



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

February 17th, 2026

9:30 a.m.

Location: 770 NE Midway Blvd
Oak Harbor, WA

Approved March 10th, 2026

Call to Order: Chairman Marvin Koorn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Also in attendance were Commissioner Gerald Smith, Commissioner Robert Miller, Chief Chris Swiger, Chief Ray Merrill, Chief Dan Horton, and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

Policy 102 – Purchases

Secretary Spydell stated the proposed credit card limit adjustments as requested by the board are outlined in the policy draft. The adjustments allow enough credit to add the two additional credit cards as proposed and a \$10,000 credit line buffer to make adjustments as needed in the future without applying for an increased credit line. The credit card limits proposed are as follows:

- Card 1 District Office (5722) – Increase credit limit to \$15,000 (\$5,000 increase).
- Card 2 Fire Chief (8345) - Decrease credit limit to \$5,000 (\$5,000 decrease).
- Card 3 Operations Chief (6846) - Decrease credit limit to \$5,000 (\$5,000 decrease).
- Card 4 Maintenance (8211) – Decrease credit limit to \$3,000 (\$7,000 decrease).
- Card 5 Training Chief (3914) - Decrease credit limit to \$5,000 (\$5,000 decrease).
- Two additional Cards:
 - Card 6 Deputy Chief – Credit limit \$5,000
 - Card 7 Wildland Mobe – Credit limit \$2,000

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 102 with the proposed credit limits and two additional credit cards; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

KnoxBox Purchase

Chief Merrill stated the district's KnoxBox setup is no longer supported by Knox Company and proposes upgrading to the KeyDefender with electronic and mechanical key capabilities. Knox Company is pushing towards all electronic keys in the future. Chief Merrill asked the board's approval to purchase four KeyDefenders with the 2-key system, one for each chief vehicle, including the software license at \$584.00 annually. The total purchase price is \$5,425.00.

Chief Swiger stated he is asking the board because it is above the \$5,000 limit and capital equipment.

Commissioner Smith asked if four is enough.

Chief Swiger stated for now, four is enough.

Commissioner Smith asked how many are included in the license.

Chief Merrill stated up to six.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the KnoxBox purchase as presented; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Design Conference Attendance Approval



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Chairman Koorn stated Chief Swiger is requesting board approval to send Chief Horton to the design conference in Reno, NV.

By consensus, the board gave Chief Swiger the authority to decide who is sent to the design conference.

Chairman Koorn declared the agenda items concluded and the session into recess at 9:43 a.m. until the BRINC representatives arrived for the final agenda item.

Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of recess and into regular session at 10:00 a.m.

BRINC Drone Meeting

Two representatives from BRINC introduced themselves and gave a presentation that discussed the history of BRINC, the future of BRINC, different drones and capabilities, the Take-Off Program, and gave a video flight demonstration. The Take-Off Program is a twelve-month trial period for agencies to determine the need and benefit for a drone program. After twelve months, an agency can terminate or continue with two options: Safeguard light - \$60,000/yr, or Safeguard - \$80,000/yr.

Chairman Koorn asked what the district's responsibility is during the trial period.

BRINC stated the district's responsibility is to fly it.

Commissioner Smith asked which cell service provider the drone is capable with.

BRINC stated currently T-Mobile and AT&T and are in current talks with Verizon.

Commissioner Smith stated the drone is currently flying under VFR and asked if it has IFR capabilities.

BRINC stated it can fly IFR by setting a waypoint mission.

Chief Merrill asked what the drone's limitations are.

BRINC stated flying in hail is a limitation. The drone can fly in fog within specific parameters, and winds up to 30 mph sustained.

Commissioner Smith asked if the drone has to be flown below 500 feet to location.

BRINC stated it has to be flown below 200 feet.

Commissioner Koorn clarified that at the end of the 12-month trial period, the district can walk away and spend nothing or continue for \$60,000 or \$80,000 per year.

BRINC confirmed.

Commissioner Smith stated he is concerned about the limitations the drone has covering such a large area and sees the drone most useful for the Deception Pass area for search and rescue missions.

BRINC stated it would probably be more beneficial to have the launch pad somewhere closer to the Deception Pass area than stationed at the district office.

Commissioner Smith stated he is concerned with putting the drone technology to its best use for the district's location needs and working around the military base.

BRINC stated their team will assist in coming up with a plan and grid for best use and apply for waivers.

Commissioner Smith asked if the drones are built as needed or stocked.

BRINC stated they are built as needed. BRINC currently has four different airframes, including the new Guardian that is launching in April. The decals, agencies design and put on themselves.

BRINC took the board and district personnel outside for an in-person flight demonstration of their drone.

BRINC packed up and departed. The board members agreed they would like to see a copy of the contract to look over and discuss it further in the future.

Adjourn



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

Motion carried unanimously.

The Special Meeting of the Board adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Attest:

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager