



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

June 30th, 2026

9:00 a.m.

Location: 770 NE Midway Blvd.
Oak Harbor, WA

Approved July 14th, 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 300 – Safety Committee

The board was presented with a draft proposal for Policy 300. Chairman Koorn asked the board for questions and comments.

Commissioner Smith asked about Section 1.2.1.2., if the officer should be a chief officer.

Chief Walton stated it was meant to be lieutenant and above.

Commissioner stated the ratio of management representatives/membership representatives of 50/50 is not upheld if it is not a chief officer.

Chief Swiger stated the association selects two members and the chief officers select two members; one is always the chief of training/safety, and the other is normally an appointed lieutenant.

Chairman Koorn stated the management appointee should not be a volunteer. The policy should define who can be a management representative.

Commissioner Smith agreed.

Chief Swiger stated the WAC requires only one management representative.

Chairman Koorn stated he is not comfortable with only one and added that Section 1.2.2.1. should define members as well.

Chief Walton stated the chiefs will discuss and make the changes.

Commissioner Smith asked what is *'a reasonable timeframe'* to resolve issues as mentioned in Section 1.4.2.

Chief Walton stated it depends on the issue and whether there is funding, etc.

Commissioner Smith stated it is worthy to mention timeframes/expectations, i.e.: *within 72 hours a recommendation shall be made with how to proceed...*

Chief Swiger stated it is common to have different levels (1,2, 3) for different issues and resolutions.

Commissioner Smith stated the draft mentions meeting minutes being available at Station 25, but the WAC states, *'all the stations.'*

Chief Walton stated he strongly considered and concluded that no other stations are manned, and Station 25 is a place of congregation for Monday Night Trainings, so all members have access if displayed at Station 25 solely.

Commissioner Smith stated he understands but there is no harm in having them available at all stations.

Commissioner Smith directed a comment to Section 3.1 stating the WAC requires a one-hour minimum.

Chairman Koorn stated more than one member should be required to call a meeting, such as a majority (quorum) or the chairperson.

Commissioner Smith stated all forms passed along with Policy 311 – Bloodborne Pathogens, should be included in Section 4.2.



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The board directed Chief Walton to make the requested changes as discussed and bring back to the board at the regular meeting in July.

Policy 301 – Disposal of Universal Waste

The board was presented with a draft proposal for Policy 301. Chairman Koorn asked the board for questions and comments.

Commissioner Smith asked what are considered non-hazardous lightbulbs.

Chief Walton stated Section 3.4. defines what is considered non-hazardous and what personnel are allowed to do.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 301; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Policy 302 – Lockout/Tagout

The board was presented with a draft proposal for Policy 302. Chairman Koorn asked the board for questions and comments.

Commissioner Smith asked if hydraulic pumps are considered fuel powered.

Chief Walton stated it was meant for power heads.

Commissioner Smith stated Section 4.2.3. and 4.2.4. should include the entire description '*lock-out tag and out-of-service ribbon*' for uniformity.

Chairman Koorn stated Section 4.3.2. should include the chief rotation instead of 200 duty.

Chief Swiger recommended changing it to *command officer*. As long as the command officer knows, it does not matter who takes a vehicle out-of-service and notifies dispatch.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve Policy 302 with the requested changes to Sections 4.2.3, 4.2.4, and 4.3.2.; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

Motion carried unanimously.

Levy Planning/Ault Field Property

Chief Merrill stated he met with Kristina at the county offices to discuss bonding capacity and without knowing the future assessed value (AV), the estimate based on current AV would be \$35M - \$36M. He met with the Carletti Group and received quotes for feasibility studies. One quote is for a new station on Ault Field Rd., and the other quote is for existing facilities, presented as separate stand-alone projects. The feasibility study quote for the new station is \$72,050 and the feasibility study quote for existing stations is \$77,945.

Commissioner Smith asked if the new station study included Van Dam.

Chief Merrill stated the new station quote is only for Ault Field Rd. and Van Dam would be considered part of the existing stations study.

Chairman Koorn requested going out for bids on feasibility studies.

Chief Merrill stated a request for quote (RFQ) or request for proposal (RFP) would need to be prepared to be sent out.

Chairman Koorn stated he prefers an RFQ but could go either way, and recommends mirroring the Carletti quote. Chairman Koorn wants to look at budget cuts before deciding either way but does not want to stall the process. The decision needs to be made sooner rather than later which to prioritize and whether to go with a levy first, etc.

Chairman Koorn asked for the valuation on \$10M and the need to discuss with a bond agent soon.

Swiger stated \$10M will not be enough. He believes the district needs a 15,000 square foot facility.



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Chairman Koorn stated plans from when remodeling Station 25 was discussed should be around somewhere, or Brian at TCA might be able to provide a copy.

Commissioner Smith asked if looking into logging was still on hold.

Chairman Koorn stated a survey is needed regardless. The district can look into logging/clearing the property, what is required, and meeting with a local company regarding mineral rights. It would be worth getting an estimate for timber but cannot start cutting until approved by the county.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to get a survey done and contact the county to discuss the regulations on clearing the land.

By consensus, the board agreed (1) the county should be contacted first to find out what would be approved to do, (2) then a cost estimate on a land survey, (3) contact some companies who may be interested in minerals, (4) if county says okay to log, contact logging companies for estimates.

Chief Merrill asked about the RFQs for the stations.

The board agreed it was okay to start working on RFQs if time allowed and to start with new stations, one for Ault Field Rd. and the other for Van Dam Rd.

The discussion shifted to levy planning.

Chief Swiger stated through the strategic plan, the district already knows it is not meeting the response parameters it should be and he would like to go for a levy for manning.

Chief Merrill stated a discussion on what type of levy/bond the district wants to go for and the pros and cons to all, such as single levy lid lift, multi-year, G.O. Bond, with/without CPI attached, etc. The monetary amount needs to be determined and what the district intends to do with it and inform the public about what is in it for them. The district needs to plan and market and form a political action committee to share information with the public.

Commissioner Smith stated he continues to ask the chiefs what the district is going for and does not get an answer.

Chairman Koorn recommended a permanent levy increase.

Chief Swiger added, with CPI.

Commissioner Smith stated he is less in favor of going for levy and more in favor of a G.O. bond knowing the district needs stations. Apparatus need replaced but that can be budgeted and planned for in the future. The district is more in need of a facility. He is not in favor of a levy. There has been discussion on it, but no numbers or amounts have been drafted and proposed yet. Infrastructure is a big-ticket item, and the district cannot build with a levy so why plan stations if planning to go for a levy.

Chief Merrill stated the district needs both levy and bond, just need to decide which to do first, or whether to go for at the same time.

Commissioner Smith stated the district needs infrastructure to lay the foundation, not increase hiring to run medical calls.

Chairman Koorn agreed stating he struggles with that as well.

Commissioner Miller stated the district needs stations, equipment, and people and a budgeted amount of money should go into a replacement fund every year.

Chairman Koorn stated a list of everything the district purchased with the 2021 levy lid lift in order to show the public that the district spent more than the \$400,000 raise because it has the need.

Chief Merrill stated general election timing and validation needs to be decided.

Chairman Koorn stated the board needs to have numbers.



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Commissioner Smith reiterated he is in favor of a bond and wants to see the cost of two stations and go for that.

Chairman Koorn stated he could see justifying a levy and it is quicker than a bond. The district has stations and an admin building now. Hiring more firefighters to improve response is easier to justify.

Commissioner Smith asked if longevity is there if the district goes for a levy lid lift, so they are not going back to the public in five years.

Chief Swiger stated the district is going to have to regardless.

Chairman Koorn stated the board needs to see some numbers from the county and admin staff and see where budget cuts can be made and what the district needs a levy to purchase.

Commissioner Smith stated he feels the district has gotten salary heavy as-is and believes the district can run with volunteers.

Chairman Koorn stated the district has a lot of volunteers but a minimal amount that actually respond. A better job could be done making sure volunteers understand what they are committing to.

Commissioner Smith stated the district keeps talking about levy planning, but there is no progression. A presentation should already be put together.

Chairman Koorn agreed stating there is no reason why putting together needs, information, etc. cannot be done.

At 11:19 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting into Closed Session.

1. Closed 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 11:24 a.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of Closed Session and into Regular Session. No decisions were made.

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 11:24 a.m.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natasha Spydell".

Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager