

CAPTAINS MEETING
Thursday, February 6, 2020
Station 63 – Birch Bay

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

FIRE CHIEF

North Bend Recruit Academy

Chief Van der Veen visited the new recruits at North Bend on Wednesday, February 5. All four members are doing well. The recruits are being housed in a hotel in Issaquah while the North Bend dormitory is being utilized as a Coronavirus quarantine location as needed.

FF Jason Donnelly is also at North Bend serving as a company officer for this academy.

Surplus Vehicles

Chief Van der Veen noted that three surplus aid units have been recently sold at auction.

The tender that was recently involved in an accident and totaled by the insurance company, is being repaired (*motor mounts*). Once the fixes are complete it is also expected to be sold at auction.

Engine / Ladder Swap

No new information was available regarding the official swap of apparatus between the district and BFD. It was noted that the ladders and hose will stay on the engine although other equipment will be removed. BFD is already utilizing the engine during trainings at the Britton Loop St 12 training grounds.

OPERATIONS

Odell St 61 Leak

Due to the recent torrential rains, a leak was discovered in the Odell St 61 apparatus bay. Northwest Professional Services surveyed the area for necessary repairs on Monday, February 3. The district has yet to be notified of their findings or cost of any repairs.

Possible Upcoming Hotel Training

Chief Davidson noted that two hotels in the Samish area will be demolished in the near future. The district has requested to be added to the rotation for training at one or more of the facilities.

Nitrous Oxide Training

Chief Davidson attended one of the recent nitrous oxide trainings. It is expected that the district will order nitrous oxide supplies in the near future. It was suggested that members actively participate in the training.

Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

There was a discussion regarding the protocol for handling AFAs, specifically when canceled by the owner/building manager (reporting party). Chief Rostov noted that there is no benefit to the district to respond if notified by Dispatch that the reporting party requests to cancel the call. In fact, it may actually relieve the districts' liability.

Chiefs Davidson and Rostov will be meeting to discuss tagging buildings when the district responds to an AFA with no findings and are unable to make contact with the owner/building manager. The tags will alert the owners/building manager that the district responded to their residence/place of business. How BFD responds to those types of calls will also be considered.

In the past, the district was instructed to approach all AFAs as a potential structure fire until a size up had been completed (Directive 15-004 Fire Alarm Response). With the yearly growth of the district, it is more often that an AFA may correlate with concurrent calls and cause a delayed response to other district areas.

Captain Ahrenholz voiced his concern regarding crew safety when members are not bunking up for AFAs. Chief Van der Veen will review and update Directive 15-004 to emphasize that fire alarms will be treated as structure fires until proven otherwise.

POW/MIA flags

In 2017, the State Legislature passed a bill that became RCW 1.20.017. This measure directs that every state agency, county, city, town and institution of higher education shall display the national league of families POW/MIA flag along with the state and national flags on certain days each year.

The purpose of this notification is to inform you of the designated days for 2020. These days are:

- Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day on March 30
- Former Prisoners of War Day on April 9
- Armed Forces Day on the third Saturday in May
- Memorial Day on the last Monday in May
- Flag Day on June 14
- Independence Day on July 4
- National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day on July 27
- National POW/MIA Recognition Day on the third Friday in September
- Veterans' Day on November 11
- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on December 7

When the designated day falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the POW/MIA flag will be displayed on the preceding Friday and may remain up over the weekend. Please note that the POW/MIA flag should be flown under the flag of the United States.

Flags have been ordered for the career stations and will be sent out in the near future. Flag poles will also need to be retrofitted for the additional flag.

Chief Van der Veen will be in charge of notifying the members when to erect the flag.

B76 Notification

It was noted that officers are expected to notify **all** NWFR chiefs (*when necessary*) not just the B76, especially if either of the Lynden Chiefs are the duty officer.

Tech Help Meeting

Chief Van der Veen will be meeting with Tech Help for assistance with the recent MDC issues (*missing and dropped calls*). Tech Help surmises that the issues are not stemming from the district's network but rather from Verizon. Tech Help intends to examine the latest Verizon updates to see if they may be the root cause of the recent issues.

AT&T may be a better option for the district in the future, although it is expected that various other cell providers will also be reviewed.

MDC Connectivity Issues

There was further discussion regarding MDC connectivity issues. It was noted that BFD utilizes Net Motion with no reported issues.

One of the past issues was that Microsoft and Versaterm do not communicate appropriately. To date, this issue has not been rectified.

Another issue that is causing multiple issues and needs to stop immediately is utilizing Spotify on MDCs and district tablets.

Auto and Mutual Aid

A recent issue brought a complaint from D7 regarding the district responding with the requested apparatus. Chief Davidson reiterated the importance of responding to mutual/auto aid with the requested apparatus.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Chief Davidson is currently investigating grant opportunities through DNR and/or lower costs for foam, hose and wildland gear.

Upcoming Vacation

Chief Davidson will be on vacation from February 22-29.

Updated Overtime Procedure

Recently Labor provided Management with an updated version of the overtime procedure. There was discussion regarding the updated version, specifically the ability to schedule overtime 48 hours in advance. The other addition included adding officers to a second-tier overtime list. The procedure will be discussed in further detail at the upcoming labor/management meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 11.

Additional discussion ensued regarding members requesting officers to enter their time off requests via CrewSense. It is expected that members learn how to request time off using CrewSense. It was noted that only the chiefs or commissioned officers can approve time off.

Debit day picking/scheduling will be discussed with Labor and ultimately be part of the normal scheduling in the future. It was noted that debit days are utilized to fulfill the 192-hour FLSA requirements.

Chief Van der Veen apologized for underestimating the amount of overtime required during the early part of 2020, due in part to the influx of members attending classes outside the area.

Comp Time

Additional lines have been added to the green timesheets to include comp time accrued and utilized.

TRAINING

Extrication Training

Captain Jorgensen noted that the recent extrication training went well. He thanked all those who assisted with the training. Captain Ward agreed, stating that it was also a good opportunity to utilize the Ferndale medics.

Multi-Company Officer (MC0) and Live Fire Training

Due to BFD utilizing the Britton Loop St 12 training grounds for the next three months, Captain Jorgensen is struggling to schedule the upcoming MCO training. This training may need to wait until the recruits return from the North Bend Academy.

Probation testing

Captain Jorgensen will be contacting the captains regarding scheduling probationary firefighter testing.

After Academy Assignments

Captain Jorgensen intends to work with the captains to determine a plan of action for the returning recruit firefighters (two weeks) prior to their probationary year shift assignments.

Rescue Pumps

Captain Jorgensen noted that it is expected that the rescue pumps will continue to be utilized in Whatcom County. He is currently working with the Bellingham and District 7 medics to gain access to leftover and replacement items.

Future IFSAC Instructor 1 Class

An IFSAC certified Instructor 2 class is expected to be offered in the future. This class is a requirement for Fire Officer 2 (IFSAC certified). Currently, there are three members interested in taking the class. Since the optimal class size is fourteen (cost efficiency), the class may also be offered to firefighters throughout the County. Information regarding the class will be sent out in the near future.

Clarification was offered regarding shift coverage and overtime for attending certain training. It was noted that if a class is required for your position, shift coverage and overtime will be offered.

If the member is aspiring to become an officer, but the class is not required for their current position, tuition only will be covered. Members will still be required to find their own shift coverage.

A new training request form (pdf fillable) has been sent out and added to the Extranet.

ResQ Hub Training Consortium

Concerns were expressed regarding some of the ResQHub Consortium training materials not pertinent to NWFR. It was suggested that training material including links, be reviewed prior to dissemination to NWFR members. Chief Van der Veen will contact the consortium members prior to the March meeting to discuss the concerns.

Captain Jorgensen recommended that members utilize the online survey to express concerns and/or point out errors.

One of the consortium goals is to work better together during auto or mutual aid.

PREVENTION

Adobe Acrobat Pro DC

Chief Rostov has been working on comparing pdf software programs. Since the software is pricey, Chief Rostov is recommending that the district purchase four Adobe Acrobat Pro DC licenses for admin and training. The program allows scanned documents to be edited, and compared to other PDF documents.

Knox Box

Chief Rostov noted that the district is currently utilizing four sets of keys to gain access to various Knox boxes. One, possibly two old City of Blaine keys are still in use, which are expected to be replaced in the near future. The district will continue to research eliminating a number of additional keys, since they are currently a huge liability for the district.

Chief Rostov attended a new electronic key demonstration which may be considered in the future. The benefit of switching includes allowing mutual and auto aid districts access. It was noted that electronic key software is costly. No decision has been made however, the district may research possible grant funding opportunities in the future.

NWFR and BFD are currently sharing multiple keys in specific apparatus to allow both access when necessary.

Inspections

The district is moving forward with a fire inspection program. Following the publication of the new codebook (July) and additional training (March), the district is expected to begin actual inspections sometime in July. Supplemental software training along with the mechanics of entering information into iPad is also expected.

It will be up to the captains to ensure all shifts (district-wide) are completing the required inspections.

I Am Responding (IAR)

Chief Rostov noted that he will be meeting with Dispatch to discuss and recommend modifications to IAR, specific to the district.

There was discussion regarding merging station apparatus together in IAR, although tenders would remain independent to allow the tender group to easily understand/differentiate between tones. This piece will allow the district to drop from forty sets of tones to eleven.

It is expected that the phones will also be set up to function more effectively in the future.

Chief Rostov noted that some pre-fire information and member contact information has been added to the program for members to utilize.

Please contact Chief Rostov with any issues or suggestions regarding uploading additional pertinent information.

Collateral Positions

Chief Rostov provided information regarding the deputy fire marshal and two fire investigator positions. He is currently working on the draft job descriptions that will be reviewed by Labor during the upcoming labor/management meeting.

Depending upon the number of applicants, a testing process will be determined in the near future.

It was also noted that free online classes are available through the National Fire Academy website. Please contact Chief Rostov with any questions regarding the classes and/or positions.

National Fire Academy (NFA)

Chief Rostov will be attending the NFA from February 22 – 29.

A Shift

Captain Ahrenholz is currently investigating pricing for LDH and attack hose. It was noted that as the district responds more into the City of Bellingham, certain types of hose are not adequate for some tasks.

Additionally, pony sections may also be replaced in the future.

B Shift

Nothing to report.

C Shift

Nothing to report.

D Shift

Captain Ward is investigating nitrous oxide system pricing and replacement locations. Replacement locations may include Station 45. Additional bottles for testing will also need to be purchased.

There was a discussion regarding utilizing a more beneficial air capture system in the apparatus bays. The system will also be key turn activated in lieu of ignition start. In addition, Chief Van der Veen has directed Elliot to set up E63 and A6302's exhaust system to be able to be accommodated at all stations.

Recently purchased equipment still needs to be loaded onto L63.

Chief Van der Veen will pick a date to review the Operative IQ Management (inventory) software recommended by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI).

There was a discussion regarding applying for an AFG for pagers/radios or Knox Box paraphernalia. The current grant deadline is March 5.

All Officer Meeting: Thursday, March 5 at Odell Station 61
Captains Meeting: Thursday, April 2 at Birch Bay Station 63