

OFFICER'S MEETING
Thursday, July 6, 2017
Station 61 – Blaine

Attendees: Chief Noonchester, Training Captain Jorgensen, Captain Ward, Lieutenants Ahrenholz, Biery, Esser, Hofstad, Nelsen, LSmith and Zylstra.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Fourth of July IEP

Chief Noonchester provided information regarding his experience as B76 during the Fourth of July events. There were approximately twenty calls throughout the district with no major incidents. It was suggested that in the future Point Roberts Fire District be notified that the district will not assist with cross border transports during major events. Chief Noonchester thanked the crews for their diligence during the holiday.

Vacations

Chiefs Pernett and Hollander are currently on vacation. Chief Hollander will return next week (Monday, July 10).

SAFETY

Hearing Conservation

There was discussion regarding the draft hearing conservation policy. Lieutenant Adam Smith has been researching WAC and OSHA requirements while he has been assigned to light duty. Ear plugs and signage have been ordered for each station.

Chief Noonchester urged company officers to ensure that firefighters wear the proper hearing protection as needed. In addition, good modeling to the newer firefighters now may enable them to retire without the common hearing loss.

There was further discussion regarding the continual use of headsets in engines. It was noted that the use of headsets make it easier to communicate with firefighters as well as dispatch.

It was requested that larger hearing muffs be ordered to accommodate those members who use hearing aids. Chief Noonchester agreed to complete some additional research.

The NWFR Fire Commissioners are currently reviewing the hearing conservation policy which may be approved during the upcoming meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 20, 2017.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) Update

Firefighter Gina Ball who is also on light duty, is currently working on updating the SDS. The updated data base may be available on the district extranet in the future. Chief Hollander will need to be contacted regarding any unused contaminates located at the stations. A standard inventory list regarding what is stocked at each station will be assembled by D shift.

Dry Season / Wildland Gear

With the beginning of the dry season, Chief Noonchester reminded the officers to ensure that their wildland gear is close at hand. There was discussion surrounding replacing wildland gear, especially since some of it is nearing the end of their life cycle. Contact Chief Noonchester regarding any out of date gear. Lieutenant Mike Nelson will work with firefighter Kenneth Cunningham on investigating costs and budget allotment for future purchases.

There was discussion regarding utilizing the Department of Resources (DNR) discounts for foam and wildland gear in the future. Significant discounts are offered in January and February on their website.

Brush Rig 68 (AP802)

Brush 68 has been relocated to Britton Loop Station 12.

Burn Ban

A partial burn ban will go into effect on Friday, July 07, 2017.

LOGISTICS

Crewsense

Crewsense is up and running. An instructional email with a video tutorial attachment was distributed. Everyone should be familiar with the system. An additional email will be distributed to the volunteers. Officers may will need to assist volunteers on how to sign up for shifts.

To eliminate redundancies and streamline the process, the daily operation plan document has been eliminated. All pertinent information will be added to the activity / notes section of Crewsense.

There was some discussion around keeping FireHouse updated in a timely manner. It was noted that when a captain is was not on duty, some of the designated lieutenants no longer have access to make the necessary changes. Chief Noonchester will investigate why some of the designated lieutenants seem to have lost access to make those changes. For completing reports, officers will still need to reconcile FireHouse on a daily basis, earlier rather than later in the day.

The goal of the district is to switch from FireHouse to a web based fire/EMS system that will interact with Crewsense, Versaterm as well as payroll. Tablets may also be used in the field in the future for patient reporting and rig checks. Chief Noonchester will keep everyone updated as more information becomes available.

All FireHouse reports will be archived for record management purposes. The county is also looking at systems that have the capability to communicate with various systems in real time.

The district continues to be in the process of replacing MDCs as necessary.

Dispatch / Radio Issues

There was discussion regarding the reoccurring communication issues with dispatch and district radios. It was reported that dispatch did find a faulty card which has since been replaced and improved some issues. Birch Bay Station 63 has reported some improvements. Chief Hollander continues to work on other communication issues with various towers.

Long term, the County is working toward all simulcasting all frequencies in the future. At this time there is no funding for the expensive venture.

OPERATIONS

Communication

Chief Noonchester thanked company officers for their continual relay of communication regarding district operations. He noted that officers can communicate with him if needed after hours via text.

Ladder 61 (AP401)

Ladder 61 has been repaired and is now back in service. Captain Jorgensen continues to work on a ladder qualification program for all staff. Everyone needs to have adequate and ongoing training on how to use both L61 and L63 adequately and safely, regardless of where they are stationed.

At this time volunteer firefighters Sabrina Ooms and Lane Renskers are permitted to drive L61 for training purposes only.

Compressed Air Foam System (CAFS)

There was discussion regarding the use of CAFS during fires. Chief Noonchester noted that CAFS should be utilized as another tool when appropriate and at the discretion of the company officer. It was noted that there may be a CAFS training deficiency with some members and additional training can be requested through the training division. Since the district did not acquire additional foam through the DNR this year, foam will need to be used prudently. Chief Noonchester will send out an email concerning his expectations about CAFS usage.

Summer Months

Chief Noonchester noted that with the summer months upon us, many members will be taking vacations causing additional overtime.

New Hires

The district is in the process of bringing on three new career firefighters. Two have accepted offers while the other has received a conditional offer and continues through the hiring process. All three recruits will be attending the North Bend Academy beginning in August until the November. An email introducing the three new recruits will be sent out sometime next week.

NEW TOOLS IN TOOL BOX

Fuel Cans – After successful implementation of the mixed fuel procedure at Birch Bay Station 63, other career stations will soon be following suit. Captain Ward noted that each station has

been assigned two, five gallon containers of mixed fuel along with separate containers of additives. It is imperative that the mixed fuel is drained in each container prior to mixing new fuel so the ratio remains consistent. The containers should also be rotated consistently. The fuel mixture will work in all four cycle motors. A policy is expected in the near future.

TRAINING

Officer Development

Lieutenant Jon Ahrenhoz made a presentation about the importance of mentoring in the fire service.

Why do we need to mentor?

- Invest in our future firefighters
- Develop firefighters
- Mentoring programs work at all levels
- Employees are more motivated; feel valued and involved

Who should do it?

- Someone who has a positive attitude, experience, technical knowledge, can teach and lead by example, willing to advocate for mentee, ability to turn events into experiences, committed to standard and vision of the department, provides real time feedback.
- Everyone functions as a mentor in some capacity.
- Lessons can be learned from varied styles, personalities and mistakes.

How do we do it?

- Mentoring is not coaching
- Talk with the new firefighter / veteran firefighter about their role in the process.
- There must be collaboration and mutually defined goals.
- Mentors share stories, don't judge, inspire, see the best, expect the best and encourage the best.
- Ideally not a supervisor but rather a veteran firefighter who can share experiences and teach situational awareness.
- The job of old firefighters is to help young firefighters become old firefighters.

Second Quarter

The second quarter requirements are due. Chief Noonchester will be emailing out delinquencies.

Quarterly Make-Ups

Officers need to check to see who needs to make up requirements and schedule accordingly.

Third Quarter Schedule

Captain Jorgensen handed out the third quarter requirements and schedule. Third quarter training consists of live fire and several online trainings including sexual harassment and diversity. Once the online training is complete members must print out the certificate and forward it to the training division to receive credit.

Captain Jorgensen requested that football injury training be completed soon, so loaned equipment can be returned to the various schools.

BLS Evaluator Refresher Training

Captain Jorgensen reviewed how the district was able to secure the BLS evaluator refresher training for the district. The refresher training will take place during the week of July 17th. There are currently thirty-six BLS evaluators who have the opportunity to take part in the training.

EMT Renewals

Captain Jorgensen reminded the group that it is each member's responsibility to complete their EMT renewal applications online, which makes the review and approval process easier and involves no unnecessary additional paperwork. An email will be sent out to schedule those interested in participating.

Volunteer Recruitment Update

Ten potential volunteers have passed the written and PAT exam and will be moving forward in the process. Oral interviews have been scheduled for July 11th and 12th. It is expected that four to five recruits will be attending the upcoming Whatcom County Recruit Academy. Captain Jorgensen will keep everyone up to date on their progress.

OTHER

Responding to Home / Business Alarms

There was an in-depth discussion regarding entering homes and/or businesses to verify that there is no fire or other emergency due to activated alarms. Chief Noonchester noted that it is imperative that those responding to a call use your discretion and gain entry if necessary. Crews will secure the residence as best they can and leave pertinent district information following any entry. Chief Noonchester stated that the district would rather account for entry damage than an unidentified fire.

There was further discussion regarding repeated alarm activations and visits to a specific business during a shift. Chief Noonchester noted that during those types of scenarios, especially when those businesses have a 24 hour fire watch, responses will be left to the discretion of the responding officer.

Chief Noonchester urged crews to not get complacent.

Lieutenant Esser suggested that an article discussing those types of entry be included in an upcoming issue of the Responder.

SHIFTS

A Shift – Nothing to report.

B Shift – Nothing to report.

C Shift – Nothing to report.

D Shift – Lieutenant Joel Nielsen discussed this year's hose testing process which will include pumps, appliances and all nozzles. Ladder testing will be conducted simultaneously. The streamlined plan test hose and ladders on one engine or two tenders per day. Testing will be completed at either Birch Bay Station 63 or Britton Loop Station 12.

Lieutenant Kevin Biery suggested that a fax machine be located on the firefighter side of Britton Loop Station 12 so the firefighters do not have to fax reports from the administration building.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chief Noonchester commended the responding crews who assisted during a patient extraction from a semi-truck near the truck crossing border in Blaine. Chief Noonchester praised the crews for their diligence and securing the best outcome. He reported that the patient was released from the hospital with minor cuts and bruises later that evening.

Lieutenant Leslee Smith provided information regarding some dorm room deficiencies at Birch Bay Station 63. Concerns brought forward included its proximity to the app bay and short bunks causing some members to sleep on the dorm floor or in recliners. There was discussion regarding utilizing current office space as crew bedrooms. Chief Noonchester agreed to investigate the concern.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 3