



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

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

Special Meeting Minutes

January 23rd, 2025

09:00 a.m.

Location: 770 NE Midway Blvd

Oak Harbor, WA

Approved February 11th, 2025

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

Chief Swiger - Schedule

Chief Swiger shared his upcoming schedule with the board. He is expected to be out for a couple of weeks in February for medical reasons.

Chief Lacy Position – Budget

Chief Swiger stated Chief Lacy has stepped down from his position at the district office but still wants to stay with the district. Chief Lacy would stay on and fill in for 200 duty as needed and pick up other small tasks to help the district. Chief Swiger stated his position was not budgeted for in 2025 and he would like to adjust the budget to accommodate the change.

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve a \$5,000 budget for line item 522 20 10 010 VOL Battalion Chief; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

NWLS – Chief Horton

Chief Swiger asked for board approval to send Chief Horton to the Northwest Leadership Seminar in Portland, Oregon.

By consensus, the board approved Chief Horton to attend the seminar in March.

Station 27 Building

Chief Swiger and Chief Merrill discussed Island County permitting requirements and various options for housing an additional vehicle at Station 27.

The board agreed that the structure needs to withstand strong winds, be fully enclosed and able to accommodate various apparatus types, including an engine. The board asked Chief Swiger and Chief Merrill to decide what size is needed, contact contractors, and research different building plan options and associated costs.

The board asked to have additional information ready to be presented to the board by the regular meeting in March.

Maintenance Position

Chief Swiger proposed creating a designated maintenance position in order to perform maintenance and upkeep district buildings and grounds. Chief Swiger stated having a designated maintenance position where the individual does not have to stop what they are doing to respond to calls would benefit the district. Chief Swiger proposed making Lieutenant Reinstra a duty crew lieutenant, keeping his current



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schedule and having vehicle maintenance as a collateral duty. Chief Swiger stated he discussed both changes to the union and they would be fine with them. Chief Swiger stated having an additional person assigned to duty crew would cut down the hours Aid 205 is out of service saving the district money on the Whidbey Health contract, and duty crew needs supervision.

Chairman Koorn stated he sees a real advantage with having a designated maintenance position but still thinks it should be a firefighter position.

Commissioner Smith stated he does not see the need for a designated maintenance person, as the duty crew should be doing some upkeep and maintenance on the stations as things currently stand now.

Commissioner Miller stated he supports the idea of having a firefighter in the maintenance position and doing a better job of taking care of what we have now.

Chairman Koorn asked Chief Swiger to present further information to the board comparing different positions, schedules, and costs so the board can further discuss the topic in the future, and what would best suit the district's needs.

Commissioner Miller would like to see the supervision plan laid out for the positions as well to guarantee the overseeing of getting the stations up to standards.

The board tasked administrative staff to gather more information for the position to be discussed at a later date.

District Goals

Chief Swiger, Chief Merrill, and Chief Horton went over their plan for accomplishing district goals that were laid out as a result of Chief Merrill's NFPA 1720 evaluation. The district goals included the following topics:

- Response Times
- Monitor Mutual Aid and Auto Aid
- Develop Succession Plan for Officers
- Hire Duty Crew Officer
- Short-term/Long-term Strategic Plan
- New Station/Headquarters
- Qualify More Drivers
- Apply for Hiring SAFER Grant
- Hire Additional Career Personnel
- Increase Volunteer Wages
- Public Education Campaign
- Levy Increase

The board gave the staff direction on their expectations for meeting the district goals.

Chairman Koorn stated this is a good start and asked if the board could receive updates every other regular meeting.

Chief Swiger agreed to have updates prepared for the board at every other regular meeting.

Strategic Plan

Chairman Koorn expressed his concerns moving forward with hiring a consultant company to develop a strategic plan stating it appears the district is going to pay a lot of money just to get a strengths and weaknesses evaluation based on what members of the district tell them.

Commissioner Miller expressed his concerns as well, stating he thinks the strategic plan will be similar to the district goals already discussed and being worked on.



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Commissioner Smith stated he is not against spending the money to get what he is expecting in a strategic plan, but he is not sure the district will be getting what it expects based on the proposals.

Chief Swiger expressed his support for using an outside agency to develop a strategic plan in order to provide the public with an unbiased determination for what direction the district needs to go.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like Chief Swiger to contact some references of the agencies and ask them what they proposed, what they received, if the pricing was transparent, and how they feel about the work that was done.

Commissioner Miller stated he would like to see an agency that is dedicated to our local area and works primarily with smaller districts.

Commissioner Koorn stated the proposals are too generic and focus on goals and visions rather than action plans and associated costs.

Chief Merrill stated they need to formulate a direction of where they are trying to get to.

Commissioner Smith stated his goal is to be able to tell the community and members whether the district is on track with where it is trying to go or if it needs to get back on track.

The board asked Chief Swiger to reach out to references for AP Triton and Public Consulting to get more information on what the agencies did for them and if they got what was proposed. The board would like to see the proposals to compare them with what each district/department received in the end. The board would like information on whether the districts were satisfied with what they received and if the estimated costs were accurate.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The Special Meeting of the Board adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Attest:

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

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager