



## 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](mailto:admin@nwfr.org)

### **Special Meeting Minutes**

April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026

9:00 a.m.

**Location:** 2720 Heller Rd.

Oak Harbor, WA

*Approved May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

**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, Chief Dan Horton, Chief Ian Walton, and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

### **Policy 153 – Cadet Program**

Chief Merrill stated there is a conflict with age in the current policy. Once a member turns 18, they are no longer protected under the state's child labor laws. Chief Merrill would like the policy to have a minimum age for the district cadet program, but no maximum. At the discretion of the district, a member who turns 18 can move into the E.L.F. Program even when enrolled in high school.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 153; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **District Office HVAC**

The board was given a quote from Nordic Temperature Control to repair HVAC system leaks at the district office in the amount of \$19,224.06.

Lieutenant Reinstra stated that Nordic came to evaluate the system and there is no way of knowing the condition of the entire HVAC system until the leaks are repaired. He asked Nordic to put together a quote to replace the entire system. They would have to come out and complete a design concept but did give a very loose quote that a new system would run anywhere between \$250,000 - \$400,000.

Chairman Koorn stated the district is not in a position right now to spend \$400,000 on HVAC, and doing the repairs right now buys time to plan for the future.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to see the replacement quote before approving leak repairs.

Chief Swiger stated he would like the repairs done before the hot season hits, especially with tenants.

Commissioner Miller agreed that fixing the leaks now buys time and the district can prepare to replace in the future after reviewing the strategic plan.

Commissioner Miller motioned to approve the HVAC quote; motion seconded by Commissioner Koorn. Commissioner Smith dissents.

### **Strategic Plan**

Chief Merrill presented a PowerPoint introduction to the strategic plan document. He stated the strategic plan is a living document that should be reviewed and updated annually. Chief Merrill stated the document will explain district strengths, weaknesses, and challenges and give recommendations such as staffing.

Chief Swiger stated in regards to staffing, the part-time firefighters are costing the district money. Chief recommends the board considers removing part-time firefighters and adding a minimum of three full-time firefighter positions. Currently the district is paying a lot of overtime to staff the ambulance.

Chairman Koorn stated he would need to see a more in-depth cost comparison.



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Chief Swiger stated he does not expect a decision today, just would like to have the discussion sooner rather than later.

Chief Merrill continued going over the strategic plan on going out for a levy.

Chairman Koorn stated the district needs to start promoting and sharing information with the public now, it is already behind.

Chief Merrill asked what the board would like to promote to the public.

Commissioner Smith stated his priorities are developing Ault Field Rd. and Van Dam but need conceptual ideas for the two properties.

Chairman Koorn stated Ault Field Rd. needs a land survey and someone in the district office needs to take the lead.

Chief Merrill asked if the board wants to conduct a feasibility study on station consolidation.

Chairman Koorn asked for the cost.

Chief Merrill stated \$50,000 or above.

Chairman Koorn directed that Ault Field Rd. property be added to the agenda for the May Regular Meeting.

Chief Merrill continued with the strategic plan to discuss vehicle refurbishment/replacement.

Commissioner Smith asked if the district needs to replace four engines in 2027 since the previous recommended refurbishments/replacements were not completed.

Chief Swiger confirmed.

Commissioner Smith asked if there was anything other than the four engines.

Chief Swiger stated JAWS, and replacing one Tahoe this year and the other next year.

Chief Merrill stated the brush trucks are due in 2027 and the Tahoes are due now according to the matrix.

Commissioner Smith asked the chiefs what the district is going to ask the taxpayers for money for.

Chief Merrill stated two stations, staffing, refurbishment/replacement of vehicles, tools, etc.

Commissioner Smith asked if the chiefs are recommending four new vehicles.

The chiefs were not prepared to answer specific questions on vehicles.

Chief Swiger stated he would like to ask for a 30-cent increase in 2027 and tell taxpayers about another 30-cent increase three years later.

Chairman Koorn asked if they should go through the equipment and come up with the specifics at a special meeting.

Chief Swiger asked the board if they wanted to adopt the strategic plan first.

Commissioner Miller stated to put on the May Regular Meeting agenda to formally adopt.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to see some numbers on staffing, facilities, apparatus, equipment, etc.

Chairman Koorn recommended scheduling a special meeting once a month to discuss the items more specifically.

The board agreed to add Schedule Special Meeting to the May Regular Meeting Agenda.

### Adjourn

Commissioner Miller motioned to adjourn the special meeting; motion seconded by Chairman Koorn.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

The Special Meeting of the Board adjourned at 10:46 a.m.



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Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Natasha Spydell".

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager