

# Whatcom County Fire District 4

## Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners

### September 15, 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 William Pernet, Board Secretary Kris Parks, Division Chief Henry Hollander and Captain Joe Noonchester. Commissioner Ness attended the meeting at 12:55 p.m.

Commissioner Andrews called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **BOARD ACTION**

##### Meeting Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the August 12, 2015 Meeting.

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

##### Interlocal Agreement for Payroll Services

Approval of the Interlocal Agreement.

Commissioner Andrews moved to approve the interlocal agreement for payroll services. Commissioner Neal seconded; motion passed.

#### **MONTHLY REPORTS**

##### Finance

Chief Pernet provided information on the financial statements and on the payroll and expense vouchers.

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

Commissioner Andrews seconded; motion passed.

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

Commissioner Neal seconded; motion passed.

## **Chief's Report**

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

## **Lieutenant Promotional Process**

The department has six qualified candidates that will participate in the upcoming Lieutenant promotional process in November. A promotional list will be developed from the results of the testing process.

## **Newhalem Fire Deployment**

NWFR deployed a fire engine to Newhalem as part of a five engine strike team to perform structure protection for the town. All personnel and apparatus completed the assignment safely.

## **Medical Insurance**

The Chief had an initial visit with Erven Bong & Associates LLC to discuss Health Insurance options for next year. He hopes to meet with CAS as well and will reconvene the Health Insurance Committee to consider insurance for next year.

## **Operations Division Report**

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

### **Crew Activities**

Business Inspections  
Volunteer Training  
Wild Land Training  
Quarterly Training  
Demolition Derby  
Business Inspections

### **Meetings Attended**

Fire Chief Interview  
Border Chiefs  
Board Meetings  
County Ops  
Labor Negotiations  
Officer Meeting

### **Operations Projects**

Rehab Unit  
Safety Committee  
Burn Tower Conversion  
Life Safety Rope  
Annual Appraisals

## **Calls of Interest**

8/06/15 – Vail Drive – House fire/Garage fire, E69, B76, E75, E43, arrived on scene to find a residence with a working garage fire. Crews extinguished the blaze and there was no extension into the residence. The fire is under investigation.

8/15/15 – Birch Bay Lynden Rd – House fire, E63, E61, E6102, B76, E69, E46, and E43 responded to a reported mobile home fire. Crews arrived on scene to find the park model home 50% involved. E63 performed an offensive attack and had the fire under control in 20 minutes. No one was injured and the cause is under investigation.

8/29/15 - Storm/Wind Event – A strong storm/wind event took place on Saturday August 29th causing wide spread power outages with electrical lines down across the county. Vehicles and homes were also

damaged by falling trees. Crews responded to over 72 calls including three house fires over the weekend.

- 8/29/15 - Birch Terrace Drive – House fire
- 8/29/15 - Ramona Lane – House fire, small outbuilding with 500 gallon propane venting
- 8/29/15 - North Shore – House fire

8/31/15 – Yellow Brick Rd – House fire, TR63, B76, C7103, E12, E69, E6, responded to a reported house fire. TR63 first on scene reported a manufactured home with a working fire on the deck side of the building. Crews performed search and rescue to ensure everyone was out of the house. The fire was extinguished on the deck side of the house with the main damage to the deck and outside wall. The home had minor smoke damage throughout.

September 2 – CO Poisoning

September 5 – Fire Fatality

### **Training Division Report**

Captain Noonchester presented the training division report.

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

North Whatcom’s firefighters have completed 454 hours of training for the month of August. The call volume has increased drastically this summer which reduces the amount of training time. The department has set records for overall responses for service.

In August, the firefighters performed and completed their routine drills which included topics like SCBA quarterlies, wet hose evolutions and EMS ongoing education. Some outside training has taken place as well. One of the members attended an advanced pump class. These types of offerings provide a great opportunity to enhance the skill set of our drivers and makes us more proficient.

The training division spent a fair amount of time in August preparing our 5 newest recruits for the WCRA Fall 2015 class. They have been issued gear, trained on the use of an SCBA and begun their basic HAZMAT awareness training. So far the academy is going well with 35 students.

Each month the training division of North Whatcom attends a training officer’s meeting. Captain Noonchester meets with the other county agencies to discuss training as a whole. As a group of leaders they share resources quite often in an attempt to reduce costs and streamline operations. One good example is the shared use of the training grounds and props at station 12.

Outstanding effort in August goes to:

- FF Jeffrey Schwab
- Tender support member Dale Rutgers

## **Technical Services & Maintenance Division Report**

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

All plans have been made for the 911 Memorial Ride and Ceremony for this year.

<http://911memorialride.org/>

Pre-construction has begun for the Blaine School District renovations.

Construction has begun on the addition to the Blaine public works building.

The Loomis Trail crossing work is complete and the train crossing is now open. The Dakota Creek project is on schedule and anticipated to re-open on schedule.

BNSF is still moving forward in an effort to close the road at Valley View and Arnie permanently.

There were three TRC meetings in the month of August.

There were a total of 8 inspections completed for the Month of August.

### Apparatus

Annual Pump testing is underway for all fire trucks and tenders as required by NFPA.

The department continues to bring on new members for our new Rehab 70 unit. It already has been deployed to two working fires.

The new staff vehicle has been delivered and received by the district. It will get all of its accessories over the next few weeks before it will go into service.

### Facilities

The new exhaust system for station 68 was installed over the weekend of August 1 and 2. The installers also serviced our two other systems. With the grant funds we were also able to purchase new end fittings for the exhaust system at station 69. With this modification all apparatus now are interchangeable between staffed stations with the exception of station 12. We have received the funds from FEMA for this project.

Station 64 (Custer): Chief Hollander will be looking for direction regarding the roof repairs for the Custer Station.

The water heater at Station 63 (Birch Bay) was replaced due to leaking issues.

Station 63 (Birch Bay): The stove top has been replaced after cracking, this was a new stove recently purchased.

Station 61 (Blaine): The dishwasher has been replaced after no longer being feasible to repair.

## IT

The Computer that manages the door locks and security gates for Station 12 (Britton Loop) has failed and the software is no longer supported. We are working on solutions and a long term plan. More information as it develops.

The department is working with the City of Lynden Fire Department on adding additional in-vehicle repeaters to more of our first out apparatus and adjusting the frequency's to match. The additional equipment is being purchased by the COL and funded by the new freezer plant being constructed in their area.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Discussion on the Burn Tower

Captain Noonchester informed the Board that two companies will provide the department with formal bids with a deadline at the end of September. He stated that he will present the bids at the October meeting.

### Update on the Trickle Creek Annexation

Chief Pernet has a meeting with Bill Hewett from the Bellingham Fire Department on 9/16/2015 to discuss some issues regarding the annexation.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Letter from American Tower Corporation

Chief Pernet presented a letter from the American Tower Corporation to the Board.

They are interested in purchasing or extending our current ground lease where the cell tower is located at station 13.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

Strategic Planning Meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> at station 12 at 8:00 a.m.

Zumba with Firemen on September 26<sup>th</sup> at station 12 at 10 a.m.  
Community Pumpkin Party on October 26<sup>th</sup> at station 12 from 6-8 p.m.

The Chair called for an executive session at 1:25 p.m. for 10 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 1:35 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

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Harry Andrews, Chair

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Kris Parks, Board Secretary

## **Motions and Directives:**

### Meeting Minutes

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### Interlocal Agreement for Payroll Services

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### Vouchers

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Commissioner Andrews seconded; motion passed.

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

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