

OFFICER'S MEETING
Thursday, February 2, 2017
Station 61 – Blaine

Attendees: Chief Pernet, Chief Hollander, Chief Noonchester, Training Captain Jorgensen, Captains Davidson, Johnson, Schmidt and Ward, Lieutenants Ahrenholz, Biery, McPhail, Nelson, Nielsen, Riehl, ASmith, Van der Veen and Zylstra.

Chief Pernet welcomed everyone and stated that all officers will be included in future monthly meetings, allowing for respectful open dialogue to comment and to share issues, successes and concerns. The meeting format may be adjusted as necessary over the next few months.

Chief Pernet reviewed how officer meetings are conducted.

Chief Pernet observed that members are utilizing the districts' core values including safety, accountability and respect.

Chief Pernet handed out Chief challenge coins to the officers.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION / POLITICAL UPDATE

Rumors

Chief Pernet invited officers to bring forth any rumors they may have heard so information could be clarified.

Lynden Fire Department is putting together a firefighter hiring list which may lead to potential hiring in the future.

Lieutenant Van der Veen inquired whether the Bellingham Fire Department (BFD) has purchased ballistic vests and helmets for possible active shooter response. Chief Pernet noted that the BFD has been very involved in active shooter response training and has purchased additional equipment. Chief Pernet will follow up with BFD and consider if the district will participate in some additional training.

Assistant Chief Position

Chief Pernet stated that newly promoted Assistant Chief Noonchester has been getting organized and concentrating on the operations of the district.

Washington Survey and Rating (WSRB)

Chief Pernet announced that the district will be receiving a fire protection audit from the WSRB on Monday, February 6, 2017. The auditor will review several areas including staffing, training, maintenance and hose records prior to giving the district a protection class rating which will be utilized by insurance companies for insurance rates. The auditor will also be touring the district and visiting various fire stations. Currently the City of Blaine has a class 4 rating and the remainder of the district has a class 5 rating.

Washington State Audit

The district is currently in the final stages of a 2014-2015 audit. The exit interview will be held on Thursday, February 2. It is expected that the both districts will receive a clean audit.

Medical Insurance Update

After investigating other medical health insurance companies, the district has made the decision to stay with Coastal Administrative Services (CAS) for 2017. Group Health came in close to CAS but the benefits were not identical. Although the members will see an increase in dependent care costs in 2017, the district is committed to reducing costs in the future and plan to go out to bid early for 2018.

District 4 / Whatcom County Inter-Local Update

The Whatcom County EMS levy went into effect January 1, 2017. Since Whatcom County is a senior taxing district it takes precedence over any junior taxing district who also have EMS levies. An inter-local agreement has been drafted that will reimburse any lost revenue to District #4 along with other districts who also have an EMS levy. It is anticipated that the agreement will be signed sometime in February.

Training Captain

Three members completed the hiring process for the vacant training captain position. Lieutenant Kris Jorgensen will be filling the position effective Tuesday, February 2.

Lieutenant Position

With a vacant lieutenant position the district utilized the current lieutenant hiring list and promoted firefighter Stefen Paige effective Tuesday, February 7. It is unclear at this time where Paige will be located.

Both Captain Jorgensen and Lieutenant Paige will be recognized during the upcoming NWFR Fire Commissioner Meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 16. Congratulations!

Firefighter Open Positions

Currently there are three vacant firefighter positions. The district may hire one or more firefighters off the current hiring list in 2017. The district has reserved spots have in the upcoming Washington State Academy scheduled to begin in May.

Gordon Graham Conference

All three chiefs recently attended an officer development conference held at the Shoreline Conference Center on January 26th 2017. Guest speaker Gordon Graham spoke on officer development as part of ongoing succession development. Gordon Graham is a 33-year veteran of California Law Enforcement. His education as a Risk Manager and experience as a practicing Attorney, coupled with his extensive background in law enforcement, have allowed him to rapidly become recognized as a leading professional speaker in both private and public sector organizations with multiple areas of expertise. Members are encouraged to visit his website.

Fire Commission

Chief Pernet announced that a resolution was passed during the special NWFR Fire Commissioner Meeting held on Thursday, January 26 that censured a fire commissioner for his actions at an earlier meeting. Chief Pernet explained that due to NWFR's fire commissioner guidelines, a commissioner may be censored (public admonishment or a written reprimand) and barred from representing the district at any outside meetings. In addition, it allows the district to be transparent to the public. Chief Pernet noted that the commission will work out their issues in time and this in no way undermines the mission of the district. Please direct any inquiries to Chief Pernet.

