



NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Station 25, 2720 Heller Rd., Oak Harbor, WA

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

Special Meeting Minutes

September 29th, 2026

10:00 a.m.

Location: 770 NE Midway Blvd.
Oak Harbor, WA

Approved October 13th, 2026

Call to Order: Chairman Marvin Koorn called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Also in attendance: Commissioner Gerald Smith, Commissioner Robert Miller, Chief Chris Swiger, Chief Dan Horton, Chief Ian Walton, and Secretary Natasha Spydell. Chairman Koorn, Commissioner Smith, and Commissioner Miller were in attendance via conference call.

SAFER Grant

Chief Swiger stated he was notified via email that the district has been awarded the FEMA 2025 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. With grant funding, the district would be able to hire six additional full-time firefighters for three years. The grant requires district fund matching of 25% in year one, 25% in year two, and 65% in year three. The district total for wages and benefits for the three-year period is \$653,852.01. Chief Swiger stated that Chairman Koorn came in the day prior to discuss possible grant budgeting and proposed a new line item with funds set aside for the entire district portion of the grant. After three years, the district would determine how to move forward depending on possible levy, etc. Chief Swiger stated he made additional cuts to the 2027 budget proposal to put money aside for the grant if approved. He explained the grant does not cover bunker gear, uniforms, or NFPA 1582 physicals for the six additional firefighters. The estimated cost to the district would be \$20,000 depending on how much internal hiring is done to fill the new positions. Chairman Koorn made it clear that there is potential for layoffs after the three-year grant period ends. Commissioner Smith agreed that without decisions on the levy/bond discussion, the district cannot guarantee to keep the six positions after the three-year period. He asked how soon the district could receive funding through the new grant.

Chief Swiger stated once the grant is accepted, the district has 180 days to hire. If all six firefighters are hired before the first 180 days, the district can apply to move up the performance period to get funding sooner.

Commissioner Smith asked about accommodations for the additional firefighters.

Chief Swiger stated the chiefs and Chairman Koorn had a discussion about options yesterday, and there are multiple options that would be better discussed at a later meeting.

Chairman Koorn agreed stating the meeting today is just to approve or deny acceptance of the grant and the specific details should be discussed at a later date, but the district has options.

Commissioner Miller asked what the grant says about grant supervision and if the SAFER Recruitment and Retention Coordinator position would carry over.

Chief Swiger stated the current SAFER grant is completely separate, and the position would not oversee the grant.

Chairman Koorn stated the chiefs are working on future planning for how the district would do supervision out in the field and will be proposed at a later meeting for discussion. Chairman Koorn asked if the board had any further questions or comments before making a decision. None were presented.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Chief Swiger to accept the FY 2025 FEMA SAFER Grant as awarded; 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 10:09 a.m.

Attest:



Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager