

OFFICER'S MEETING
Tuesday, July 17, 2018
Station 61 – Blaine

Attendees: Chiefs Pernet and Noonchester; Training Captain Jorgensen; Captains Ahrenholz, Davidson, Schmidt and Ward; Lieutenants Biery, Esser, Hofstad, McPhail, Nelson, Nielsen, ASmith and LSmith; Acting Lieutenant Tom Kettman; Volunteer Dale Rutgers.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT

Bonneville Power Administration

Autumn Engh of Bonneville Power provided a presentation regarding high voltage dangers. The PowerPoint is available for viewing on the Extranet under Training.

BRIEFING BY DISTRICT FIRE CHIEF PERNETT

Commission Political Update

Chief Pernet noted that the commissioners will be scheduling study sessions to discuss the 2019 budget as well as the strategic plan.

NWFR Career Firefighter Hiring List

Chief Pernet noted that following the initial hiring process the district interviewed ten individuals to establish a firefighter hiring list. Initially three were offered positions however, with the upcoming resignation of one firefighter, another individual was hired. Unconditional offers will be going out to Seth Richardson, Delanie Warner, Aaron Ebner and Cody Bowen. The new hires will begin by completing administrative paperwork on Tuesday, July 24. They will attend the North Bend Academy beginning Thursday, August 9 and it is anticipated that they will start shift work in early November. Three candidates remain on the hiring list.

Lateral Hiring

Captain Ahrenholz announced that up to seven members of NWFR may be applying for positions outside the district. He expressed his concern regarding morale and asked for suggestions for ways to create an environment that will make members want to come to work.

There was discussion regarding why members may be looking to leave the district. Chief Pernet noted that members may be choosing to leave for a variety of reasons, some of which are beyond the control of the district. Some ideas brought forth included unhappiness, ambition, greener pastures and contract issues.

Members leaving the district are provided an exit interview to discuss why they have chosen to leave the district. Chief Pernet noted that those who have participated in an exit interview have not expressed negativity towards the district.

Chief Pernet noted that the district continues to be a work in progress and is experiencing growing pains. Morale is a big concern for both management and line staff. Chief Pernet stated that the strategic plan is a good indication of what the district hopes to accomplish in the next five to ten years. Items identified in the plan such as training, facility placement and apparatus

replacement are moving forward while keeping the district's budget in mind. Chief Pernet encouraged everyone to pull together and to bring forward any specific issues, concerns or ideas.

There was discussion regarding revisiting the current staffing model including where and when brown downs are allocated. Currently brown downs occur at either Britton Loop Station 12 or Odell Station 61. Since it has more resources readily available, it was suggested that the district look at browning down Laurel Station 69 instead of Station 61. Captain Schmidt also noted that the City of Blaine where Odell Station 61 is located has a school, large nursing facility, border crossing and is where many tax dollars for the district are generated.

In the past the district has adjusted the staffing model and called in additional overtime during peak months to accommodate the increased number of calls. Lt Hofstad noted that last summer (2017) there were many times when one or both stations were browned down. Chief Pernet noted that June (2018) had very little brown downs compared with July, due to the higher number of vacations and sick time.

A short term solution is that newly hired firefighters do not take vacations during their probationary year. Other considerations include budgeting concerns, members getting burned out on overtime and undesirable short time overtime. Another alleviation may be the start of the resident program at Semiahmoo Station 62 expected to begin in the near future. Dale Rutgers suggested staffing a BLS unit at Delta Station 68 during peak hours.

Chief Pernet thanked everyone for their honesty and stated that he is open to looking at other solutions for better effectiveness while keeping budgetary constraints in mind. Further discussions with captains and lieutenants is expected in the near future.

SAFETY

Power Lines

Chief Noonchester discussed a recent incident that included a down energized power lines which put the responding crew at risk. The downed lines rested across water which is potentially very dangerous. The situation was identified early and no one was injured.

Rehabilitation NFPA 1584

Chief Noonchester recommended that all crews review a You Tube video which provides a rehab presentation designed to provide an overview of firefighter rehabilitation to fire and EMS personnel. The contents are based on the NFPA 1584 standards with the goal of reducing line-of-duty injuries and death. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bmnxOI-TWA>

Chief Noonchester reminded the group that the district recently approved policies and directives regarding gross decontamination and the procedures seem to be going well.

There was discussion regarding allowing first responding crews to either leave early or not left to complete the cleanup. Having rehab stay with those crews during lengthier calls was also discussed. Another suggestion was to have other crews or the tender group assist with rolling hose off of the first in engine. Those members that come in on callbacks may also be able to

provide additional assistance at the incident. Chief Pernet noted that his philosophy for crews on more in-depth structure fires is “first in first leave”. It was further noted that all responding crews need to go through rehab prior to rehab leaving the scene.

The group reviewed the current callback procedure.

Lt McPhail noted that he has witnessed favorable and safe rehab medical monitoring both on scene and during air management training.

LOGISTICS

Ambulance Committee

An ambulance committee has been formed to provide recommendations for purchasing a new ambulance.

No one on the committee was present at the time for discussion.

Keystone Valve

Lt Biery requested information regarding the keystone valve on Tender 12. The part was approved.

Training Engine Storage

Lt Biery noted that the Pierce training engine now housed at Britton Loop Station 12 is currently being stored outside. He asked for solutions to keep the engine out of the weather. One solution the district has been exploring is finding another home for the Fire Safety House which is currently utilizing a bay at Station 12.

OPERATIONS

Questionnaire

Chief Noonchester led a group exercise, encouraging individuals to give their viewpoints on the following questions:

What drives your interest in the fire service?

What is the #1 target hazard in your area? Why?

What has been your most challenging incident in your career thus far? Why?

What is the toughest thing about being a company officer?

Apparatus Accountability

Knowing where each apparatus is positioned on a daily basis is important information for chiefs and officers. Chief Noonchester has recently developed and put in place a way for the operations chief and captains to track all apparatus at any given time. It was noted that communication between staff regarding moving apparatus, switching rigs mid shift is important information that needs to be shared. It was suggested that CrewSense be utilized to document apparatus placement.

TRAINING

Air Management Prop and Deck

Captain Jorgensen thanked Cpt Schmidt and his crew for repairing the air management props and deck.

Sublottic Airway

Copies of certifications need to be forwarded to training.

EMT Recertification

Copies of certifications need to be forwarded to training.

Evaluator Recertification

Copies of certifications need to be forwarded to training. Please contact Captain Jorgensen regarding any issues.

Second Quarter Training

Second quarter training documentation needs to be completed and forwarded to training.

Whatcom County Recruit Academy

Captain Jorgensen noted that the district is sponsoring four recruits in the academy scheduled to begin in September. FF Haley has agreed to act as company officer for the group. If any members are interested in teaching a class in the academy please contact Captain Jorgensen.

NWFR Resident Program

Two residents have been approved to reside at Semiahmoo Station 62. They will begin their residency most likely sometime in August.

North Bend Academy

The newly hired recruits will be attending the academy in August. Additional information on the recruits' activities before they leave will be forthcoming.

Emergency Room Changes

Captain Jorgensen reviewed the emergency room changes as requested by the emergency room physicians. An email was recently sent out outlining some of the changes. The hope is to improve relationships between the district and emergency room staff.

Birch Bay Village Response Team

A Birch Bay Village Response Team is working with Whatcom County and Pulsepoint to respond to CPR emergencies in the area. In the future, crews can expect to find members of the team performing CPR or utilizing a defibrillator at incidents within Birch Bay Village. There remain some concerns and issues that have yet to be addressed. More information is expected to be obtained in the near future.

Training Requests

Captain Jorgensen reviewed how the training requests are approved. It was noted that at this time there is no clear policy or procedure for how budgeted funds are allocated for individual training requests. Funds are allocated based on the yearly budget and number of people in the district. In addition, the benefit of attending the class including the pertinence to the position and how it could benefit the district is also considered. The training division (Cpt Jorgensen and Chief Noonchester) will discuss any training requests that are turned down with individual members.

Chief Pernet noted that a future policy will provide better clarity and possibly include:

- Education reimbursement plan
- Funds for books, manuals and classes
- Education individual allotment
- How to disperse unused funds allocated for the year

ROUND THE TABLE

Ragnar Race

It was noted that the district was not notified about a Ragnar Relay being held on Friday, July 13 within the district. The influx of inhabitants due to the race could have had an effect on district responses.

Frequent Call Request

It was noted that one individual who resides on Adelia St in Blaine contacts 911 for assistance sometimes multiple times per day. The district has already made two referrals to the Northwest Regional Council. The Chiefs and the Cpt. Jorgensen will continue to work on obtaining the appropriate assistance for this individual.

Brush Trucks

Cpt Ward requested to relocate the hard suction to the lower department and the hand tools to the tray above. Cpt Ward will send out pictures of Brush 63 with the changes so all brush trucks can be organized in the same manner.

H St Radio Tower Issues

Chief Noonchester noted that there have been some radio frequency issues due to some complications with the H St tower. It was noted that a recent transformer issue may be the culprit and the issue is being rectified.

Bonneville Presentation Review

Lt LSmith noted that the Bonneville presentation by Autumn Engh was nicely done. She was easy to understand and all members would benefit from her presentation.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 6