



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Administration Building, 770 NE Midway Blvd. #1 Oak Harbor, WA

Phone: 360-675-1131 Email: Admin@nwfr.org

Special Meeting Minutes

September 24th, 2024

09:00 a.m.

Location: 770 NE Midway Blvd

Oak Harbor, WA

Approved October 8th, 2024

Call to Order: Chairman Marvin Koorn called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Also in attendance was Commissioner Gerald Smith, Commissioner Robert Miller, Chief Chris Swiger, Chief Ray Merrill, Chief Dan Horton, Chief Jobie Gause and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

Policy 121 – Performance Reviews

Commissioner Miller stated under *Purpose* the wording should state *in categories*, not *on categories*. The board agreed with the change.

Commissioner Miller also stated he would like to see Form 121_2 since it is referenced.

Secretary Spydell stated it was approved last year and forgot to submit it with the packet. She stated she could email it to the board after the meeting.

Secretary Spydell stated the form number needed to be corrected in the policy as well.

Chairman Koorn referred to 3.2 stating an evaluation every month for the first six months seems excessive.

Chief Swiger stated it is what other departments do.

Chairman Koorn stated he is fine with it being in the policy as long as it is being done.

Chief Horton stated he has been completing the reviews as stated in the policy.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 121 as amended; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 152 – Code of Conduct

Commissioner Miller referred to 1.5 asking who the *designated representative* is.

Chief Swiger stated it is whoever he or the board designates when necessary.

Commissioner Miller stated he would like to nail it down, unless it is better this way.

Chairman Koorn stated he is fine either way and citizen complaints usually go through the front desk then up the chain of command.

Chief Horton stated it is a common statement in a lot of district policies.

The board was fine with leaving it as-is.

Commissioner Miller stated the word *applicable* in 2.3 should be removed.

Chairman Koorn and Commissioner Smith agreed.

Commissioner Miller referred to 4.2 stating every firefighter he knows carries a pocketknife as a tool.

Commissioner Smith stated this has been discussed before and suggested limiting the size of the knife blade.

The board agreed to limit the size of the blade to no more than four (4) inches.

Chairman Koorn stated throughout the policy the human resources position appears to have increased authority above the office manager and fire chief even. He stated the position's authority should be limited, and policy should ensure things go to the fire chief, battalion chief, or office manager instead.

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Miller agreed with that concern.



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Chairman Koorn stated *human resources* should be removed from 6.1.

Chief Swiger suggested adding *designee* instead.

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Miller agreed.

Commissioner Miller stated there is an extra *or* in section 7.1 that should be removed.

Chairman Koorn stated 8.2 should state *the fire chief recommends final action* instead of *takes final action*.

Chairman Koorn stated *human resources* should be removed from 11.1 and changed to *the chain of command*.

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve Policy 152 as amended; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 160 – Progressive Disciplinary Action

Chairman Koorn stated the policy references the administrative chief throughout.

Secretary Spydell stated the position is on the organizational chart.

Chairman Koorn asked if it was board approved.

Chief Swiger confirmed.

Chairman Koorn referenced 3.1 regarding a supervisor's authority to suspend.

Commissioner Smith agreed that it contradicts other policies.

Chairman Koorn stated suspension should fall on the fire chief.

Chief Merrill asked if *suspension* was the correct word to use. He suggested a supervisor has the authority to relieve someone of duty for the day or remainder of their shift.

The board agreed with the change.

Chairman Koorn stated *human resources* should be removed from 4.2.

a. Progressive Disciplinary Action Form 160_1

Commissioner Miller stated there should be a space on the bottom of the page for employee comments and concerns.

Chairman Koorn stated he is good with that, but the signatures should be on the bottom of the page.

Secretary Spydell stated she would make the changes and correct the numbering on the form as well.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 160 and Form 160_1 as amended; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 161 – Pets in the Workplace

Chairman Koorn stated *human resources* should be removed from 1.1 in both places. He stated the decision is on the fire chief.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 161 as amended; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 162 – Conflict Resolution

Chairman Koorn stated the last statement in 3.1 should be removed.

The board agreed.



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Chairman Koorn asked why complaints are going from the administrative chief to human resources. Chief Merrill stated complaints usually have upward mobility skipping any persons involved. Chairman Koorn stated *Section 4* should be rewritten with a better flow of the process. He stated the fire chief and deputy chief should be involved or notified of any complaints. Chairman Koorn stated *5.1* and *5.2* do not fit within the organizational makeup of the district. The board agreed the policy should be rewritten to align more with the district prior to approval.

At 9:43 Chairman Koorn called the meeting into executive session until 10:15 a.m.

1. Executive Session:

a. RCW 42.30.110(g)

To evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee.

b. RCW 42.30.140(4)(b)

That 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 proposals made in the negotiations or proceedings while in progress.

**At 9:15 a.m. the meeting was called out of executive session and into regular session.
No decisions were made.**

Part-time Firefighter Position

Chairman Koorn stated Chief Swiger gave the board a rundown of the applicants and their qualifications.

Chief Swiger made a recommendation to hire two applicants as per diem, and a third applicant as per diem contingent on training to be hired as a part-time firefighter in the future.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the recommendations for hire; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn Meeting: Commissioner Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Special Meeting of the Board adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natasha Spydell".

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager