

**ALL OFFICER'S MEETING**  
**Thursday, June 6, 2019**  
**Station 61 – Blaine**

Attendees: Chiefs Noonchester, Rostov and Van der Veen; Training Captain Jorgensen; Captains, Davidson and Schmidt. Lieutenants Biery, Hofstad, McPhail, Nelson, Nielsen, Scott, LSmith; Tender Volunteer Rutgers.

**FIRE CHIEF**

**Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) Master Plan**

Over the next four to five months, ESCI will be assisting the district with a master plan. Administration is in the process of gathering information that will be utilized in the master plan. It is expected that ESCI will be conducting site visits along with interviews in the near future. The master plan will assist with creating district efficiencies such as equipment, apparatus and station placement.

**Paramedic Consortium**

Chief Noonchester provided an update on the progress of the Whatcom County ALS / Paramedic program discussions. NWFR Chiefs Noonchester and Van der Veen, Bellingham Fire Department Fire Chief Hewitt, District 7 Assistant Chief Crosswhite, Lynden Fire Department Fire Chief Mark Billmire, and District 14 Fire Chief DeBruin attended the second paramedic meeting.

The selection process may include an abbreviated anatomy and physiology (A&P) course along with prerequisites (fall 2019) and an entrance exam or placement test. It is anticipated that a class of fourteen paramedic students will commence in January 2020. The district may be able to take advantage of two open slots and are currently exploring the feasibility and impact to the organization.

The County EMS Levy intends to reimburse the district for backfilling the positions as they attend school however, during this time those paramedic students will be expected to complete their regular shift assignments when not in class.

Once certified, paramedics will be shared into the County system 75% of the time and work within their home district 25% of the time. It is expected that the district will be reimbursed for the overtime utilized during the 75% paramedics are working for the County.

The district believes that it will be beneficial to have certified medics in the system before a 5<sup>th</sup> medic unit is approved in the future.

There are at least two members interested in the program.

The officers will be kept up to date on the results of future meetings.

**OPERATIONS**

**Presentation**

Deputy Jamie Collins of the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) discussed a collaborative approach to the mental illness crisis by law enforcement and the fire service.

Jamie Collins reviewed the Grace Program which has been around for approximately two years. The goal is for the program to be utilized by the district as another tool to identify frequent flyers and offer them other forms of assistance.

The Whatcom GRACE (Ground-Level Response and Coordinated Engagement) project is a community-based effort to find solutions for individuals who are using crisis services and law enforcement in frequent, yet ineffective ways. The aim is to offer intensive, coordinated services to these “familiar faces” whose needs span beyond any single agency. This program, in development, will create a system to improve communication, care management, and supportive services, with a goal toward improving the health and wellness of these vulnerable residents. In addition, it may be another avenue to plug patients into resources and additional follow up without law enforcement having to transport, potentially escalating a situation.

Jamie Collins noted how first responders are already quite skilled at deescalating situations. Many responders are better able to connect with patients by offering compassion, empathy and using a calm demeanor, which in turns calms the patient. In addition, at times, responders also follow up with patients to ensure they have access to available resources.

Community paramedic Joe Frank in Bellingham is already using the program and can be contacted to find out how they currently utilize the Grace Program.

Chief Noonchester noted that officers should be keeping an eye on crews in case they may need additional support following a stressful call.

*(additional information about the Grace Program is listed on the last page)*

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/2797/GRACE>

### **Fire Blocks**

Following the unusual dispatch during a recent structure fire on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> and after some investigation, Chief Van der Veen announced that the district’s current run card line up had not been inputted into the system correctly. Rob Wilson apologized for their error and rectified the issue.

The fire block order for a structure fire should have been E69, E43, E6, E5, E1, E12 and E4.

In addition, no callback was ordered and will be requested when needed in the future as expected.

### **Lock Out / Tag Out Procedure**

A new draft safety procedure was handed out for review. It is expected that kits will be placed on engines in the near future and as per policy, some type of training will be forthcoming.

## TRAINING

### **Hospital Update**

Captain Jorgensen stated that members are receiving high praise for their professionalism when transporting patients to the emergency room.

If any issues come up at the hospital regarding the transfer of patient information please contact Captain Jorgensen as soon as possible.

The group reviewed a recent email discussing temporary changes in the emergency room, specifically at the EMS work station. Please note the changes are temporary and will result in improved patient flow. Captain Jorgensen will check into how long this modification is expected to last.

### **Skills Academy**

The new hires will be participating in an upcoming skills academy. It is expected that many district members will also be involved. The training division will be busy during this time and the best way to contact him if necessary, will be by text.

### **EMT Recertification**

Twenty-five members will need to recertify their EMT accreditation in the near future. Captain Jorgensen reminded members not to wait until the last moment in case of unexpected issues.

There was some discussion regarding issues with logging on to the Department of Health website at Britton Loop Station 12. Several suggestions were provided and Chief Van der Veen agreed to contact Tech Help if the suggestions did not rectify the issue.

### **NFA Classes**

Captain Jorgensen announced that an upcoming NFA leadership class will be hosted at Britton Loop Station 12 in the fall (Sept/Oct). He hopes that all members will attend.

### **Promotional Classes**

The training division hopes to offer in-house Officer I, Officer II, ISO Instructor I classes prior to a promotional process. Captain Jorgensen encouraged officers to be proactive and inspire those members who may be interested in promoting, to partake in the classes.

It is unclear regarding the timing of the next promotional process.

### **BLS Evaluator Course**

There was discussion regarding hosting a BLS evaluator course in the future. The training division will send out an email to determine if there is enough interest to move forward.

## PREVENTION

### **Fire Prevention Office Overview**

Chief Rostov reviewed his vision of the districts' prevention division. His approach includes getting ahead of an emergency by providing a multitude of opportunities.

1. Fire Investigation – Within the City of Blaine, the fire marshal will be the primary investigator, while outside the city limits he will provide back up for the County and provide support for the Sheriff's office. Work will need to be completed with dispatch regarding notification.
2. Construction Services – Currently all construction services are limited to new construction within the Blaine city limits. The fire marshal consults with the County on the remainder of the district.
3. Existing Buildings – Chief Rostov expects to provide safety operational permits, inspections and confidence testing in the district.
4. Public Education – For the time being this portion will not change however, it is expected to be built upon in the future.
5. Operations Support – Chief Rostov intends to work with members to improve the prevention division including following up on and correcting repeat alarms, enabling crews to stay in service. Chief Rostov asked to be contacted for those frequent fire system alarms. In the future, there may be a way to track habitual calls through Image Trend.

### **Contacting the Fire Marshal**

Chief Rostov stated that if needed on calls outside of his work day, he could be contacted through his work phone, text or dispatch.

### **Future**

In the future, Chief Rostov intends to advance the districts' pre fire planning and mapping capabilities.

### **I Am Responding**

Chief Rostov reviewed the I Am Responding phone, email, website and dispatch app. The app will include CAD information including live routing and tracking, auto mapping, communications and short report information. The system encompasses all agencies in the area and has the capability to include pre fire planning, mapping, hydrant and freeway turn arounds, dependent on the needs of the district. The entire program will take some time to fully integrate.

Chief Rostov encouraged members to become familiar with the program and begin to explore the various links sooner rather than later.

In addition, Chief Rostov noted that with this application, pagers could be phased out in the future.

### **Blaine High School Addition / Remodel**

Chief Rostov has started his inspections and plan reviews of the roughed in sprinklers, fire alarms and hydrant relocation. The proposed completion of the project is in August, prior to the 2019/2020 school year. Chief Rostov will remain actively involved in the project. Please keep Chief Rostov informed of fire alarm responses to the building.

### **A Shift**

The hose testing process has been finalized and will begin in the near future.

### **B Shift**

#### Reports

Cpt. Davidson reminded officers that an Image Trend report (short) must be completed with pertinent information even if the district is cancelled.

All officers should be reviewing and signing crew reports (narrative) for content including grammar and professionalism. These reports may be reviewed years later in court proceeding and when thorough notes are not taken it is many times hard to recall accurate information. Currently chief officers review all reports requested through public records requests.

Chief Rostov noted that important information collected when responding to potential illegal burns include pictures, damage, material burned and repeat calls. The report should paint a good picture of the nature of the call and the districts' response.

There was discussion regarding conflicting reports or information if more than one agency responds. If the district is providing mutual aid, only information about what your crew did should be included in the report.

When responding to hazmat burns or vehicle fires, Cpt. Davidson reminded officers to collect occupant information including name and phone number. This information may be utilized by law enforcement. Birthdates should also be collected and transferred to the note section.

#### Public Service Calls

Public service calls such as installing or switching out batteries in smoke alarms will be able to be tracked in Image Trend in the future.

At this time activities and events are added to CrewSense in the note section however, it cannot be tracked. Cpt. Jorgensen noted that ResQHub can document and track those events and activities.

#### Pagers and Radios

Lt. Hofstad noted that he is in the process of evaluating how pagers are set up and ways to improve their functionality. He requested feedback regarding which tones each officer utilizes

and if they also monitor portable radios. It was suggested that tones be limited to that of the responding station.

It was noted that command duty officers require all station tones.

It was suggested that since the Motorola radios are more functional and can better handle multiple stations, officers would benefit from utilizing those radios. Lt. Hofstad noted that he is waiting on additional programming cables for the Motorola radios.

#### Water Pumps

With the threat of wildfires during the summer, there was discussion regarding adding a water pump to the brush trucks on both Birch Bay Lynden Station 63 and Britton Loop Station 12. Chief Van der Veen will follow up.

#### **C Shift**

##### Fire Extinguishers

It is expected that a light duty member may assist Alpine Fire with some fire extinguisher testing.

#### **D Shift**

##### Multiple Company Officer (MCO) Training

Both live fire MCO training and instructor training is expected in the future although dates have yet to be set.

It was also requested that NWFR and BFD have additional opportunities to train together.

#### Response Follow-up

Lt. LSmith reviewed a recent response when her follow-up created the need to call Child Protective Services (CPS), which resulted in a favorable outcome. If CPS had not been notified, the minor may have not have been given help that was needed. CPS was grateful for the contact.

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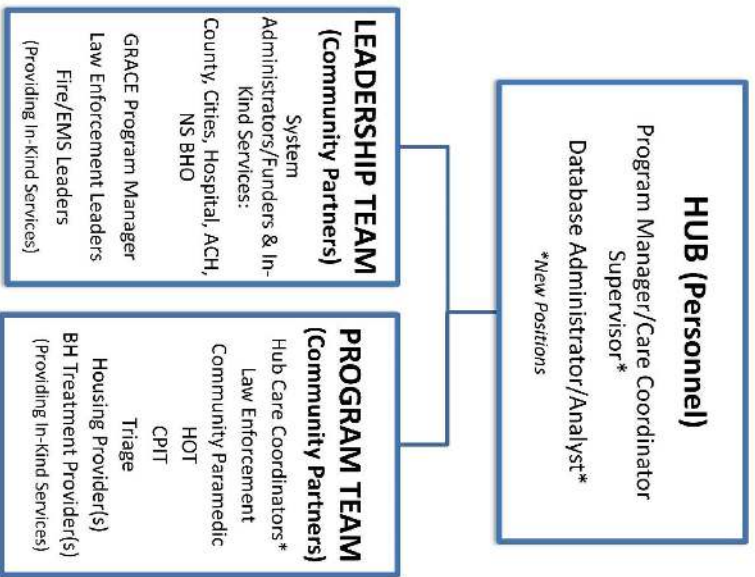
Chief Noonchester attended the Fallen Firefighter Ribbon Ceremony held in Olympia on Sunday, June 2. John Swobody was honored during the event. Two other fallen fighter events will honor John including the IAFF Fallen Firefighter Memorial in Colorado Springs (September 21) and the National Fallen Firefighter Memorial in Emmetsburg (October 5-6).

Lt. Nelson noted that his son Gabe has accepted a job as a fire inspector for the County.

Chief Van der Veen reminded officers to take care of their crews especially after traumatic calls. Members react differently to such calls and what might not affect one, may in fact have a tremendous impact on another. Crews can be taken out of service and backfilled, if needed, to recover. Contact a chief officer if the need arises.

Captain Meeting: Thursday, July 4 possibly cancel? All Officer Meeting: Thursday, September 5

Organizational Structure



**GRACE PROGRAM**

Functional Structure

