

Whatcom County Fire District 4

Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners

March 11, 2015

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on the above date at the district office. Those who attended were as follows: Commissioners Mary Beth Neal and Harry Andrews; Fire Chief Ron Anderson, Board Secretary Kris Parks, Division Chief Bill Pernet, Division Chief Henry Hollander and Captain Joe Noonchester. Commissioner Ness was excused.

Commissioner Andrews called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BOARD ACTION

Meeting Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the February 11, 2015 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 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.

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.

Personnel

Juan Ocegueda, with District 4 and NWFR since 6/27/08, reason for leaving, busy schedule, going back to school.

Approval of overlooked 2015 Pension Dues: Malcolm Simshauser, Clayton Levien, Ryan Oppewall, Ben Ocheltree and Brandon Lee.

FEMA Grant

Installation of the vehicle exhaust removal system has been completed at Station 61 (Blaine) which was part of our 2013 FEMA Grant Award. We will be asking FEMA to allow us the use of any remaining grant funds to install a vehicle exhaust system at Station 68.

Labor Negotiations

Labor negotiations are continuing with hopes of finding common ground on the issues at hand.

Prospect- FRL (Fire Response Lists)

We are waiting for Prospect to finalize updating the FRL's with a couple of more departments in the county before implementation. These lists are used to determine what personnel and resources will be dispatched on initial alarms to both fire and medical calls within our district. This year we are also attempting to standardize our FRL's across the county if possible. As you can imagine there are many challenges to this as we have a very diverse makeup of fire departments within the county including full-time, combination and all volunteer departments as well as urban, suburban and rural characteristics that need to be addressed.

Email backup and archiving

The equipment and software that will be used to back up our emails is now installed at Tech Help's facility. As you are aware State Law now requires that we backup and save all department emails for a minimum of 2-years. Emails are considered public records and must be backed up in a secured location. We are sharing the costs of the email backups and server with South Whatcom Fire Authority to reduce expenses. In order to share expenses we must all be using the same google email account so the next phase of the project will involve migrating all of our current google gmail accounts over to the non-profit "Whatcom ES" account. This will be a little more labor intensive and will take several weeks to complete. We hope to have this project completed by the end of March.

Operations Division Report

Division Chief Pernet provided information on the operations division report which included the department time-off statistics, February staffing, overtime hours and volunteer shift hours for February and information on:

February Crew Activities

Strut training completed
Volunteer Training
Girl Scout Troop Tour
EMS Training
Annual Mask fit testing
Engine Company evolutions
Apparatus maintenance
Personal protective gear inspections

February Meetings Attended

Joint Academy Planning
B76 Incident Simulations
Community meals
Border Fire Chiefs
Contract Negotiations
Labor / Management
Officer meeting
Career Fairs

Operations Projects

MCS development
Air monitor equipment
Operational Directives
Light Duty Personnel
Personnel management
L&I claims management
Trauma Care Grant
Narcan Proposal

Calls of Interest

On January 30 A63 and M45 responded to a Blaine area address for a reported infant with an unknown medical problem not breathing and without a pulse. NWFR personnel provided excellent competent care to both the patient and the family. Our personnel rode in to the hospital and assisted the paramedic crew with patient care, but to spite everyone's best efforts the infant never regained consciousness.

Because of the responders CPR efforts the baby had a heartbeat for 3 days before passing away. More importantly the organs were able to be used to save the life of a young lady in California. The patients Grandmother came by the station to thank the crew for their efforts and left them a pendant that represents organ donation.

Training Division Report

Captain Noonchester presented the training division report.

The report included the staff productivity, the career and volunteer firefighter training for February and the following information:

North Whatcom's firefighters have completed 1051 hours of training for the month of February. These crews have been involved in all types of training including suppression, EMS and task oriented events like CPR and strut/stabilization work. Great training this month and the concentrated effort put forth by our firefighters.

NWFR has finalized the in-service evolutions which prepared our firefighters to use a new stabilization system known as "STRUTS". All firefighters had the opportunity to apply these tools on a rolled over vehicle demonstrating the way in which we secure the vehicle for patient removal and transport.

February was our recruitment period for the upcoming joint academy being put on by NWFR and the City of Lynden. We held 3 separate career fairs/open houses, and advertised all over the county. The attendees will now be invited to an orientation meeting, written exam and other entry level requirements needed prior to the start of class. We have hopes that our recruitment was successful with several eager and energetic people that have the desire to become volunteer firefighters in our district.

Outstanding effort in February with the most training hours:

- ❖ FF Stefen Paige
- ❖ FF Haley Urling-Ehinger

Technical Services & Maintenance Division Report

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

Semiahmoo Marina has had all standpipes piping pressure tested to 230 psi. They are still tracking a few small leaks that are preventing that system from holding 200 psi for a period of two hours. They have also received all new portable fire extinguishers and are in the process of getting them installed.

BNSF is requesting a permanent closure of Valley View Rd. at the railroad tracks between Creasey and Arnie Rd. Whatcom County is going to petition the (Federal) Utilities and Transportation Committee for a hearing. BNSF originally asked the County to waive the hearing. The Fire District will need to submit a letter by March 13th stating our opposition to this request.

The County Planning Department has requested to continue our work on the draft CFP (Capital Facility Plan). We have had one meeting so far and our focus this month will be on our buildings. We will be preparing a mitigation agreement for the Crabtree subdivision at 8804 Berthusen Rd. The project is planned to separate a four acre property into seven residential lots.

Inspections completed by occupancy report:

There were a total of 4 inspections completed for the Month of February.

Apparatus

All warranty work has been completed on A-63 (AP115).

A-12 (AP107) is having the officer's door repaired at the body shop. The door was sprung during a wind event and now binds on the door jam. The repair will include a heavy duty canvas strap to try and prevent the same thing from happening again.

The 1987 one ton Chevy shop truck had worn front springs and mounts and was in need of new brakes. All repairs have been completed.

Almost all the lawn equipment including mowers, weed trimmers, blowers etc. have had their annual service completed.

All apparatus that have traffic emitters (Opticom) have been reprogrammed by the City of Bellingham to work on the city traffic lights.

Facilities

Station 12 (Britton Loop): Currently we are exploring options with the burn tower control system. The hope is to find an operating system that will be more dependable and will require a minimum amount of maintenance.

Station 62 (Semiahmoo): The Semiahmoo Resort Association (SRA) at their expense has installed computer wiring throughout the Semiahmoo Station.

Station 64 (Custer): We are still collecting bids for a new roof on the Custer Station.

Station 72 (Northwood): A broken front window was recently discovered on the front of the station. The window has been replaced.

Station 68 (Delta): We have submitted an amendment to our AFG grant to install an exhaust system at the Delta Station. At this time we are waiting for a response from FEMA.

D.C. Hollander will inspect all the windows at station 12.

IT

After several months of testing we have found the Verizon “hotspot” to perform better than our current Sprint wireless cards for our wireless connections on our department MDC’s. The goal will be to schedule two replacements per month and complete the transfer in nine months. There is no cost to the district for the equipment and the monthly connection fee will be the same.

NEW BUSINESS

City of Bellingham (Proposed Annexation)

The City of Bellingham has notified the District that they are moving forward with their plans to annex 163.5 acres of property that is currently in Fire District 4’s area. The property is generally located between E. Bakerview Rd. Dewey Rd. and Mt. Baker Highway encompassing the Trickle Creek Subdivision and a few properties located along Mt. Baker Highway. The Assessed Value of the properties in this area is approximately \$21,000,000. This annexation appears to be the same property that the City was planning to annex back in 2009 but for whatever reason didn’t annex it at that time. We do have an Inter-local Agreement in place for that annexation. The Chief asked Chief Bill Newbold from Bellingham Fire to look into the timeframe that the City is looking at for this annexation as well as when we can anticipate when Bellingham may want to annex the Tweed Twenty subdivision and the area surrounding Station 12 (Britton Loop) so we can adequately plan for the future fire and EMS services of the District.

Next Board Meeting: April 14th at 12:00 p.m.

The Chair called for an executive session at 1:35 p.m. for 15 minutes.

Executive Session:

per RCW 42.30.140 “*Collective bargaining sessions with employee organizations, including contract negotiations, grievance meetings, and discussions relating to the interpretation or application of a labor agreement; or... that a portion of a meeting during which the governing body is planning or adopting the strategy or position to be taken by the governing body during the course of any collective bargaining, professional negotiations, or grievance or mediation proceedings, or reviewing the proposal made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress.*”

The meeting resumed at 1:52 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Harry Andrews, Chair

Kris Parks, Board Secretary

Motions and Directives:

Meeting Minutes

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