



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 24th, 2026

9:00 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 9:00 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 164 – Apparatus Graphics

Commissioner Smith stated he submitted a rough draft to management to clean up and make changes such as font, uniformity, and whether the patch should go on the side door of the ambulance.

Chairman Koorn stated he tends to like the patch but just wants policy done.

Commissioner Smith requested that admin cleans up the draft and have the final revision ready for the March meeting.

Commissioner Miller agreed that he just wanted the policy done, consistently and appropriately.

Chairman Koorn stated Chief Swiger has leeway to complete the policy.

Chief Merrill clarified that the board wants district vehicles to be aesthetically pleasing with as much uniformity as possible.

The board confirmed.

Nightshade Solutions Contract

Chief Horton shared an email from the CEO with new verbiage to replace the section that was in question. It clearly states Nightshade Solutions receives a percentage of the amount collected on a claim, not requested on a claim. Chief Horton stated if the board is good with the new language, he will have the CEO update the contract for board approval.

Commissioner Miller stated the new language matches his concerns.

Commissioner Smith and Chairman Koorn agreed and asked Chief Horton to have the updated contract ready for the March meeting.

Drone Program

The board received a copy of the Brinc contract for review for the meeting.

Commissioner Smith stated he does not have issues moving forward with the 12-month program but has an inkling the district will not use the drone enough to justify the cost of the program beyond the 12 months.

Chief Swiger stated his concern is whether the Navy will even grant a waiver.

Lieutenant Valencic stated Brinc expressed they do not see any issues with getting a flight path approved with the base, and communicating with the base commanding officer is beneficial. He shared that Brinc feels confident they can work with the Navy to get the flight restriction raised 100 ft.

Commissioner Smith asked how many cliff-rescues the district does on the west side annually.

Chief Swiger stated around 3-4.

Commissioner Smith asked how many marine assists the district responds to annually.

Chief Swiger stated around 5-6.



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Lieutenant Valencic stated placing the drone at Station 21 would be the best for search and rescue utilization.

Chairman Koorn stated the drone can be placed in a case and moved around.

Lieutenant Valencic shared that just a drone and case, without a docking station, could probably be worked out with Brinc if it fits the district needs better.

Commissioner Smith stated he is good with the 12-month trial program and Station 21 is the best place for the drone to help with rescues around Deception Pass.

Chief Swiger stated the drone would be beneficial for structure fires also.

Commissioner Smith stated he still does not see it being utilized enough to justify spending that much to continue after the trial period.

Chairman Koorn stated he questions whether the district would continue after the trial period with the cost as well. He stated he is good moving forward with the 12-month trial program.

Lieutenant Valencic stated as soon as the contract is signed, Brinc starts working on getting waivers and everything setup, and the 12-months does not start until the drone is up and running.

Chief Swiger asked if the board wanted to go with one or two drones; one at the district office, and one at Station 21.

Commissioner Smith stated he is good with two. The district cost would be \$2,000 - \$3,000 for a fence at Station 21.

Chief Swiger stated it is worth looking at Station 21 and Station 22 to decide best area for a docking station.

Commissioner Smith stated the trial period will give the district time to find a grant.

Lieutenant Valencic stated Brinc has people that will find grants, the district just has to write them.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve entering into a contract with Brinc for two drones and docking stations for the 12-month trial program; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like the district to get more people qualified for drones.

Commissioner Miller agreed, stating the district needs to find some classes for people to attend and receive training.

Chairman Koorn stated he would like to see people who are willing and actively responding to be approved for training.

Commissioner Smith stated it may be worth considering making it a separate program similar to MSAR.

Chairman Koorn stated he does not like the separation but in some cases, such as with MSAR, programs work very well that way.

At 9:31 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting into executive session until 9:50 a.m.

Executive Session:

a. RCW 42.30.140(4)(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.

At 9:50 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of executive session and into recess until 10:10 a.m.



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At 10:10 a.m. Chairman Koorn announced the meeting back in regular session.

At 10:10 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting into executive session until 10:20 a.m.

Executive Session:

b. RCW 42.30.110(g)

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

At 10:20 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of executive session and into regular session. No decisions were made.

Battalion Chief of Training & Safety Position Hire

Chief Swiger recommended hiring Jeremy Ian Walton for the position.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve hiring Jeremy Ian Walton for the battalion chief position with a start date agreed upon with Chief Swiger; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The Special Meeting of the Board adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Attest:

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager