



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

Meeting Minutes

June 13th, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Approved July 19th, 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, Battalion Chief Dan Horton, Volunteer Battalion Chief Steve Lacy and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

Additions to the Agenda

- a. Air Trailer
- b. Office Manager
- c. Battalion Chief Position

Chairman Koorn stated addition (a) will move to New Business and (b) and (c) will move to Personnel to be discussed after the executive session.

Public Comment

District firefighter Mike Pelzer made a comment on behalf of another firefighter that was not able to attend the meeting. Mr. Pelzer presented the board with a letter from firefighter Joseph Henigsmith where Mr. Henigsmith expressed his concerns regarding manning issues within the district. The letter discussed how the lack of duty crew and career staff makes it difficult, and at times impossible, for the district to respond to all the calls that get assigned to North Whidbey Fire and Rescue. Volunteers are a great asset when they show up to a call, but there are no guarantees volunteers will show up.

Mr. Pelzer handed the board another letter regarding recent response times to medical calls. Mr. Pelzer explained that a medical call got toned out three times for an overdose while he was on another call and the arrival time to the scene was over twenty minutes. In another instance, Mr. Pelzer had to request an all-call to have ICOM dispatch other units and the arrival time on scene was over twenty minutes again. Mr. Pelzer echoed Mr. Henigsmith's concern with staffing issues and manpower.

Chairman Koorn stated that the district is a fire district, and medical response is not the district's number one priority. The district is contracted by Whidbey General Hospital to man an ambulance, to supplement their manning issues. The district is obligated to the first call, however, if a second medical call goes out, the district is not required to respond. We would like to respond but it was the hospital's decision to go down to one ambulance.



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Commissioner Lamont stated when the district has the assets and manpower available it will respond, but if we do not have the assets and manpower, the district cannot respond.

Chairman Koorn stated Whidbey General Hospital should be sending a unit to help.

Commissioner Smith stated he appreciated the input and concern of the firefighters but the district's obligation to respond to medical calls is the same as the sheriff's department's obligation to respond to medical calls. The district is a band-aid to the issue, not the issue.

Commissioner Lamont recommended the firefighters attend a hospital board meeting to voice their concerns and take the issue up with them.

Commissioner Smith stated he would be happy to sit down with Mr. Pelzer, or any district firefighter, to go over budget and personnel to discuss issues and any proposed plans, but the district cannot solve the issue.

Correspondence

- a. Patton's Retreat Water Association

Chief Swiger stated the water association sent a notice that they are planning to replace the water lines due to age, and as a result the water bill for Station 23 could increase.

Consent Agenda: Minutes: Regular Meeting, May 9th, 2023, Expenditure Approval for the month of May 2023 and Treasurer's Report approval for the month of April 2023.

General Batch #18G for Vouchers 230501001-230501024 dated 5/03/2023 in the amount of \$80,808.24.

General Batch #19G for Vouchers 230502001-230502011 dated 5/10/2023 in the amount of \$9,450.14.

General Batch #20G for Vouchers 230504001-230504010 dated 5/17/2023 in the amount of \$29,591.83.

Payroll Batch #20B for Vouchers 230503001-230503009 dated 5/17/2023 in the amount of \$15,354.72.

Payroll Batch for 941 EFT dated 5/26/2023 in the amount of \$11,499.15.

Payroll Batch #0526P for Transactions 764-836 dated 5/26/2023 in the amount of \$57,478.37.

General Batch #21G for Vouchers 230506001-230506018 dated 5/24/2023 in the amount of \$6,602.63.

General Batch #22G for Vouchers 230507001-230507014 dated 5/31/2023 in the amount of \$4,396.19.

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

No questions or comments were presented.

Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve the consent agenda; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session

Chairman Koorn stated the executive session will be moved to the end of the agenda after New Business.



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Personnel

Chairman Koorn stated Personnel will be moved to the end of the agenda after the executive session.

Unfinished Business:

Budget

i. Amendment

Chief Swiger stated this is the board's first look at the proposed budget adjustments for the year. Chief explained the proposed changes as follows:

522 10 10 007 Admin Salaries – Internal Audit/Training

Budget increase of \$5,000 created for a temporary employee Brenda Ibarra's work performed training a new accounting manager and auditing financial records for 2022. The

522 20 10 010 VOL Battalion Chief

Budget increase from \$40,000 to \$45,000 for an increase in hours worked by Chief Lacy.

522 20 10 011 VOL Misc

Budget increase from \$6,500 to \$9,000 due to increase in volunteer activity for miscellaneous events.

522 20 10 012 VOL Shifts

Budget decrease from \$25,000 to \$22,500 to move to cover increased costs for 522 20 10 011 VOL Misc.

522 20 21 002 Ops PERS

Budget increase from \$10,000 to \$17,000 due to Chief Lacy not being accounted for in the original budget for this account.

522 10 40 004 Computer/IT Prof Svcs

Budget increase from \$20,000 to \$22,000 to cover the remaining contract costs plus service calls.

522 10 40 010 Commissioner Travel/Per Diem

Budget increase from \$5,000 to \$6,000 to cover remaining conferences and extended trip in Henderson, NV to Firetrucks Unlimited.

522 10 40 012 Personal Bonds/Liability

Budget increase from \$22,000 to \$24,710 due to premium increase for 2023.

522 10 40 022 Contract Services

Budget increase from \$26,000 to \$32,000 to cover the semi-annual contract fees remaining with Target Solutions. The Account is over budget due to new setup fees and contract with First Due.

522 50 40 003 Facilities Insurance

Budget decrease from \$23,000 to \$21,500 to move to 522 10 40 012 Personal Bonds Liability.

522 60 40 001 Vehicle Liability Insurance

Budget decrease from \$25,000 to \$20,000 to move to 522 20 10 010 VOL Battalion Chief.

522 10 40 020 Audit



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Budget increase from \$0 to \$50,000 to account for 2023 state audit fees. Audit fees were not accounted for in the original 2023 budget.

522 20 40 013 ICOM

Budget increase from \$90,000 to \$92,000 to cover increase for ICOM fees for 2023.

594 22 60 002 Capital Bldgs/Structures Repair/Upgrade

Budget decrease from \$75,000 to \$63,000 to cover increases for 522 10 40 022 Contract Services, 522 20 21 002 Ops PERS, 522 10 40 010 Commissioner Travel/Per Diem and 522 10 40 004 Computer/IT Prof Svcs.

594 22 60 003 Capital Building Projects New/Remodel

Budget decrease from \$150,000 to \$95,000 to cover increases for 522 10 40 020 Audit and 522 10 10 007 Admin Salaries – Internal Audit/Training.

594 22 60 008 Capital Computer/IT Capital Asset

Budget decrease from \$10,000 to \$6,790 to cover increases for 522 20 40 013 ICOM and 522 10 40 012 Personal Bonds/Liability.

594 22 60 011 Capital Phone Upgrade

Budget decrease from \$5,000 to \$1,000 to cover increase for 522 10 40 022 Contract Services.

508 91 00 000 Operations Reserved

Budget increase from \$0 to \$899,697.28 to move fund excess into Operations Reserved which was not accounted for in the original budget for 2023.

Each **SAFER** BARS code budget item will increase to 80% of 1-year expense costs allotted by FEMA.

Commissioner Lamont asked why money is being taken out of the budget for capital buildings and structures when the district is looking to purchase land and/or build an additional station.

Chief Swiger stated the BARS code is not for the purchase of property or building new stations.

Chairman Koorn stated he does not have any objections to the proposed budget adjustments but would like to see the changes in narrative form in the meeting minutes. He stated his personal preference would be to take the adjustments out of excess funds.

Chief Swiger stated he did not want the budget adjustment to change the bottom line.

Chairman Koorn stated it is fine, it is only a personal preference.

Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve the budget adjustment; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

Uniforms/Hi-Vis Coats

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions or comments after reviewing the breakdown on uniform purchases and expenses this year.

Commissioner Lamont stated he appreciated the breakdown, and everything looks good.



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Rescue Decaling

Chief Swiger stated Lt. Reinstra received a quote from Meyer Sign and there was only an \$8.00 difference from Humphrey's Sign Co.

Chairman Koorn stated he was still shocked about the cost.

Commissioner Lamont stated this is still just a quote, it could end up costing more if removing the old decals becomes more of an issue than anticipated.

Commissioner Smith stated he did not have any questions.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve decaling the rescue truck; motioned seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Swiger asked if the board wanted to go with Humphrey's Sign Co. because they are local to save on transport costs.

Commissioner Smith stated to go with whoever could complete the work sooner.

Survey Monkey

I. Subscription Renewal

Chief Swiger stated the current subscription ends June 30th. He stated the account still had Teri Jo Summer on it and could not remove her permanently. Chief Swiger stated he would prefer to not renew the current subscription but to open a new district account with a one-year subscription. Chief Swiger stated a one-year subscription with one user costs \$468 per year.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve a one-year subscription at \$468; motioned seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

Motion carried unanimously.

II. Exit Interviews

Chief Swiger stated Human Resources Specialist Crystal Swanson updated the exit interview questions and a draft was submitted to the board in their packets.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like there to be a question at the end asking if the exiting member would like a follow-up to their interview, and if so, who would they want a follow-up from.

Chairman Koorn stated he did not have any issues with the exit interview draft and the has been wanting this to be done for a long time.

Secretary Spydell stated Human Resources Specialist Crystal Swanson stated the exit interviews could be done using Survey Monkey as well.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the exit interview questions for use; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

Motion carried unanimously.



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III. Internal Questionnaire

Commissioner Lamont stated that question #2 and question #10 were the same question.

Chairman Koorn asked if this questionnaire is intended to go out to members using Survey Monkey.

Chief Swiger stated that is what was mentioned before by Commissioner Smith.

Commissioner Smith stated there should be a follow-up to questions where the answer is 'No'.

Commissioner Smith stated he suggested to the human resources specialist to use a different scale other than 1 through 5.

Chairman Koorn stated if a member rates a question a 1 or a 2 there should be a comment box with an explanation.

Chief Horton stated a comment box can be input when setting it up in Survey Monkey.

Chairman Koorn stated the board would like to see a draft of the questionnaire with comment boxes.

Chief Swiger stated it could be formatted on Survey Monkey and sent back to the board for review.

Chairman Koorn and Commissioner Smith agreed they would like to see an updated draft before moving forward.

Policy Updates

Chairman Koorn stated he would like to move all policy approvals to special meetings for immediate changes.

Chairman Koorn stated Policy 102 and Policy 152 will be tabled.

Commissioner Lamont stated the board should set a date for a special meeting before adjourning tonight.

Training Officer

Chairman Koorn stated the discussion is tabled until further progress is made with union negotiations.

Longevity Pay Scale

Chairman Koorn stated the district used to have a longevity pay scale and has discussed implementing a new one for a while now.

The commissioners reviewed the proposed pay scale step increases.

Chairman Koorn stated the initial pay should be on the scale, and asked the other commissioners what their thoughts are on the pay scale.

Commissioner Smith stated he thinks it looks good.

Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve the longevity pay increase scale; motioned seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lamont asked if it would go into effect immediately for June earnings.

By consensus, the board agreed the scale would go into effect for June earnings.



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Fire Chief

Chairman Koorn stated the discussion will be moved to personnel after executive session.

New Business:

Policy Approval Procedure

Chairman Koorn stated this item was already discussed under Unfinished Business. The board will set a date for a special meeting under Good of the Order.

Resolutions

Secretary Spydell stated the county auditor's office had conducted their audit of all warrants from 2021 that were not redeemed. Secretary Spydell stated the district had two checks from 2021 that were never cashed, and she verified with both vendors that our accounts were up to date.

I. Resolution 536 – Cancel Warrant

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve Resolution 536; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

II. Resolution 537 – Cancel Warrant

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Resolution 537; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

Motion carried unanimously.

Petty Cash Audit

Chairman Koorn stated he was asked to perform an audit on the petty cash account. He stated the account looks good and line items were where they should be. Chairman Koorn stated his only comment for improvement would be not using the petty cash account when it is not necessary. For example, for the EMR class each person was issued a petty cash check for payment.

Chief Swiger stated it was done like that because the instructor requested payment that way.

Chairman Koorn stated other than that the account is well organized.

Air Trailer

Chief Swiger stated the district has been looking into turning a cargo trailer into a rehab trailer. The current cargo trailer is not large enough for what they were hoping to do. Chief Swiger stated the current plan will max out the trailer's weight limit. He stated Lt. Reinstra has received quotes for larger trailers from three companies and the quotes have been presented to the board for review. Chief Swiger stated the quote for internal equipment of trailer has been presented previously to the board for a single-fill station. He is still waiting for a quote for a double-fill station. Chief Swiger stated there would be an additional \$153 cost for the shelving system. Chief Swiger gave his preference of the white trailer for \$8163.

Commissioner Lamont asked if that was the price for everything to get the trailer on the road except striping and decals.



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Chief Swiger confirmed.

Chairman Koorn stated the district has been told by all agencies we do mutual aid with and has an air trailer that we could use them; what has changed?

Chief Swiger stated when Oak Harbor Fire Department comes out to a call, they are quick to leave, which is understandable because they have a city to protect, but our firefighters have had to leave a scene just to go fill bottles and return. Chief Swiger stated this was just an idea he had and is presenting options to the board.

Chairman Koorn stated he would prefer looking into doing this when the budget for 2024 is discussed. Commissioner Smith asked who is building the air trailer and where it will be stored. Commissioner Smith stated he does not feel an immediate need for it but is open to receiving more research and options.

Commissioner Lamont stated he would go along with that.

Chief Swiger stated district personnel were going to build the trailer.

Commissioner Smith stated he had some major concerns with that.

At 7:13pm Chairman Koorn called the meeting into Executive Session from 7:15pm until 8:15pm.

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.

b. RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)

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

At 8:15pm Chairman Koorn extended the executive session for ten minutes until 8:25pm.

Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of executive session at 8:25pm. No decisions were made during the executive session.

Personnel

• Chaplain

Chairman Koorn stated that a district chaplain was leaving and Chief Swiger has given his recommendation for William Mendenhall as a district chaplain.

Chairman Koorn asked if there were any questions or comments.

No questions or comments were presented.



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Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve William Mendenhall as a chaplain; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

- **Part-time Firefighter/EMT**

Chairman Koorn stated three part-time firefighters have been recommended for hire and asked if there were any questions regarding the three recommendations.

No questions or comments were made.

Commissioner Lamont motioned to approve the part-time firefighters for hire; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion carried unanimously.

- **Recruitment & Retention Coordinator**

Chairman Koorn stated the board had a chance to review the candidates for the position and Chief Swiger has given his recommendation.

Commissioner Smith stated he recommends Chief Swiger hires Arica Goulet for the coordinator position.

Commissioner Lamont stated Arica Goulet is the best candidate in his opinion.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Arica Goulet for the position; motion seconded by Commissioner Lamont.

Motion carried unanimously.

- **Office Manager**

Commissioner Lamont stated his recommendation for offering an officer manager title to Accounting Manager/Board Secretary Natasha Spydell.

Chairman Koorn stated the position would be going back to the old format of the administrative assistant and human resources specialist having an office manager as their immediate supervisor.

Commissioner Smith asked if the position job descriptions need to be modified.

Chief Swiger stated only the organizational chart will need to be updated.

Chairman Koorn stated the additional title should come with a pay increase and asked the board for their input on pay.

Chairman Koorn asked the board if moving Secretary Spydell to \$29.50 per hour sounded good.

Commissioner Smith stated he would be good with \$29.50 if she accepts it.

Commissioner Lamont stated he was comfortable with \$29.50 per hour.

Chairman Koorn asked Secretary Spydell if she would accept the position and the hourly wage of \$29.50.

Secretary Spydell stated she accepts the position and the wage.

Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Chief

Chairman Koorn stated there is no change to the fire chief position.

Fire Chief Report



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Commissioner Smith stated he liked the new weekly report Chief Swiger has been sending to the commissioners.

Chief Swiger stated a level 1 burn ban will be going into effect July 3rd.

Chief Swiger stated the SCBAs have been shipped but we have not received any tracking information yet.

Operations Chief Report

Chief Horton shared a chart from the new system First Due that shows a breakdown of calls that have gone out over the last month. Chief Horton stated it was a busy month with fire calls overlapping other fire calls. Chief Horton explained how the report shows how many personnel are on duty versus how many are supposed to be on duty, and there were three days last month where there was no duty crew.

Chairman Koorn asked if the brush fires were minor.

Chief Swiger stated they were minor.

Chief Horton stated there were multiple marine calls that went out last month as well.

Commissioner Lamont asked Chief Horton for a percentage base on how much First Due has been implemented to this point.

Chief Horton stated he had one major category left, which is assets. He stated he is working on getting the Community Connect module active. Chief Horton stated about 75% of the modules are up and running, and about 45% of the 75% are complete. Overall, Chief Horton stated First Due is 65% implemented and he is about a month behind schedule of where he expected to be right now.

Battalion Chief Report

No Report.

Good of the Order

Chairman Koorn asked the board to decide on a date for a special meeting in July to approve policy updates. Chairman Koorn asked if the 5th or 6th of July is good.

Commissioner Lamont stated either date would work for him.

Commissioner Smith stated he works but will see what he can do.

Commissioner Lamont asked what time to schedule the meeting for.

Chairman Koorn asked if 9:00am on July 5th at the district office is good.

Commissioner Lamont stated there is a staff meeting on Wednesdays at 9:00am.

Chief Swiger stated he could move the staff meeting to accommodate for a special meeting.

By consensus the board agreed to schedule a special meeting for July 5th, 2023, at 9:00am.

Chairman Koorn stated he will be out of town for the regular scheduled board meeting.

Commissioner Lamont stated the board meeting should be rescheduled.

Chairman Koorn stated a resolution to reschedule a board meeting will need to be on the special meeting agenda.



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Chairman Koorn stated he cannot do July 18th.

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Lamont stated they were available July 19th.

Chairman Koorn stated the 19th is good.

Secretary Spydell stated she will prepare a resolution for approval at the special meeting.

Adjourn Meeting

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Attest:

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager