

Whatcom County Fire District 4

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners

September 17, 2013

A combined meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Whatcom County Fire District # 4 and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue was held on the above date at station 12 on 4142 Britton Loop, Bellingham, WA 98226. Those who attended were Whatcom County Fire District # 4 Chairwoman Mary Beth Neal, Vice-Chairman Harry Andrews, District # 4 Board Secretary Kris Parks, Fire Chief Ron Anderson, Division Chief Henry Hollander, Division Chief John Swobody, Captain Joe Noonchester, North Whatcom Fire and Rescue Chairman Bill Salter, Vice-Chairman Dean Whitney, Commissioners Rich Bosman and Larry McPhail, Recording Secretary Jennie Sand and Business Manager Benita Williams. North Whatcom Fire and Rescue Commissioner Rodger Hawley attended the meeting at 12:22 p.m. Whatcom County Fire District # 4 Commissioner Steve Ness was excused due to his work schedule.

Commissioner Neal called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD ACTION

Meeting Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the August 14, 2013 Regular Meeting.

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

MONTHLY REPORT

Finance

Chief Anderson provided information on the financial statements and vouchers.

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

Commissioner Neal seconded; motion passed.

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

Commissioner Andrews seconded; motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Refinance of ballon payment for 2006 Darley Lease-Purchase Agreement

Chief Anderson explained the process of refinancing the ballon payment to the Board. Commissioner Andrews made the motion to sign the documents for the master lease purchase-agreement between Whatcom County Fire District # 4 and Oshkosh Capital. Commissioner Neal seconded; motion passed.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Chief's Report

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

Sharing of Volunteers with the City of Lynden

Now that the automatic first response and mutual aid agreement between the City of Lynden and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue is in effect we have been hearing reports that the City of Lynden may not be happy with the amount of calls they are responding to in our area. There has been no formal request to meet by the City; however we expect there may be in the not too distant future. In the mean time we have been working with Lynden Fire Dept. in an effort to share volunteers who may be interested in working for both departments. On Sept. 9th we held a second meeting with perspective volunteers to discuss our vision of having them respond from Station 72 (Northwood) to support both Lynden and North Whatcom as needed. They all seemed very excited about the possibility and were anxious to get started. We are currently in the process of signing them up with both departments and have begun joint training on Emergency Vehicle Driving and Tender Operations.

SAFER Grant

We have completed the application and submittal of our 2013 SAFER grant. This request is to continue funding of four (4) personnel through fiscal years 2014 and 2015. This year the grants are specifically intended for the purpose of retaining firefighters and priority will be given to the rehiring of laid-off fire fighters and fire fighters that are about to be laid-off. Since our District is facing the strong possibility of lay-offs at the end of this fiscal year we are hopeful that our request be funded allowing us to keep our personnel. Additionally, we have submitted a request to FEMA and been approved to apply for the balance of funds available in our 2010 SAFER grant which total \$58,399 which will be reflected as additional revenue for this fiscal year 2013.

EMS Levy Committee

The Election Committee continues their work on preparing for the upcoming District 4 EMS Levy Election. At this point we are working on developing a press release, printing of post card mailers, organizing door knocking and phone calling groups to help inform the public of the upcoming election and what the issues are. We scheduled two Town Hall Meetings at station 12 in October and a "Coffee with the Chief" on November 2nd. The next meeting of the Committee will be Oct 7th at 5:30 p.m. Station 12.

Operations Division Report

Division Chief Swobody provided information on the operations division report which included the department staffing, time-off statistics and the fire incidents for August.

Hose Testing

This year hose testing will be accomplished by our firefighters. By testing our own hose we are saving approximately \$20,000 that we paid National Hose Testing in the past. Testing started in August, during the testing process we found some concerns that needed to be addressed before continuing the process.

The crews that were testing the hose did not have enough information and training to meet our department standards for hose testing. Training will start September 17th and I am hoping that all department hose will be tested by the middle of October.

Automatic Aid Agreement with City of Lynden

All of the fire response lists (FRL) except for zone 68 are set up. It appears that tones are extremely long when dispatching both City of Lynden Fire and NWFR. We will be looking into trying to find a way to shorten the tone package. City of Lynden and NWFR crews are working well together in the field.

Demolition Derby

North Whatcom Fire and Rescue was able to provide fifteen firefighter/EMT's that assisted Northwest Washington Fair Demolition Derby shows. Our firefighters put out four small engine compartment fires and assisted with one minor EMS call.

Light Duty Assignment

Lt. Joel Nielsen has been cleared by our department doctor to return to work with no restrictions. Lt. Nielsen was a big assist to admin staff during his light duty assignment.

911 Peace Arch Ceremony

Division Chief Swobody stated that the ceremony was a great event and had lots of participants.

Training Division Report

Captain Noonchester presented the training division report.

The report included the staff productivity and the crew training. Captain Noonchester informed that Aid 63 was a testing station for a newly designed full body inflatable mattress splint made by Conterra. The crews at 63 had the splint for 3 weeks and were able to apply it in the field and evaluate its usability. They used it to immobilize patients who suffered from a skeletal injury then delivering these patients to the ER. Overall, the results were favorable.

The City of Blaine has given us permission to utilize the old Blaine Airport runway for fire service training. This will give us a great north end facility for the crews at 63 and 61. Since it is within their response area, they can practice their skills there and not leave their first due areas.

Technical Services & Maintenance Division Report by Chief Hollander

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

Fire Marshal

The Blaine School District project for the remodel of the Life Skills Classrooms in both the High and Middle School along with the modernization of the science classrooms is complete.

The Semiahmoo Marina has provided the district with an updated proposal for a stand pipe system. The district is reviewing the current proposal.

The Rite-Aid project is also proceeding on schedule.

Michael Bleakney has submitted his mitigation fee for his next mini storage structure, approx. 3200 sq. ft.

The Birch Bay Alder Woods LLC has met with the fire district and has signed a mitigation agreement.

Northshore Corp has requested a mitigation agreement be prepared for their project.

City of Blaine Planning Commission is in the process of requesting text amendments that could possibly lead to the raising of the SEPA threshold for the city. The Fire District will submit a comment letter describing the possible impacts on our funding for any future growth.

Engine Company Inspections have been completed in August.

Apparatus

Pump testing of all fire apparatus is complete with one unit failing (AP202), the 1971 Ford Pierce. There are currently no longer any parts available for the gasoline engine. We are looking at the option of a replacement engine.

AP402-Ladder 63 developed moisture steaming from the exhaust. The head gasket and head were replaced. This particular 60 series diesel engine in the ladder truck has a history of cracking to the point that the factory has re-engineered the head. The truck now has the newly designed head. All repairs are complete and the truck is back in service.

AP401-Ladder 61 developed an air leak in the master brake control valve. This part is now obsolete. Our shop was able to locate a replacement different valve and make all the adjustments to get it installed. This apparatus is now in service.

Facilities

The Burn Tower has developed an issue with the liquid propane modulating valve. The valve is currently obsolete; we are looking at options for long term repair. We have located some replacement parts and we are working with a vendor to upgrade the existing valve.

Station 61 (Blaine) and Station 12 (Britton Loop) have had their parking lots resealed. Station 63 (Birch Bay) and Station 69 (Laurel) are scheduled to have their lots completed this week.

We continue to work on moving inventory out of station 71 (Lynden). Medical supplies have been moved to station 63 and cleaning supplies have been moved to station 69.

IT / Communication's

There continues to be no progress to report on the Harvey Rd. repeater site. They are now looking into a hard wired telephone connection to help improve the connection. The City of Blaine has expressed an interest in sharing the cost of installing copper wire to the repeater structure.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Next Board Meeting: October 16, 2013 at 12:00 p.m.

The District # 4 meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Mary Beth Neal, Commissioner

Kris Parks, Board Secretary

Motions and Directives:

Meeting Minutes

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