service career. Chief Rostov worked his way up through the ranks in King County at Skyway as a volunteer, career firefighter and lieutenant. He also worked at Mercer Island for twenty two years and was promoted to fire marshal in 2015.

He has collaborated with numerous neighboring departments during his fire marshal tenure and intends to bring that approach to NWFR.

Chief Rostov has earned many certifications including residential and commercial plan review, inspector I and II, CPSE, IFSAC and fire investigation to name a few. In addition, Chief Rostov has a valuable resource with the ATF which he plans to utilize as needed.

Chief Rostov's goals include bolstering the prevention division with focus on pre fire planning, inspections by all stations including sprinkler and fire alarms, building plan reviews and public education.

For the moment, Chief Rostov will spend time getting to know the area, the culture and how NWFR operates. He recently found a house in the district and plans to move in shortly.

Fire Marshal Assistance

Former County Fire Marshal Mitch Anderson who was recently hired as the assistant chief for SWFA has offered to assist the county to work through fire marshal issues as they proceed through their hiring process.

Chief Rostov has also offered his services if needed during the county's transitional period, which will ultimately benefit both the department and the county.

Chief Rostov envisions that the department may take on business inspections as it pertains to the fire district, allowing the district to collect fees for those services.

TRAINING

ResQHub

Cpt. Ward pointed out some issues with ResQHub. The chiefs will investigate.

A Shift

Cpt. Ahrenholz stated that hose testing will be conducted much like last years'. Lt. Esser is working on a hose replacement plan. Work still needs to be completed on an appliance and nozzle testing plan. An appliance and nozzle rep may be asked to be present during the testing phase of the nozzles so they can assist with determining the longevity of the items.

Cpt. Ahrenholz will complete his probation on May 3, 2019. Congratulations!

B Shift

Cpt. Davidson requested that dates be confirmed for at least two upcoming apparatus committee meetings. Chief Van der Veen will schedule.

Cpts Davidson, Schmidt and Jorgensen will set up a meeting to discuss and schedule skills verification for the new hire in house academy. Cpt. Schmidt requested that the meeting be scheduled on a C Shift day.

Cpt. Davidson requested the Semiahmoo Station 62 be removed from CrewSense since there is no members scheduled to work from that station. The removal will make the other station's crew line up easier to view.

The captains plan on moving their bedroom into Chief Hollander's office once he retires. The current captains' bedroom will be set up as their office. They also plan on repainting the bedroom / office. The captains will retain Chief Hollander's computer set up, including the multiple computer screens to view the station security cameras. There was also a request to add a security camera to face the fuel tanks at Birch Bay Station 63.

Lt. Hofstad will complete his probation on May 3, 2019. Congratulations!

C Shift

Cpt. Schmidt will discuss hose testing with officers following the meeting.

D Shift

Cpt. Ward requested clarification regarding officers signing the incident narrative once completed in Image Trend. Although it was mandatory in Firehouse, Image Trend does not require that officers sign the narrative since it is documented elsewhere in the program.

Chief Noonchester noted that the district does receive public records requests regularly and reminded the captains to hold members accountable who complete inadequate narratives.

There was discussion about issues with Guardian Security alarms, specifically for an activated elevator alarm in Birch Bay, where the crew responded multiple times in one day. Chief Rostov requested that he be sent an email explaining the event so he can follow up with the business and Guardian Security if needed.

John Lovatt has identified an issue with the fire safety house. Since the fire safety house is owned by the Whatcom County Fire Chiefs Association, maintenance will address the issue and bill the association.

There appear to be some WI FI connectivity issues at Birch Bay Station 63. A service request will be submitted and Chief Hollander will investigate.

The group discussed adding a software program to convert files from one program to another (Adobe) so they can be manipulated. Programs that may need to be manipulated include hose testing, plan reviews, pre incident planning and rig / station checks. Chief Van der Veen has heard that Target Solutions also works well CrewSense. Chief Hollander will investigate and further discussion may be required regarding which program will best fit the districts' needs.

Chief Hollander will investigate to see if MDTs can be removed from rigs for use on inspections, etc.

All Officer Meeting: Thursday, June 6