

CAPTAIN'S MEETING
Thursday, November 7, 2019
Station 63 – Birch Bay

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

FIRE CHIEF

Rescue Boat

Chief Noonchester and Sheriff Elfo met to discuss the concept of jointly staffing a rescue boat in the future. The idea is to possibly have an EMT available to respond with the sheriffs during a water type rescue.

Chief Rostov noted that one challenge may be the differing perspectives of each agency. While the district approaches emergencies from a rescue response, the sheriff's approach is one of recovery.

Another challenge is that there is currently no L&I standards and the district will need to build the program from the ground up. Chief Rostov has knowledge and experience of similar programs that can be utilized as needed in the future.

More discussion is expected regarding what the districts capabilities will be and how to interface the two agencies.

Training Consortium

NWFR, SWFA and the City of Bellingham continue to meet to discuss the future of a training consortium. It is expected that a program will be put into place during the first quarter of 2020.

The program will be modeled after the successful South King County model which consists of volunteers, combination and career departments. The hope is to deliver more training more often while providing coverage for crews while they are participating in training.

Chief Van der Veen noted that it will be a collaborative effort by all agencies and not a hierarchy. The initial focus will be on skills and maintenance training that will be built on over time. All three agencies already respond well together in some capacity.

There was discussion regarding housing the consortium staff in building D as opposed to the admin building, both located at Britton Loop Station 12. It was noted that there will be seven training officers and building D does not have adequate space.

The agencies continue to work diligently behind the scenes.

Administration Relocation

Chief Noonchester stated that for many reasons, including politically, he hopes to relocate the admin staff back into D21's response area. The plan is to relocate the admin staff to Semiahmoo

Station 62 sometime in early 2020. The move is the most prudent and cost effective option at this time. Chief Rostov will remain at Odell Station 61.

Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) Master Plan

ESCI continues to work on the district master plan. They are currently working on a technical review portion which will be reviewed by Chief Noonchester for inaccuracies. It is expected that once complete, the plan will be presented to the district sometime in late December, at which time plans for the future can be decided.

2020 Budget Session

The last board study work session will be held to review the draft budget on Saturday, November 9, 2019 at Odell Station 61 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend.

OPERATIONS

1-5 Responses / Fire Blocks (some don't make sense)

Chief Van der Veen noted that he has been meeting with Prospect to redo the 1-5 fire blocks.

Responses on the freeway will include:

- District I-5 south to Grandview – no U-turns on freeway
- District 7 – North to Birch Bay Lynden Rd.
- Two engines or two engines and a ladder truck.
- L63 and E63 will respond to all I-5 calls
- A42 will respond if needed
- Possibly L61

District 7 Station 41 is moving volunteers to Station 45 in the future and can respond as needed. They will continue to respond from home and are engine capable only.

Chief Van der Veen noted that the changes will take a while to implement and the fire blocks will need to be changed prior to adjusting the run cards.

Due to the anticipated higher responses, there was discussion regarding changing the type of tires on L63 for longer wear. More discussion is expected in the future regarding station design and ladder truck storage.

Traffic Safety Initiative

Chief Van der Veen circulated a Traffic Safety Initiative memo issued by the Bellingham Fire Department. The initiative provides a larger buffer for responders on the freeway.

Captain Ward agreed to investigate the concept of adding a lower light setting on apparatus when stationary at a scene.

Responder Safety

Chief Van der Veen provided information regarding a recent structure fire response on Saturday, November 2. The call involved a volatile situation that required law enforcement assistance.

Chief Van der Veen is investigating the validity of offering some sort of self-defense training for members in the future.

Winter / Inclement Weather Preparation

Chief Van der Veen reminded officers to ensure that their crews are prepared for the upcoming inclement weather (gloves, hats). A pallet of deicer will be ordered now for distribution between the stations. Captain Ward will investigate purchasing additional square edged shovels for the aid cars along with ice melt.

There was discussion regarding adding buckets of sand to the ladder and shop truck for use as needed for apparatus that may get stuck.

It is expected that a new plow ready shop truck will be purchased with mitigation funds in the near future. The mechanics may take the truck home during inclement weather to be ready to plow or respond as needed.

