

OFFICER'S MEETING
Thursday, February 1, 2018
Station 61 – Blaine

Attendees: Chiefs Pernet, Noonchester and Hollander; Training Captain Jorgensen; Captains Davidson and Johnson; Lieutenants Ahrenholz, Biery, Esser, Hofstad, McPhail, Nielsen, Paige, Riehl, ASmith, and LSmith; Volunteer Dale Rutgers.

BRIEFING BY DISTRICT FIRE CHIEF PERNETT

Firefighter Swobody Disability Retirement

Chief Pernet announced that FF Swobody has applied for disability retirement effective February 28, 2018. He will be recognized at an upcoming NWFR Fire Commissioner Meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 15 at Odell Station 61 at 1:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend.

Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) Program

Chief Pernet provided information regarding the GEMT Program.

Chief Pernet noted that this is a voluntary Certified Public Expenditure base program that provides supplemental cost based payments to eligible providers that render GEMT services to Medicaid enrollees. For qualifying agencies, the supplemental payments cover the funding gap between provider's actual costs per GEMT transport and the allowable amount received from Medicaid along with any other sources of reimbursement. Chief Pernet noted that the district could possibly recoup up to \$1,700 per transport on Medicaid calls.

Chief Pernet reviewed the steps that will be needed in order for the district to become a GEMT member including signing an agreement, completing a feasibility study as well as an extremely detailed annual cost report spreadsheet (\$30,000 completed by PCG).

The Board gave their approval for the district to move forward with the process.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) – SCBA Regional

Chief Noonchester is working on a regional AFG grant to replace self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs). South Whatcom Fire Authority, NWFR, Bellingham Fire Department along with District 7 and District 8 are all working together on the grant. The district will need to provide a 10% match. The grant is due February 2.

It is anticipated that if approved, a regional committee will be formed to test and provide a recommendation on what unit to purchase.

Performance Evaluation Development

Chief Pernet noted that district performance evaluations have not been completed for the past two years. The decision was made not to renew the Trackstar performance evaluation program since it was expensive and not user friendly. Chief Pernet is working on updating evaluations for all admin positions by the end of February. The evaluation will begin with self-evaluations that will be used as a guide when the supervisor and employee meet. It is expected that the new performance evaluation template will be completed using the same format within the next couple of months.

NWFR Fire Commissioner Meetings

Chief Pernet announced that all future NWFR Fire Commissioner Meetings will continue to be held on the third Thursday of the month at Odell Station 62. The meetings will take place at 1:00 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m. so admin staff can attend during working hours.

Within the next couple of months, it is anticipated that all Board meetings will be streamed live and video recordings will be saved on the district website.

Fire Agency Radio System (FARS)

The FARS committee is made up of local fire district and law enforcement representatives who all pay a fee to assist with radio upkeep and maintenance. The FARS committee recently formed a subcommittee to look into possible funding sources to assist with upgrading area radio sites to simulcasting. Chief Pernet and Chief Noonchester also plan to meet with the governor's staff in Olympia to look for alternative funding sources.

Volunteer Resident Program

A volunteer resident program will be developed and housed at Semiahmoo Station 62. The Semiahmoo Resort Association who is currently leasing the office space have been given notice and will be relocating within the next six months. With more growth and higher end homes being developed in Semiahmoo Station 62's response area, a medical response from that station is vital to the area.

The program will happen in stages including:

- Finding current volunteers to staff Station 62 for an EMS response
- Chief Hollander will set up a satellite office and work from there as the fire marshal for the City of Blaine
- Develop a volunteer resident program within the next six months
- Develop policies to outline program and expectations

Chief Pernet envisions utilizing volunteers on duty at the Semiahmoo station throughout the district as needed.

Policy Development

The district is currently working on the following policies:

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – draft has been forwarded to the union for review.
- Mandatory Sick Leave – Even though the district's sick leave well exceeds the new state rules and regulations, the district still needs to ensure they remain compliant. The part-time training secretary is the only employee whose sick leave will be effected.

Washington State Rating Bureau (WSRB):

After a lot of hard work by all three chiefs, the district's ratings for all areas will remain the same for the next five years. The WSRB will be sharing their in-depth report which will allow the district to keep improving in the future.

SAFETY

Chief Noonchester provided a handout for safe lifting techniques. He emphasized that officers should call for assistance on calls when needed (“light” crew).

Chief Noonchester provided a web link to information regarding firefighter health, wellness and fitness.

https://www.usfa.fema.gov/operations/ops_wellness_fitness.html

Information included:

- Cancer
- Effects of sleep deprivation
- Respiratory diseases
- Health and wellness
- Resources

LOGISTICS

Apparatus Update

T63 (AP201) – in shop for a pump seal replacement and installation of back up camera

E6102 (AP502) – relocated to Birch Bay Station 63 for the week of January 29- February 2 while T63 is in the shop

A62 (AP104) - will be switched with A13 (AP112) with the goal of responding out of Semiahmoo Station 62

T68 (AP208) – a replacement pump has been ordered; shop will rebuild

Gurney Maintenance

Chief Hollander thanked Vol Rutgers for his assistance with the yearly gurney maintenance. Over sixty gurneys were examined. All gurneys should have a new label located on the foot of the gurney. Contact Chief Hollander if a label is not found.

