



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Administration Building, 770 NE Midway Blvd. #1 Oak Harbor, Washington
Phone: 360-675-1131 Email: Admin@nwfr.org

Board of Fire Commissioners Special Meeting Minutes

April 16th, 2020

9:00 am

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Koorn called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and in attendance was Commissioner Lamont, Commissioner Goen, Fire Chief Clark, BC Swiger, Secretary Torgerson, CAPT O'Connor, CAPT Lacy, Lt, Zimmerman, FF/EMT Cooper, FF Powell, Larry Morse,

Staffing Benefits

- Chief Clark spoke about the district mission statement and how we do more than just fire service. 35% of our calls are fire suppression. 65% are responding to EMS calls. Chief Clark showed the Board a chart on what our duty crew looks like on a day-to-day operation. Commissioner Goen stated he really liked the chart. It was exactly what he was looking for. There were no other questions from the board.
- Chief Clark mentioned to the Board that we have twelve duty crew positions that are being staffed by 21 part time employees. These shifts are 12-hour shifts. The more part time employees we have the better the district will be to staff the twelve position we have. All of the part time duty crew employees are FLSA (7K). We just started hiring EMT's only. They are being utilized for the twelve positions we have. However, they can only work 40 hours per week. They are not consisted firefighters and do not meet the FLSA (7k) Firefighter guidelines. After they work 40 hours they are entitled to overtime. At this time, we have two employees that fall under this category. We will have to limit their hours in order to manage the overtime.
- The disadvantages are that it would be difficult to maintain coverage and manage schedules. We are using our full time Firefighters to cover when needed. By doing so we are using the time our Firefighters could be working on other things such as vehicle maintenance.

At this point we have four employees that exceed three hundred hours every pay period. It is not sustainable. Our job is to provide the Board with all the information for you to understand what is going on and provide you with options for you.

Alternatives:

1. Limit employees part time hours
2. Provide prorated benefits (holiday, healthcare)

In 2019 we have \$16,500 dollars in over time. In 2020 we are projected to pay \$48,584 in overtime. This number is based on the overtime hours in quarter 1. We have forecasted if the hours stay the same the total overtime will be \$48,584. We are providing four Firefighter a call. Chief Clark would like to sit down with the Board again and continue talking about this topic and how the SAFER Grant could help the district with the



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overtime we currently have. Chairman Koorn asked Chief Clark if the district had a previous EMT policy. Chief Clark stated there was only a Duty Crew program policy and it did not talk about EMT's.

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER)

- Chief Clark mentioned the SAFER Grant has opened up for this year. The deadline to submit our package is May 15th, 2020. The grant is awarded in September and full-time employees should start working by January 1, 2021. SAFER only pays for a base wage of a Firefighter. They will not pay a Lieutenants salary. One scenario could be to staff six full time employees with 10-12 part-time employees to cover the 12 Duty Crew position. The advantages would be having significant support for the shifts. Disadvantages would be the budget impact. It will not be feasible without the SAFER Grant. Another alternative would be to have our full time FF/EMT be part of the duty crew, however, we would struggle with our maintenance needs that the FF's are currently completing. The grant provides help for the first three years. First and second year they would help pay 75% percent of the salary and benefit cost. Commissioner Goen mentioned that in year four if we did not have funds from the community, we would have to lay off the Firefighters we hired? Chief Clark mentioned that we can have a long budget conversation in order to figure out what to do in year four. Chairman Koorn mentioned that he does not believe we could sustain the extra full time Firefighters without the SAFER Grant.
- The other suggestion would be to hire three full time Firefighter instead of six full time Firefighters. Chief Clark is looking for some sort of direction from the Commissioners. Chairman Koorn mentioned he liked the idea of the SAFER Grant and the option of hiring three full-time firefighters instead of six. He would like to see a five-year projection plan of revenue, expenditures, capitals and SAFER included.
- Commissioner Goen would like to push it off until next year. It would allow the district to do more research possibly get a levy in place before we do the SAFER Grant. He just does not want to lay off anyone after the five years are up. If there is a levy that passes that would allow us to be more stable.
- Chairman Koorn would like the five-year projection for next weeks meeting. Commissioner Lamont agrees with Commissioner Goen. They should try for a levy first before any SAFER Grant. Commissioner Goen asked Chief Clark if the district is having staffing issues can we only have services with one ambulance instead of two? Chief Clark mentioned we could however, it would hurt the coverage on calls. We could also add our full time FF/EMT that we have now, however, it would leave us with an empty spot on maintenance. Commissioner Lamont stated it is up to the tax payers to decide how much coverage they really want. Chairman Koorn mentioned the district is in better situation now and that we may have a better chance to pass a levy.



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Policies

- 13-03 Post Testing- Chief Clark mentioned he received the policy back from Brian Snure. He needs to make some changes and will have the policy be sent to the Commissioners before the next meeting.

Attest

Monica Torgerson/Board Secretary