

Whatcom County Fire District 4

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners

March 20, 2014

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on the above date at station 61 on 9408 Odell Rd. in Blaine, WA. Those who attended were as follows: Commissioners Mary Beth Neal and Harry Andrews; Fire Chief Ron Anderson, Board Secretary Kris Parks, Division Chief Henry Hollander and Captain Joe Noonchester. Commissioner Ness did not attend the meeting.

Commissioner Andrews called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD ACTION

Meeting Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the February 12, 2014 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Andrews moved to approve the meeting minutes. Commissioner Neal seconded; motion passed.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Finance

Chief Anderson provided information on the financial statements and the vouchers.

Approval of the expense voucher: Commissioner Neal moved to approve the expense voucher.

Commissioner Andrews seconded; motion passed.

Approval of the payroll voucher: Commissioner Neal moved to approve the payroll voucher.

Commissioner Andrews seconded; motion passed.

Chief's Report

Chief Anderson provided information on the chief's report which included the response activity from February, the dollar loss activity and response times.

FEMA Grants

No new information to report on our SAFER or Fire Act Grant; we are still in a holding pattern as FEMA reviews the applications and announces the awardees.

Sale of the Lynden and Custer Fire Stations

We now are under contract with a Buyer who wants to purchase the Lynden Fire Station on 19th Street. The purchase price of \$740,000 has been agreed to by both parties with an anticipated closing date of May 30th. We have notified the Whatcom County Sheriff's Department that they have 90 days to find

another location for their patrol division. We have set a target date of May 1st for us to have all of our equipment and furnishing out of the building. We are also planning to allow the quilting group that has used our Lynden Station for years to now use our Northwood Station as their new home. Our realtor Jeff Johnson continues to actively market the Custer Station however no serious buyer has been identified at this point in time. The NWFR Board reduced the sales price of the Custer Station by \$10,000 to \$349,000.

County Adoption of the Fire Code

The Whatcom County Council decided at its March 11th meeting to send the fire code adoption issue back to the public works committee for further modifications. Several of the County Council members indicated that they felt the water supply requirements were too restrictive and would discourage Agriculture related businesses from expanding or building new facilities in the County. Apparently they have been lobbied rather heavily by a Mr. Honcoup who is a developer specializing in Ag properties. As you will recall from last month's meeting the flow requirements being considered by the Council had already been reduced substantially from the published code. It was difficult to understand why the Council feels that the published code is too restrictive other than political pressure to reduce the requirements by special interests. The Council has instructed their staff to bring them comparisons of what other rural counties in the State of Washington are doing to accommodate the Ag industry for them to consider.

Operations Division Report

Chief Anderson provided information on the operations division report which included the department staffing, time-off statistics for February and information on:

Division Chief of Operations Search

We ended up with a total of 25 applications for the Division Chief of Operations position. The Committee consisting of representatives of the Commissioners, Management, Union and Volunteers are now in the process of reviewing the qualifications and resumes of those individuals to determine who will be invited for the first round of "Skype" interviews. It is anticipated that when the first round of interviews are completed that we will invite 3-4 finalist in to participate in an assessment lab process involving several exercises to test their skills and abilities for the position.

2014 Electronic Time Cards

We are continuing to work through the bugs of switching over to electronic time cards. A lot of work has been accomplished with the development and training of all members. The hope is that the new time card system will streamline the payroll process making it less time consuming and more reliable for our employees. A lot of credit goes to Lt. Doug Clark, FF John Swobody, FF Tom Kettman, Shift Capts, Kris Parks, DC Hollander and others for making this project happen.

Personnel Injuries

We continue to have several full-time personnel off shift with personal injuries sustained while off duty. Two of them are currently working light duty for us and one is using personal sick leave. Another fire fighter who had been off with an injury recently was cleared for work and has returned to duty, however having three personnel unable to work their assigned shift is having an impact on our overtime budget. Fortunately we are still browning down stations as this is our slowest time of the year impacting us less. We hope to have all three back on shift by next month.

Significant Incidents

- 2/03/2014 5100 Block of Seaview Drive, Responded to a single story residential structure with basement. Upon arrival discovered a fire on the front deck with fire extension into the basement subflooring. Units responding 3-Engines, 1-Water Tender, 1-Command Officers, 11-personnel total, Loss of \$30,000 to property and contents, Value of \$240,000.
- 2/08/2014 7700 Block of Enterprise Road, Responded to a report of a structure fire upon arrival found an R.V. Motorhome fully involved with exposures on all four sides. Damage was contained to the R.V. and was estimated at \$2,500. Units responding 2-Engines, 1-Tender, 1-Aid Unit, 2-Command Officers, 15-personnel responded to this incident.
- 2/22/2014 Boblett Street, Responded to a report of a tractor trailer unit on fire. Upon arrival found the refrigeration unit on the front of a 40' ft. semi-trailer fully involved. Trailer was loaded with food products. Damage to the trailer was estimated at \$12,000, 3-Engines, 1-Command Officer, 6-personnel responded to this incident.

Training Division Report

Captain Noonchester presented the training division report.

The report included the staff productivity, the crew training for February and the following information:

Several training classes were delivered by our members with great success.

Four of our firefighters and officers spent weeks developing a department standard diversity/harassment class and managed to teach most of the crews the new policy and expectations of the topic. Their instruction was very professional and well received.

Also in February, Kris Jorgensen, Gina Ball and Tom Kettman put together and delivered an updated CPR class for our firefighters/EMTs. This is the curriculum they learned from a day long training event that was held in Ferndale. Thank you to those 3.

On February 10th, a joint firefighter association meeting was held at station 12 to assist in bringing together those associations that were assembled years ago by FD#4 and several North Whatcom groups. New officers were appointed and quarterly meetings are now on the schedule for 2014.

On May 5th, NWFR and LFD will launch its first ever joint volunteer firefighter academy. This teamwork between these agencies will provide much needed well trained firefighters to the City of Lynden and the north east region of our fire district. There is a great need for volunteers for both agencies and we look forward to teaming up with Lynden in this effort.

Technical Services & Maintenance Division Report

Division Chief Hollander presented the technical services & maintenance division report.

Fire Marshall

We continue to work with the Semiahmoo Marina with the goal of bringing them into compliance with the IFC (International Fire Code). The Marina and the District have agreed to a two phase approach. They will immediately install a FDC (Fire Department Connection) and three standpipe outlets located evenly on the main dock. This work should be completed in the next four weeks. They will also post, at their front gate, a copy of the Fire Districts Violation notification to inform all boat owners of the situation. On or before May 1, 2014 they will submit to both the City of Blaine and the Fire District detailed engineered plans for approval for a complete standpipe system. Installation of the standpipe system is to commence no later than September 2014. They also will continue to work on correcting all other violations during this time period.

We continue to work with Whatcom County on updating our capital facilities plan (CFP) in a format that would meet both the needs of the fire district and the needs of the county for the purpose of Growth Management Act (GMA) planning. The end goal will be to docket a comprehensive plan amendment to incorporate several updated Fire District capital facility plans, including NWFR, into the County Comp Plan. The plan is to develop a draft District CFP by summer of 2014.

Apparatus

The 1987 shop truck had a transmission failure. It was replaced along with a major tune-up and exhaust manifold and tail pipe replacement.

Aid-12 sustained some minor wind damage on one of the front doors and is in the process of being repaired.

The two City of Lynden fire trucks have both come thru our shop for major maintenance.

Our tender support crews aided the City of Lynden on Saturday March 1 with a training house burn.

Facilities

Station 63 (Birch Bay): The stair treads in the training tower have been replaced and the project is now complete. This is a capital project carry-over from the 2013 budget.

Station 68 (Enterprise): We are starting to experience multiple false building security alarms and will be working with our alarm vendor to try and locate and repair the issue. Also this winter we have developed a water leak issue in the training room. We will try to locate and repair the problem.

Station 69 (Laurel): With the moving of full time crews to the Laurel station the facilities fire code classification has changed from a "B" occupancy to a "R-1" occupancy. This change requires an upgrade to the Fire and Smoke alarm system. This work has been completed. We have completed the required kitchen electric power solenoid to turn off the stove and electrical outlets automatically when the station gets toned out for an incident along with an overhead radio system.

Station 71 (Lynden): The work continues in preparing this facility to be sold. One of the last big challenges is relocating our turnout inventory to a different station.

Station 12 (Britton Loop): The main heater for the sleeping areas in the fire station building has developed leaks in the heat exchanger. We are currently awaiting the part and will complete the repair once it arrives. During routine maintenance on the burn tower it was discovered that the original bearing lubrication lines were run in plastic. With the heat generated by the tower all these lines have melted. We have now replaced all these lines with new copper replacements that should not melt. Also two of the bearings on the top exhaust blower needed replacement, the work has been completed.

IT / Communication's

There was no progress to report on the Harvey Rd. repeater site for the month of February.

OLD BUSINESS

Transport Fees

Chief Anderson informed that the TAB (Technical Advisory Board) is still working on their final recommendation for the fee structure in Whatcom County. Several studies have been done and our fees are low compared to other departments in Washington. They are going to recommend increasing the BLS/ALS fees and the mileage rate. The BLS rate of currently \$450 would increase to \$590 and the current mileage of \$12 would increase to \$15. The TAB will forward this recommendation to the EOB (Elected Officials Board) and they will issue a recommendation. The transport fees have to be adopted by each agency by resolution.

NEW BUSINESS

Interlocal Agreement

The Chief stated that some things in the agreement have probably changed since it was originally signed over 2.5 years ago. Chief Anderson would like to see that D#21 and D#4 get together and work thru the Interlocal Agreement line by line. In order to do that it would be cumbersome to have both full Boards work on that. He recommended that D#21 and D#4 each appoint a representative and the Chief would work with those representatives thru the Interlocal Agreement, discuss each of those articles and then come back to each of the full Boards with the recommended changes they might have. The two Board Chairs will act as the representatives for their districts.

Next Board Meeting: April 16th at 12:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Harry Andrews, Chair

Kris Parks, Board Secretary

Motions and Directives:

Meeting Minutes

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