SMARSH Archiving and Retention

The district has hired a company to archive and back up all cell phone, texting, website, and social media information as required by WAC 434-662-030. The information will be kept off site and will make public records requests easier to fulfil in a timely manner. The district is in the process of implementing the program. Chief Hollander requested to be notified once the officers have accepted the Smarsh application on their district phones.

Pager Issues

Chief Hollander continues to work on resolving pager issues. The district will be utilizing a portable radio in an attempt to detect which repeater calls are being dispatched. Fire Agency Radio System (FARS) is attempting to locate funding to input simulcasting in the future which will improve the system.

Mobile Data Computers (MDC) Update

Chief Hollander requested that he be notified immediately of any anomalies or issues with the new tablets. Six additional tablets will be added in the near future.

Station Alarms

Chief Hollander noted that he working with Security Solutions to disarm the remaining station burglar alarms (Haynie St 65 / Delta St 68). In addition, the key pad at Birch Bay Station 63 will be replaced and a toggle switch to unlock the door from the inside will be added.

Britton Loop Station 12 Gates

It was reported that the gates on the Britton Loop Station 12 training grounds are working properly. They automatically open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m.

Server Update

Chief Hollander and Tech Help are in the process of replacing the six year old computer server. It is hoped that the process will be seamless.

Laurel Station 69 and Delta Station 68 Generator Update

The new generator has been installed at Laurel Station 69. It is working with the exception of the automatic switch, which has yet to arrive.

Delta Station 68 will receive Laurel Station 69's manual generator once it has been inspected by the shop.

Fire Hose Inventory Update

A Shift Station 12 continue to work on inputting the hose inventory into FireHouse.

Nextdoor.com

Chief Hollander provided information regarding a new community based software program in the Semiahmoo area. The program posts and shares information pertinent to the community. The fire district will also be able to add information to the program and stay connected to the community. The district continues to learn about the program.

OPERATIONS

Fire Ground Operations V-Fire 3

Chief Noonchester requested feedback regarding the use of V-Fire 3 on the fire grounds. From the dialogue that followed, switching to V-Fire 3 is working well. Chief Noonchester will continue to request feedback as the channel is utilized on a regular basis.

Station Orders and Fire Blocks

No issues were noted regarding the recent changes to station orders and fire blocks. Chief Noonchester reiterated that crews need to push the AIQ (available in quarters) button so dispatch knows you can be toned out for the next call.

There was discussion regarding which apparatus to take during concurrent calls or when more than one station responds to a call. Since all stations are cross staffed, it is up to the officers to make the decision regarding which apparatus to take on calls. Once a crew arrives on the scene, the officer can decide what if any additional resources are needed and which ones to “code green”.

There was discussion regarding possibly updating or consolidating some zones in the future if it becomes an issue. Response time analysis on certain locations may be conducted.

Lynden Fire Department Fire Chief

Chad Baar will remain the interim Fire Chief for the next six months. He is responding within the Lynden city limits as B75. He may get involved with the B76 rotation following additional training. The goal is to continue to share resources between agencies.

Tender Response Requests

Chief Noonchester inquired as to whether career station tenders are routinely taken to fires in non-hydranted areas. Officers stated that it depends on the type of fire as well as the number and experience of the crew (probationary FF cannot drive/pump).

Vol Rutgers noted that officers can always request tender operators to assist with operating career station tenders. They should be requested as soon as possible and can always be “code greened” if it turns out they are not needed.

CrewSense and Bias Software

Chief Noonchester noted that the district is in the process of replacing the old accounting software. The new accounting software Bias, will work with Crewsense to generate timesheets, track overtime, sick and vacation time in the near future. It will be crucial for Crewsense to be accurate daily. Additional Crewsense modules will be utilized in the future.

Image Trend Software – Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) Program

The entire county will be replacing their data collection software and utilizing Image Trend for EPCR and pre fire planning. The program communicates directly with Prospect and will eliminate the need to pass along the same information to multiple groups. (billing, hospital, medics, Firehouse). Medics are already utilizing the program and it is expected that Image Trend will “go live” on March 1 and sections of the program will be phased in over time. FireHouse will be archived and available for public records requests and district use when needed.

Hose Testing 2018

A new hose tester has been purchased to assist with the 2018 hose testing. The shop is in the process of completing some minor modifications. Details about the hose testing program will be revealed in the near future.

Pre-Fire Planning 2018

The district is in the process of developing an updated pre-fire planning process that will work with Image Trend's record management system (RMS).

Class "A" Uniform Hats

The district is in the process of ordering class "A" hats for members. Once sizing is complete and hats have arrived, the district will plan an officer picture day during an upcoming officers' meeting. The district expects to also schedule a department wide picture at some point.

Incomplete FireHouse Reports

Recently it was discovered that there were eighty-three incomplete reports in Firehouse for the month of January. It is crucial that all reports are completed in a timely manner.

Captain Davidson noted that when two captains are out for any length of time it is difficult for the remaining captains to catch up on Qing reports. It was requested that some lieutenants be trained to complete reports when needed. Since FireHouse will be eliminated in the future the request may be moot.

There was discussion regarding how reports were filled out when the district is not the first responding agency. The district has to account for all calls and sometimes need to receive narratives from the responding agency to be able to complete the report.

Probationary Firefighter Drive and Pump Training

The probationary firefighters will begin engine driving and pump training in module 3 which is towards the end of their probation (May/June).

Captain and Lieutenant Promotional List

The deadline to submit a letter of interest for either the captain or lieutenant promotional is Friday, February 16.

NEW TOOLS IN TOOL BOX

Ballistic Gear

Some members took part in an active shooter training held at Britton Loop Station 12 in 2017. At this time the district is working on training and a policy regarding responding to active shooter calls, based on the County's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

The district has been researching ballistic gear similar to the gear purchased by the Bellingham Fire Department. The gear (3-4 sets) will be placed at each career station. There is always the potential that crews may need to respond to a dangerous situation and protective gear is crucial.

TRAINING

Quarterlies

Captain Jorgensen passed out information regarding missing training. He requested that those crews who are missing assignments, contact him to develop a plan for completion. Captain

Jorgensen also pointed out that trainings entered into FireHouse with incorrect codes are marked as incomplete.

Probationary Firefighters

The three new probationary firefighters have completed Module 1 of their training. It was requested that when the probationary firefighters are working with other crews due to overtime or debit days, the officer should review their probationary books to ensure they are training them appropriately.

Chief Noonchester noted that the probationary firefighters are doing well. The officers are doing a great job as leaders. It is up to each one of us to ensure that they succeed.

Acquired Structure Training

A house has been donated for upcoming district training. Training times will be assigned to shifts specifically through the training division.

Code Green Medics

Captain Jorgensen reviewed the information required by medics if an officer makes the decision to code green them prior to their arrival on scene.

- Type of call
- What was found
- What you did – Did it change anything
- Vital signs
- Plan for patient

APS/CPS Reportable Cases

Captain Jorgensen reviewed the changes regarding mandatory abuse reporting. Reports can be made online at www.hshs.wa.gov/reprot-abuse-and-neglect or by calling 1-800-END-HARM.

Burn Tower Dates

Several burn operator and refresher classes are being offered. If you meet the requirements and are interested in attending, contact the training division.

Upcoming Training

The district's insurance company is supplying instructors for upcoming training free of charge.

- True Colors – 2 hour training offered the 2nd week of February
- Driver Simulator – March – trailer molded to specific apparatus

Make up dates have yet to be scheduled.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

Lt Asmith presented a Power Point on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as it pertains to firefighters. Information included:

- Causes
- Signs and Symptoms
- Critical Incident Stress Reactions
- What we can do as officers to support our firefighters
- Occupational Stress Exposure Protocol
- Resources
 - IAFF Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health and Treatment and Recover www.iaffrecoverycenter.com
 - National Fallen Firefighters Foundation www.everyonegoeshome.com
 - Safe Call Now www.safecallnow.org
 - Whatcom County Support Officers [www. Supportofficer.org](http://www.Supportofficer.org)
 - EAP – possibly switch to Behavioral Health Access Program (BHAP) in the future

It was noted that volunteers also need the same follow up as career members.

Legislation is being considered that links PSTD as presumptive for fire firefighters.

A Shift – Lt Esser noted that with NWFR being dispatched within the Bellingham city limits more frequently, it may be beneficial for crews to familiarize themselves with the area. The two agencies will be sharing resources more often depending on who is in or out of service at the time. Any issues regarding those types of calls should be reported to Chief Noonchester.

B Shift – Cpt. Davidson requested clarification regarding how public records request information can be obtained by the public. It was noted that all public requests need to go through Kris Parks and request forms can be downloaded from the website. <https://www.nwfrs.net/resources/faqs/>

C Shift – Lt. Biery noted that they will be conducting cylinder hydro testing this month. Fit testing is ongoing and is being scheduled with the captains.

D Shift – nothing to report

ROUND THE TABLE

Tender Zone Testing

The tender group will be testing zones once a week on Mondays at 6:00 p.m.

Future Tender Planning

The district is in the process of creating a tender plan which will include:

- Defining the district's tender needs for the future
- Inventory
- Condition of each tender

- Surplus

No decisions have been made at this time.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Cpt. Davidson recognized his crew (FF Holstein and FF Jensen) for showing great compassion during a recent call. A gentleman had been incapacitated for twenty four hours on the floor of his home before the district was notified. Prior to transporting, both firefighters donned gowns, showered and cleaned the patient before wrapping him in blankets.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 1