It may also be prudent to practice deploying the chains on apparatus before the first snow fall.

Vehicle Surplus and Replacement

- AP009 will be surplused
- AP011 will move to reserve status and be located at BB Station 63
- A new pick up will be purchased for use by Fire Marshal Rostov.

Power Gurneys

There was discussion regarding the medic's use of power gurneys and their capabilities with NWFR's gurneys. There was further discussion regarding purchasing power gurneys in the future.

Captain Ward noted that Stryker may produce lighter power gurneys in future that can handle larger patients. There was a concern regarding the heavier equipment and overloading aid units. Chief Rostov noted that in his experience weight was not an issue, although to use the equipment as intended will take practice. Chief Van der Veen stated that the current gurneys are not crash test rated and wants to ensure both responder's and patient's safety. More discussion is expected.

Labor and Industries (L&I)

Chief Van der Veen warned the group that L&I frequently views public service Facebook pages to ensure that agencies are safety compliant. If images are viewed as unsafe, L&I may fine the agency. If you are unsure of posting an image please contact Chief Van der Veen who will review the picture.

It was also noted that in the future, those riding in apparatus (members/families) during parades, must ride in the cab and don seat belts.

Aid Car(s) Purchase

The recently purchased TriVan aid unit will be arriving soon. Chief Van der Veen is working closely with the manufacturer to ensure the district receives what was ordered.

Chief Van der Veen reviewed the past and new bidding process which will allow agencies to purchase specific items (apparatus, hose, station supplies) they want from specific manufactures through a vetted company.

It is expected the two or more aid units will be purchased in the near future. The district is in a precarious position with multiple apparatus breaking down frequently and in need of replacement.

Chief Noonchester noted that there is some money available in the capital apparatus reserve fund for apparatus purchases or to repower aid units. GEMT monies may also be utilized. The hope is to get the district on a budgeted rotation plan for apparatus purchasing in the future.

In addition, it is expected that the master plan will also have recommendations regarding apparatus surplus and replacement.

Image Trend

Captains Ahrenholz and Ward are working on an Image Trend guide book for entering reports that once complete, will be distributed to each station. The books were handed out to the captains for additional input.

Chief Van der Veen noted that he continues to acquire information about the program and hopes to attend an Image Trend conference in the future to learn additional in-depth data mining.

Fire District Policies

Chief Van der Veen and Kelly Freeman will begin the process of investigating Lexipole, a company who assists organizations with writing policy, procedures, contracts and standard operating procedures. For consistency, the district needs to update and implement numerous policies and procedures. It is expected that the district may require their services in the New Year. It was noted that the process may take up to eighteen months and is expensive.

Lexipole Mission

“Over more than two decades, Lexipol has served first responders and local government officials. What began as separate efforts—a website for police officers and a customized policy manual for law enforcement agencies—came together to form an entire risk management solution for public safety and local government. As we expanded beyond law enforcement to serve fire, EMS, corrections, and city and state government, we added services such as such as online training, grants and an electronic policy management platform.”

TRAINING

New Firefighter II Testing Dates (tentative)

January 31 - Written Test - Time TBD

February 1 - Practical Exam - Time TBD

There was discussion regarding the testing process.

EMS Online

Everyone will make sure that all EMT course work on EMS online is completed for 2017, 2018 and 2019. This will be important as Whatcom County agencies will be going to another provider at the end of this year. If these trainings are not complete, this **will** compromise future EMT recertifications. It is each member's responsibility to complete their online reports by the deadline.

BLS Evaluator Class

Please remind members about the BLS Evaluator Class being held at Station 12 on December 12, form 0830-1330. This is a requested class from many NWFR personnel. If only a few are committed, the class may be cancelled.

Hospital Decon

The EMS Committee is still working with the hospital to figure out a better decon system for all equipment.

Probationary Firefighter Module 1 Testing

Thank you for everyone's help as we try and get our two probationary firefighters through their Module 1 Testing. Unfortunately we are still trying due to our current call load and various interruptions.

Some frustration was expressed regarding the testing process:

- Conflict between Model II testing and Pump Ops.
- Too much time between testing
- Testing while on shift
- Some aspects of the test are too advanced. Firefighters do not manage a scene and that aspect should not be reflected in the assessment.
- Test seems to be set up for failure
- Test should reflect skills, knowledge and ability (fair and equitable; related to skill set)

There was discussion regarding improving the probationary testing process for new hires.

- Use overtime to cover test takers
- Needs to be consistent
- Chief Van der Veen requested that the captains work together to design a program that will be implemented by the training division.
- Davidson offered to work with the training division to work out the issues.

The focus will be to instill quality, motivation, excitement and enjoyment in ALL our members (floor driven).

Pump Operations Academy

December 16, 17, 18 & 19

Captain Jorgensen will be speaking to the captains regarding shift coverage while our two probationary firefighters attend the upcoming pump academy. Thank you to Lt. Biery and Firefighter Freeman for stepping up and offering to teach the academy.

Community Paramedic Team

The Training Division is working closely with the new Community Paramedic Team and requested that they attend having the upcoming “all officer “meeting to discuss patient options and resources. All agreed that having their attendance at officer meetings will be beneficial.

It was noted that Image Trend has the capability to conduct a repeat patient search as well as sending out an email to all who attended a call if needed.

PREVENTION

I Am Responding (IAR)

Chief Rostov continues to work on improving the IAR app.

Fire Prevention Week

Chief Rostov thanked everyone who participated in the fire prevention week(s). The district reached over one thousand children. Chief Rostov will review how things functioned and will build upcoming community risk education for the future.

Chief Rostov is open to suggestions and ideas, some of which include:

- Schools, daycares, etc., will be able to fill out a checklist on the website prior to a visit, which will streamline the process.
- Older student age groups will include CPR and first aid training
- Older adults and retirement homes will include safety, (cooking, meds,)

It was noted that keeping third through eighth grade engaged remains challenging. It was suggested to either bring in an educator to discuss things like classroom management with members or have the classroom instructor include additional information on the website form.

There was additional discussion regarding some member’s perceptions regarding community risk education (public education, fire investigator) opportunities. Aside from collateral duties, any new public education, fire investigator, or fire inspector positions will be open to all members and is expected to follow a process. Chief Rostov noted that he had sent out an email to all members alerting them to additional free training.

“Good morning everyone,

I wanted to take the moment to point out a wonderful training resource for fire investigation. CFI Trainer is a nationally recognized website that provides online tested training and certificates for over 60 classes. It is a great way to get your feet wet in fire investigation. It might be a valuable skill to have. Several of these classes are the same ones required as prerequisites for the NFA

investigator series. The best part, the classes are free. Just sign up on their website and you are in. www.cfitrainer.net “

Other discussions included:

- Possible need for a new call back list for those with specific experience/training
 - Union working on a callback procedure
- Possible new positions for the future may include a deputy fire marshal and two or three fire investigators.
- A process for existing members who complete additional training to perform specific work may be paid overtime to come in when not on shift as needed.

Chief Rostov noted that the division continues to be a work in progress. The hope is that the potential additional income, will support the program.

A Shift

Hose testing has yet to be one hundred percent completed. The hope is to tighten up the process to include procedures, guidelines, repair requests and an updated data entry process for next year. The captains agreed to work together to improve the process.

B Shift

Cpt. Davidson presented the draft standard of operation best practices for review. More discussion is expected during the all officer meeting in December. It was agreed to contact Captain Davidson regarding any additions/deletions/concerns no later than one week before the December meeting.

There was discussion regarding utilizing GEMT money to purchase a second set of gear along with bags to those who do not yet have a second set.

The district will be obtaining nitrous oxide systems for Odell Station 61 and Birch Bay Station 63.

C Shift

Chief Van der Veen agreed to follow up with BNSF regarding a train delay that obstructed the intersection at BB Lynden and Peace Portal for forty-two minutes.

D Shift

One generator was realigned and a new one was placed on L63 and E12. All first out engines now have the same generator.

Other

Santa Run – Saturday, December 7 – contact David Comp to assist

All Officer Meeting: Thursday, December 5 at Blaine Station 61