



## NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Station 25, 2720 Heller Rd., Oak Harbor, WA  
Phone: 360-675-1131 Email: [Admin@nwfr.org](mailto:Admin@nwfr.org)

### Meeting Minutes

October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023

6:30 p.m.

*Approved November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

**Call to Order:** Chairman Marvin Koorn called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Also in attendance: Commissioner TJ Lamont, Commissioner Gerald Smith, Interim Fire Chief Chris Swiger, Volunteer Battalion Chief Steve Lacy and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

#### **Additions to the Agenda**

None

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **Correspondence**

Secretary Spydell gave the board an IRS notice for a late filing penalty for 2021 W-2s.

**Consent Agenda:** Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Special Meeting, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, expenditure approval for the month of September 2023 and Treasurer's Report for August 2023.

*Payroll Batch #0901SP for Vouchers 1422-1428 dated 9/01/2023 in the amount of \$745.55.  
General Batch #36G for Vouchers 230901001-230901008 dated 9/06/2023 in the amount of \$2,804.40.  
General Batch #37G for Vouchers 230902001-230902017 dated 9/13/2023 in the amount of \$45,468.97.  
Payroll Batch #0915P for Vouchers 1455-1532 dated 9/15/2023 in the amount of \$55,924.57.  
Payroll Batch #38D for Vouchers 230903001-230903009 dated 9/20/2023 in the amount of \$14,873.48.  
Payroll Batch #0920WL for Vouchers 1533-1534 dated 9/20/2023 in the amount of \$7,961.47.  
General Batch #38G for Vouchers 230904001-230904018 dated 9/20/2023 in the amount of \$6,599.84.  
Payroll Batch #0926OT for Voucher 1585 dated 9/26/2023 in the amount of \$731.36.  
Payroll Batch for 941 EFT dated 9/26/2023 in the amount of \$14,011.87.  
General Batch #39G for Vouchers 230906001-230906013 dated 9/27/2023 in the amount of \$8,729.02.*

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any comments on the consent agenda.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like the meeting minutes to state the full name of North Whidbey Firefighter's Association.

Secretary Spydell stated she would make the correction to the regular meeting minutes.



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Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the consent agenda with corrections; motion seconded by Commissioner Koorn.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Personnel**

Chief Swiger stated the new Recruitment and Retention Coordinator Maroua Gottih has started and has jumped all-in to learning about the grant, the position, the district and volunteer firefighting. Chief Swiger stated Firefighter Amie Stevens was offered a full-time position elsewhere and does not have the time to put into the district as a per diem firefighter anymore.

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **Budget**

Chairman Koorn asked the board if there were any questions.

Commissioner Smith asked if the district billed and received money for the WA State Parks contract.

Chief Swiger confirmed.

Commissioner Smith asked if the district is able to do fire inspections and get paid for them under the fire inspection contract even if the county has a fire inspector.

Chief Swiger stated at the next county workshop a new interlocal agreement will be discussed and he plans to attend to get more information on what it looks like moving forward.

Commissioner Smith asked what the district revenue average is for cost recovery.

Chief Swiger stated it has varied significantly over the years.

Commissioner Smith asked why \$10,000 was budgeted for cost recovery.

Chief Swiger stated used an average from over previous years.

#### **2024 Budget**

Chairman Koorn announced the first public hearing on the 2024 Budget.

Chairman Koorn asked if all salaries reflect the current agreement.

Chief Swiger confirmed.

Commissioner Smith asked why it does not show the actual salary figures as the line-item limit.

Chief Swiger stated the line-items show a 6% salary increase for next year.

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions on the Revenue section.

Commissioner Lamont stated that Life Flight rent revenue may go away in the future if they move to the airport.

Chairman Koorn asked for comments on the Salaries & Wages section.

No comments or questions were presented.

Chairman Koorn asked for comments on the Benefits section and asked how the percentage for L&I was calculated.

Secretary Spydell stated it was just a guestimate since the actual numbers have not been received yet.

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions on the Supplies section.

Commissioner Smith asked why the line-item 522 20 30 005 – Finance Charges was removed.



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Chief Swiger stated we do not plan to get any finance charges.

Commissioner Smith stated the budget can be zero for the line-item but to keep it in because it has been used before.

Commissioner Smith asked why 522 20 30 012 - BLS/Medical Supplies was removed.

Chief Swiger stated there were two BLS/Medical Supplies line-items. The other is 522 20 30 006.

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions on the Services section.

Commissioner Smith asked why 522 10 40 001 - Admin Professional Services was \$10,000 lower for next year when we have already used over that amount in 2023.

Chief Swiger stated there was something we were not going to have in there for next year but cannot recall at this time.

Secretary Spydell stated she would look into it.

Chairman Koorn asked why 522 10 40 002 – Legal Professional Services was reduced for 2024.

Chief Swiger stated we will not have the expenses for negotiating the union contract in 2024.

Commissioner Smith asked about the new line-item 522 10 40 006 – Leasehold Tax.

Secretary Spydell stated it has been recorded incorrectly in the past and this is the correction. She explained that we cannot use it as 589 40 40 000 – Agency Type Disbursements if we never put the money into disbursements and treat it like a clearing account. We treat it like an expense, so it needs to be recorded as an expense, not a clearing account.

Commissioner Smith asked if \$6000 was enough for 522 10 40 010 – Commissioner Travel/Per Diem.

Chairman Koorn asked if we went over \$6000 in 2023.

Secretary Spydell confirmed the amount will be exceeded in 2023.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to attend events next year.

Chairman Koorn stated to change the amount to \$10,000 for 2024.

Commissioner Smith asked about new line-item 522 10 40 017 – Commissioners Conference Registration.

Chief Swiger stated commissioner registration expenses for conferences used to be put into 522 45 40 002 – Training Employee – Registration but the expenses should be separate.

Commissioner Smith asked about 522 10 40 022 – Contract Services being reduced to \$25,000.

Secretary Spydell explained the 2023 budget was adjusted to cover the cost for setting up First Due and having the overlapping of different programs for the year.

Commissioner Smith asked what 522 20 40 006 – Fire Supp Travel – Wildland was used for.

Chief Swiger explained its use in the past when firefighters were sent on an EMAC to California.

Secretary Spydell stated there will be hotel charges in that line-item for the Gray Fire this year that will get reimbursed from Washington State.

Commissioner Smith asked why 522 50 40 001 – Building Professional Services was reduced when the budget has already been exceeded in 2023.

Secretary Spydell explained an unforeseen expense came through. She stated she cannot remember exactly what the recent expense was, but the amount should be increased for 2024, not reduced.

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions on the Intergov section.

Chairman Koorn asked if \$10,000 was enough money for the election.

Chief Swiger stated yes.



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Commissioner Koorn asked if the actual numbers have been received for ICOM next year. Chief Swiger stated the actual numbers were not known yet. Commissioner Koorn stated the district cannot save for the audit and to change the amount to zero. Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions on Capital Expenditures. Commissioner Smith stated 594 22 60 004 – Capital Vehicles only has \$600,000 budgeted. He continued to explain that if two vehicles get refurbished as discussed, the entire budget would be used. Chairman Koorn agreed and suggested changing the amount to \$800,000. Commissioner Smith stated he did not have any further questions or comments for the 2024 Budget. Chairman Koorn asked if there were any public questions or comments for the 2024 Budget. No questions or comments were presented.

### **Engine 23 Refurbish**

Chairman Koorn asked Commissioner Smith if he still wanted to go to visit the Fire Trucks Unlimited facility in Henderson, Nevada. Commissioner Smith stated he would look into possible dates further.

### **Hartley Donation**

Chairman Koorn referenced emails from the Washington State Auditor's Office and Attorney Brian Snure explaining that the transfer of funds back to Mrs. Hartley or the North Whidbey Firefighter's Association would be ethical and not considered a donation of public funds. Chairman Koorn asked if the North Whidbey Firefighter's Association received its 501(c) designation. Chief Lacy stated at the last association meeting they voted on the new by-laws and subsequently applied for a 501(c) designation. Chief Swiger stated he would like to get the money transferred back to Mrs. Hartley or the association as soon as possible. Chairman Koorn asked if the money would be transferred directly to the association or back to Mrs. Hartley. Secretary Spydell stated she will contact Mrs. Hartley's financial advisor and get more information.

### **New Business:**

#### **New Computer Purchase**

Chairman Koorn asked if these were new computers or replacement computers. Chief Swiger explained that they were new computers for new positions being filled in the district. He stated that Chief Horton is currently using his laptop and the other computer would be used by the district's training officer once the position is approved and filled.

By consensus the board approved the purchase of two new computers.

### **Member Survey**



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Chairman Koorn asked if the board wanted to discuss the survey results tonight or at a special meeting. He stated he had already talked to Chief Swiger regarding his concerns with the survey results. Commissioner Smith stated he read the comments and did not see anything alarming. The two things he took away from the survey are: 1) The idea of advertising the district more, and 2) Ranking system for MSAR Program.

Chairman Koorn stated his biggest concern was the training and equipment comments from the survey, and lower-level officers not showing up.

Chief Swiger stated these issues are currently being addressed and remedied.

Chief Lacy stated it is not a quick fix, but training has improved immensely and many of these issues will be resolved with the improved training.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to see a member survey completed biannually.