SAFETY

The group discussed their experiences with ground stability. Chief Noonchester advised members to be cautious especially during the rainy season when the ground is soft.

Chief Noonchester noted that the firefighter line of duty deaths due to preventable driving accidents is rising nationwide. Captain Noonchester encouraged all members to be safe.

Chief Noonchester recommended that all members take advantage of their time on duty to exercise together as a crew.

Captain Johnson noted that after discovering a leak in the gate valve of tender 63 it was determined that following any testing on this particular tender, the tank must be drained.

Lieutenant Ahrenhloz suggested having a "close call" forum to share experiences and information (good and bad) throughout the district.

Chief Pernet noted that the district has been deficient about cleaning turn out gear on a consistent basis. Not all career stations have functioning extractors which compounds the concern. The district has applied and been unsuccessful for past grants to purchase extractors and accompanying equipment. Since there remains a need, Chief Pernet plans to have discussions with the Board of Fire Commissioners regarding using reserve funds to purchase additional extractors.

FACILITIES / MAINTANENCE / LOGISTICS

Versaterm Update

The Versaterm system has been installed at the dispatch center. A "Train the Trainer" workshop was held January 17, 2017 to train the trainers. Chiefs Hollander and Noonchester have completed their training and plan to begin shift training in February and March. The software will have basic functions similar to the old program. The system has a "go live" date of early April.

In addition, monitors will be gradually replaced in all first out apparatus.

MDT Hardware

Due to its age, the MDT hardware is having issues on line. Tech Help is currently testing various antenna systems and computer configurations. Your patience is appreciated during the testing phase. Please contact Chief Hollander with specific issues along with a time and location of the problem.

New Pagers

The new pagers are being tested and programmed at Birch Bay Station 63. The pagers are more rugged, bigger in size but do not come equipped with cases. The captain's pages are black. A handout will be circulated explaining the various functions.

Birch Bay Hydrant Update

The new waterline on Birch Bay Lynden and Blaine Road is ready for use. Not all hydrant fittings have been connected at this time.

Upcoming Developments

Semiahmoo Shores will be erecting 180 homes, a mini storage and additional retail space in spring of 2014.

Horizon Projects located near between Birch Bay Village and Semiahmoo Parkway is in the process of obtaining permitting for over 400 homes.

Knox Key Update

Bigger key boxes are being installed in all apparatus that currently hold five Knox box and two Supra keys. A master key inventory along with key codes is also being completed. The City of Lynden keys may also be added to Laurel Station 69 and command rigs in the future. More discussion is expected.

Gurney Maintenance

Annual gurney maintenance has been completed thanks to volunteers Paul VanDyken and Sabrina Ooms. All gurneys should be equipped with updated tags.

Stair Chairs

At this time yearly maintenance is not required on stair chairs. A visual inspection will suffice. Chief Hollander requested to be contacted with any stair chair issues.

The stair chair on aid 61 has been located and returned to the district. Chief Pernet reiterated to all members to not be afraid to report when an incident occurs or when a piece of equipment is damaged or goes missing.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Birch Bay Update

CERT educates individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using training learned in the classroom and during

exercises, CERT volunteers can assist others in their community following a disaster when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

CERT volunteers are also encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness projects. There is a large interest in providing CERT training to community members in our district. Birch Bay, Semiahmoo and the City of Blaine training will be the focus of training in 2017. Various training classes have been set up at Birch Bay Station 63 and exercises will be scheduled for later in the year. Chief Pernet encouraged members to get involved and possibly assist with various training.

The chiefs recently attended a meeting in Semiahmoo where they explained what could be expected from the district following a disaster.

Britton Loop Station 12 Parking Lights

The Britton Loop Station 12 lights around the outside of the station have been repaired. Please contact Chief Hollander with any complaints regarding the lights from the surrounding neighborhood.

Request for Service Forms

Apparently the request for service forms (with the exception of apparatus requests) located on the Extranet have not been working for the past couple of weeks. The issue has been fixed however, any requests that were sent in the past couple of weeks may need to be re-sent.

Birch Bay Water Usage Forms

It is imperative that members remember to send water usage reports any time the district utilizes a water from a water district. Water districts are required to account for their water usage. Water use forms will be made available at all stations. Members can also include water usage at structure fires in their Firehouse narratives.

Birch Bay Station 63 Hydrant

It was reported that the hydrant at Birch Bay Station 63 is not working properly.

Birch Bay Square High Pressure Water

The high pressure water at Birch Bay Square is currently not functioning with only the low water flow working properly at this time. Any time a system that requires an inspection (hood, elevator, sprinkler, fire alarm) is not functioning correctly the fire marshal needs to be notified since the system will need to be recertified.

OPERATIONS

FDIC Video “Leading with Attitude”

Chief Noonchester showed a clip from the 2015 FDIC Video – “Leading with Attitude” by Division Chief Eddie Buchanan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I22ON2E8IYA&list=PLCY6JErUFhio16DbYCfzjhxvvHMpYYOt8>

Chief Buchanan stated, "a fire service takes care of one another in spite of our internal differences. A fire service stands shoulder to shoulder personally, tactically and even politically. This is our fire service and it is up to us to make sure the next generations understand the honor and responsibility of our job." Chief Noonchester stated that the officers have the opportunity to influence their crews either positively or negatively. Captain Noonchester encouraged officers to become the leaders their crew is looking for to move them forward.

Pre-Fire Planning (forms)

Chief Noonchester noted that the Versaterm program has a hyperlink to pre fire planning records the district plans to assemble in the near future. These pre fire plans which will include imperative information on specific addresses will be available for use during structure fires and other emergencies. This should prove to be a good community outreach program.

Preview of Best Practices

Chief Noonchester announced that he is working on developing standard operating procedures (SOP) for the district. The guidelines are expected to streamline operations on the fire grounds and allow officers to determine how a task can be accomplished based on various circumstances. The SOP will take into account the Whatcom County Operations manual as well as the district's mutual aid partners. Once the document is presented, feedback will be requested and further discussion is expected.

Resource Management

There was discussion regarding how resources were currently being managed. No concerns were expressed. It is important for officers to be aware of what is going on throughout the district. Chief Pernet noted that B76 is always available for officers to contact for direction if needed. Captain Schmidt noted that Station 42 is now staffed 24/7 with at least one FTE and additional volunteers and could be a resource to consider if the need arises.

Burn Directive 17-002

Burn Directive 17-002 was recently circulated throughout the district. The directive will be utilized as a resource to help mitigate burn complaints within the community.

Station Failure

There was discussion regarding how to cover areas that are exhausted. After a lengthy discussion and realizing that each officer visualizes various options dependent on the situation, further discussion is expected. Currently the district has no procedure in place.

TRAINING

Quarterly and Rescue Pump Training

At this time officers have been urged to get crews caught up on quarterly and rescue pump training.

A-Shift – Captain Johnson noted that as per NFPA 1962, the district will be implementing nozzle and appliance testing. Lieutenant Nielsen will be in charge of the testing and utilizing flow testing equipment from the shop.

Captain Johnson noted that D Shift will be on shift during “Teen Screen” scheduled for Wednesday, February 15.

B-Shift – Lieutenant Nelson suggested adding a multiple language insert to the HIPPA form to allow non English speaking patients a better understanding of a their rights and billing information.

Captain Davidson urged officers to have all year end apparatus check sheets completed and returned to him as soon as possible.

C-Shift – Captain Schmidt noted that only one timesheet correction was detected by the finance department last month. Great job!

There was discussion regarding broken seals causing the rescue pump batteries to expire. Further discussion revealed how labor intensive the device is to use. Currently there are no protocols in place that address how a limited crew will utilized the rescue pump.

Lieutenant Biery announced that fit and flow testing dates will be sent out once confirmed. Lieutenant Biery reminded crews to bring rip packs off of the ladder and engines for testing. A refresher on air pack checks will also be included in the testing. Next year cylinders will be also be tested.

It is expected that the district will focus on applying for a grant to replace SCBAs in the future.

D-Shift – Captain Ward presented the new leather helmet fronts to the group. A helmet front procedure is being reviewed by Chief Hollander.

Captain Ward noted that the mixed fuel procedure has been working well at Birch Bay Station 63. Five gallon mixed fuel containers will be delivered to each station along with two gallon containers for apparatus. Extra containers are being considered for certain stations during the summer months.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 2