

CAPTAIN'S MEETING
Thursday, January 13, 2021
Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Fire Chief Van der Veen; Division Chief Ward; Captains Ahrenholz and Davidson.

FIRE CHIEF

Update Regional Fire Authority (RFA)

Chief Van der Veen stated that RFA discussions continue to move forward positively. There was no meeting in December. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 14, 2021. It is expected that more direction will be given regarding updating the public.

Chairman and District 4 Commissioner Mark Chamberlain has resigned, effective January 31, 2021. District 4 has begun the process of appointing a new commissioner. As long as a commissioner is appointed prior to the next RFA meeting, it will not disrupt the RFA process.

Directive 20-003 Exposure Control

Chief Van der Veen reiterated the importance of following the directive.

New Hires

Chief Van der Veen stated that the district has hired four new firefighters. Three of the four will be attending the North Bend Academy beginning January 28, 2021. One who has already completed the Academy will be on shift with Lt. Hofstad.

Chief Van der Veen noted that he appreciates the captains assisting with setting up the new hires. Chief Ward will arrange a time for the captains and Lt. Hofstad to meet with their probationary firefighters, most likely at Station 12 in the near future.

All four probies will utilize the rookie book and serve the same amount of time as all probationary firefighters.

Probationary Firefighter Assessment

Chief Van der Veen thanked the captains for their assistance with the probationary firefighter assessments. Cpt Davidson thanked Cpt Ahrenholz for his hard work with the process. Chief Van der Veen noted that the process was well organized. Both Chief Van der Veen and Chief Ward were able to observe part of the process.

Chief Van der Veen announced that he had presented out each of the probationary firefighters' completion letters.

It is expected that the firefighters will continue to progress and hone their skills.

Their rate of pay has changed effective January 1, 2021.

Office 365 Upgrade

Cpt. Ahrenholz voiced his frustration regarding the Office 365 upgrade. Better and advanced communications regarding the upgrade may have enhanced the experience. Cpt. Ahrenholz will contact Tech Help for assistance with converting Google Drive documents (forms and quizzes).

OPERATIONS

Seismic Monitors

Cpt. Davidson noted that seismic monitors will be installed at each of the stations during mid-January. All will be placed inside the building, except for Semiahmoo Station 62, which will be installed outside.

New Apparatus

The new engine and aid cars are anticipated to arrive sometime in March. Elliot is investigating the retrofit for the Stryker gurney.

TRAINING

Lexipol Policies

Chief Van der Veen noted that district policy creation and review is slowly progressing. Cpt. Ahrenholz noted that the last probationary task book was driven by the best practices document and it may be wise to also drive training by the same document. The best practices and the career development guide have yet to be released to the members.

Cpt. Davidson noted that missing pieces of the best practices and career development guide include the performance evaluation policy and evaluation form. He suggested that approval by a committee and the Chief since the document will have some budgetary considerations.

Currently Lt. Scott is fine-tuning the document through one of his National Fire Academy courses. Chief Van der Veen suggested including Lt. Hofstad in the review since he is quite knowledgeable about the County operations manual. It was agreed that the document will continue to be fluid and updated as needed. The original will be sent to Jennie for further formatting.

Cpt. Ahrenholz noted the importance of including information/training for new officers within the document.

Chief Van der Veen announced that the district is in the process of rolling out sexual harassment training. The sexual harassment online training will include programs for members (40 min) and supervisors (60 min). It should prove to be easier to maneuver than past training. It will up to each member to complete the training, not the company officer. Completed training will be documented by human resources. Cpt Davidson will investigate if a link to the training may be placed on ResQHub.

The district is also working on introducing the self-evaluation portion of the new performance evaluations, which will be due in April. It is expected that the officers will meet with their subordinates to conduct the one-on-one evaluations in the fall. Between those dates, training will be layered in for the company officers.

Training Opportunity

34 members are participating in upcoming training.

No member has shown an interest in representing the district at North Bend as a company officer. In the future, the district only plans on participating in the fall academy.

SHIFTS

AShift

Lt. Ahrenholz noted that the new top-rated LDH hose should be arriving at any time. Hose testing may begin earlier this year and possibly be color-coded by year.

BShift

Cpt Davidson relayed that retired Fire Chief and Skagit Valley instructor Pat McVicker, who resides in the East Wiser Lake area, has volunteered to take over the preparation of the district newsletter. Pat has a lot of experience producing a newsletter for the Oregon State Fire Chiefs. Admin will set up a meeting to discuss the proposition.

Tim Vander Mey contacted the district regarding available Whatcom County drills via ResQHub on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Time Slots will be open for NWFR members who want to participate on those days beginning January 19, 2021.

The Training Officer's Association is looking to purchase a portable forcible entry prop that can be utilized throughout the County. Further discussion is expected regarding setting up specific and consistent training for the prop.

Cpt Davidson announced that he is retiring. His last shift will be on June 29, 2021. Congratulations!

CShift

Nothing to report.

DShift

Since there is no D Shift Captain, there is a need for someone to supervise small tools and equipment. Cpt. Davidson agreed to take over the collateral duty until he retires in June. He and Chief Ward will meet to discuss the particulars.

Operative IQ is moving slowly due to Chief Ward's reclassification. If there is no movement over the next month someone may need to assist with the program.

Next Meeting: TBD