### **Firehouse Grant**

Chief Swiger stated North Whidbey Fire and Rescue received a grant in the amount of \$20,257.65 for thermal imaging cameras from Firehouse Subs and he is seeking board approval to accept the grant. Commissioner Smith stated he would like to accept the grant and use the Firehouse Subs newsletter and social media announcement as provided.

Chief Swiger stated the announcements would be utilized as requested.

Commissioner Smith motioned to accept the Firehouse Subs grant; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Policy 135 – Uniform Dress Code Class A & B**

Chairman Koorn asked the board if the policy was updated with their requested changes from the special meeting.

Commissioner Smith asked why MSAR does not get sleeve markings when *EMT Only* does.

Chief Swiger stated he took the information directly from the state.

Commissioner Smith stated he wanted to make sure everyone feels included and fits in.

Chairman Koorn stated he would like to see job shirt and polo shirt incentives for volunteers, support and cadets.

Chief Swiger asked the board for the timeline.

Chairman Koorn stated to include a job shirt at three years of good service and a polo shirt at five years of good service.

Commissioner Smith stated the MSAR badge should be described as *life ring with scramble*.

Chairman Koorn stated the color of the necktie should be specified.

Commissioner Lamont stated 'dress shoes' should be specified.

Chairman Koorn stated the term *black* should be added to 2.1.4 and 2.1.5.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 135 with changes; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.



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**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Policy 143 – Social Media/Imagery**

Chairman Koorn stated the policy had some formatting changes and clarification on what *index* was being referenced from the special meeting.

Secretary Spydell explained the index as she understood it from the Washington State Secretary explanation. Secretary Spydell stated if records are recorded and filed using an index, a public request should reference the index number. She explained that the district does not currently use an index but may in the future.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 143; motion seconded by Chairman Koorn.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Deputy Chief**

Chairman Koorn asked if the board would like to advertise the training officer position as deputy chief or a battalion chief.

Commissioner Lamont suggested the board advertises for a battalion chief first.

Commissioner Smith agreed to advertise as a battalion chief with some changes to the job description.

### **Training and Safety Officer**

Commissioner Smith suggested removing the requirement for fire instructor III within one year of hire.

Chairman Koorn asked the chiefs if they think a lot of applicants will have incident safety officer.

Chief Swiger and Chief Lacy stated they believed a decent number of applicants will have the qualification.

Commissioner Smith stated the NIMS certifications should be required, not *extensive knowledge*.

Chairman Koorn stated the district should get the job posted and see what we get but feels we will have a hard time finding someone with those requirements.

#### **a. Job Description**

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve the job description with changes; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **b. Employment Opportunity**

Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve the job posting with changes; motion seconded by Chairman Koorn.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Fire Chief Report**

Chief Swiger shared the two grant amounts the district has recently received of \$8,814.83 for a covid grant and \$20,257.65 for the Firehouse Subs grant.



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### Ops Chief Report

None

### Battalion Chief Report

None

**At 8:02 pm Chairman Koorn called the meeting into Executive Session from 8:02 p.m. until 8:10 p.m.**

### Executive Session:

#### a. RCW 42.30.140(4)(a)

Collective bargaining sessions with employee organizations, including contract negotiations, grievance meetings, and discussions relating to the interpretation or application of a labor agreement; or (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 8:10 pm Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of executive session into regular session. No decisions were made.**

### Good of the Order

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any other questions or comments.

Commissioner Smith stated he had some items to discuss. Commissioner Smith would like the administrative personnel to look into getting a credit card machine for accepting payments in the office. Commissioner Smith asked about LED lighting upgrade and why it has been in progress since May.

Chief Swiger stated he would get with Lieutenant Reinstra to discuss.

Chairman Koorn asked why we are even doing this LED lighting upgrade.

Chief Swiger stated it was in process when he came on as interim fire chief and has just been keeping it going.

Chairman Koorn stated he does not see the need to replace lights unless they are burnt out, and suggested checking with Puget Sound Energy.

Commissioner Smith asked Chief Swiger to give the board an update on the progress at all stations.

Chairman Koorn stated to no further work on LED lighting shall be done until the board has been updated.

Commissioner Smith stated the radio is disable in the district white car.

Chief Swiger stated he would look into it.



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Commissioner Smith stated he had received a copy of the marine rescue policy to review and asked why in August marine rescue responded code through town.

Chief Swiger stated the incident has been addressed with MSAR.

Commissioner Smith stated the policy is very vague and needs to be updated.

Chief Swiger stated he will look into updating the policy.

### **Adjourn Meeting**

Commissioner Lamont motioned to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Attest:

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager