



## NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Station 25, 2720 Heller Rd., Oak Harbor, WA  
Phone: 360-675-1131 Email: [Admin@nwfr.org](mailto:Admin@nwfr.org)

### Meeting Minutes

February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
6:30 p.m.

*Approved March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

**Call to Order:** Chairman Marvin Koorn called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Also in attendance: Commissioner Gerald Smith, Commissioner Robert Miller, Fire Chief Chris Swiger, Deputy Chief Ray Merrill, Battalion Chief Dan Horton, and Secretary Natasha Spydell.

#### **Additions to the Agenda**

None

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **Correspondence**

None

#### **Personnel**

Termination letters to be sent out were discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting for the following:

- Delbrouck, Ryan
- Gilbert, Troy
- Smith, Dakota
- Wallis, Hunter

**Consent Agenda:** Meeting Minutes for Regular Meeting, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026, Meeting Minutes for Special Meeting, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026, Meeting Minutes for Special Meeting, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026, expenditure approval for the month of January 2026, and Treasurer's Report for December 2025.

*General Batch #01G for Vouchers 260101001-260101015 dated 1/07/2026 in the amount of \$40,798.79.*

*Payroll Batch #0113OT for EFT Transaction 16 dated 1/13/2026 in the amount of \$152.27.*

*Payroll Batch #0113E for EFT Transaction 121 dated 1/13/2026 in the amount of \$5.02.*

*General Batch #02G for Vouchers 260102001-260102015 dated 1/14/2026 in the amount of \$13,155.76.*

*Payroll Batch #0126P for EFT Transactions 34-113 dated 1/15/2026 in the amount of \$78,001.91.*

*Payroll Batch #03E for EFT Transactions 122-126 dated 1/15/2026 in the amount of \$26,841.30.*

*Payroll Batch #03B for Vouchers 260103001-260103005 dated 1/21/2026 in the amount of \$11,176.88.*

*General/Payroll Batch #03Q for Vouchers 260106001-260106005 dated 1/21/2026 in the amount of \$20,141.85.*

*General Batch #03G for Vouchers 260107001-260107023 dated 1/21/2026 in the amount of \$17,447.81.*

*General Batch #04G for Vouchers 260108001-260108018 dated 1/28/2026 in the amount of \$35,465.29.*

Commissioner Miller motioned to approve the consent agenda; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Unfinished Business:**

**Budget**

No comments or questions.

**Station Maintenance List**

Lieutenant Reinstra stated that Kingsmen completed the interior painting at Station 22.

Commissioner Smith stated he stopped by the station and Kingsmen did a very good job.

Chairman Koorn asked if Commissioner Smith and Lieutenant Reinstra met to go over the RFQ as previously discussed.

Lieutenant Reinstra stated he met with Commissioner Smith and Chief Merrill to review the RFQ and he is working on a final draft to present to the board.

Chairman Koorn asked if the draft would be ready for the next regular meeting.

Lieutenant Reinstra stated it would be ready for the March meeting.

**Ambulance Engine**

Lieutenant Reinstra stated Pacific Diesel confirmed that the engine needs to be replaced and recommended a new Ford Motor. When asked about bulletproofing, Pacific Diesel said the van-type 6.0L engines do not have the same issues as the detuned pickup 6.0L motors. The motor comes with a Ford factory warranty.

Chairman Koorn asked if a 2006 ambulance is worth putting \$36,000 into.

Chief Swiger stated the rest of it is a great ambulance and it is meant to be a fire department ambulance.

Commissioner Smith asked how much the district already has into it.

Lieutenant Reinstra stated the district has spent around \$4,000 on top of the \$10,000 to purchase it.

Lieutenant Reinstra stated it is a good ambulance that can be used as a backup ambulance or for a rehab unit in the future if the district decided to go another route.

Commissioner Miller stated he thinks it is worth putting the money into it.

Commissioner Smith stated he questioned whether it is worth the money also, but we never know what we are getting when purchasing used.

Commissioner Miller stated it is a good unit, and he would like to see a new engine go in and it should last another 100,000 miles with the new engine.

Commissioner Miller motioned to approve the engine replacement by Pacific Diesel; motion seconded by Commissioner Smith.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**EMS License**

Chief Swiger stated the license is at the state.

**Whidbey Chaplain Resource MOU**

Chief Swiger stated no progress has been made.

**Policy 164 – Apparatus Graphics**

Chief Swiger stated the chiefs got together to make changes as requested by Commissioner Smith and he would like to table the policy to discuss at a special meeting.

Commissioner Smith recommended sending pictures to a sign shop.

Chief Swiger stated that was part of the discussion today.

Chairman Koorn stated a special meeting will be scheduled to discuss further.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Drone Program**

District members Jeff Halbrook and Lieutenant Frank Valencic presented a PowerPoint presentation on the future of the drone program. The presentation discussed what has been accomplished over the last year of the program and where they see it going in the future. They reached out to different drone companies and BRINC was responsive and inviting. The members visited the BRINC facility in Seattle and were very impressed with the company and its drone program. The BRINC drone program is designed for first responders. Jeff Halbrook and Lieutenant Valencic asked the board if they would be available for a meeting with BRINC representatives so they could come and give their presentation and answer any questions the board may have.

The board agreed to a special meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. to meet with BRINC.

Commissioner Smith asked if the board could get a copy of the contract before the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Koorn thanked the district members for their presentation.

##### **Policy 102 – Purchases**

The board was given a draft proposal of the policy that would add two additional credit cards. One card for Chief Merrill, and one card to be checked out for wildland mobilizations. The district's credit limit would need to be increased by submitting an application to the bank.

Chairman Koorn stated he is not in favor of increasing the credit limit. He stated the chief credit cards are not used close to their maximum limit and he would prefer adjusting the limit amounts on each card instead.

Commissioner Smith stated it is logical to redistribute the credit limits according to use.

Chief Swiger stated he would rather have a higher limit just in case.

Chairman Koorn requested the admin staff get together and redistribute credit limits based on past use so the two additional cards can be added without raising the overall credit limit.

Commissioner Miller and Commissioner Smith agreed that the credit limit on each card should be redistributed.

##### **Policy 141 – Fuel Cards**

Secretary Spydell stated the fuel card policy has not been updated since she has been here and it does not align with the districts current fuel card process. She stated the district has used WEX Fuel Cards for over three years, but the policy still mentions Corey Oil as the vendor. Secretary Spydell stated the State Auditor's Office looks at fuel cards very closely and she would like the policy to match the process and track fuel card discrepancies to show they have been recognized and addressed by management. Form 141-2 Fuel Card Transaction Discrepancy is used anytime there is a fuel card discrepancy such as incorrect odometer entered or a vehicle card being used to fill portable equipment, etc. Form 142-2 is completed by the accounting manager upon finding an error when reviewing the monthly transaction

report and given to Chief Horton to discuss the error and corrective action with the district member responsible for the error. Secretary Spydell stated this will help with the state auditor's review of the fuel cards during accountability audits.

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve Policy 141, Form 141-1, and Form 141-2; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Design Conference**

Commissioner Smith stated with the district's intentions for the future, he would like to attend a fire station design conference in Reno, NV and is asking the other board members for permission.

Chief Merrill stated he has attended the conference before, and it is a very good conference and he was very impressed.

Chairman Koorn stated he is interested in attending also.

Secretary Spydell asked the board members to send her their desired travel details.

### **Nightshade Solutions Contract**

Chief Swiger stated EF Recover is now Nightshade Solutions and the district needs a new contract.

Chairman Koorn stated the recovery costs increased to 22% and asked if the 45 days for payment was in the previous contract with EF Recovery.

Chief Swiger stated he cannot remember but the proposed contract states *up to 45 days*.

Commissioner Smith asked if there were other options available.

Chief Swiger stated there are other options out there but none as good as this company. He stated the board needs to discuss what the district wants to bill for on Page 9 of the contract.

Commissioner Miller stated he has concern with the number of days and processing costs.

Chairman Koorn asked if the board wanted the option that states to bill insurance, if no insurance bill liable party, then close the claim.

Commissioner Smith asked why the district would not elect to send the liable party to collections.

Chief Horton stated the district would need to select a collections agency.

Chief Swiger stated he prefers not to send to collections.

Chairman Koorn stated if a homeowner's insurance denied a claim, it would get sent to collections.

Commissioner Smith stated he could see that being an issue if insurance companies start denying claims regularly.

Chief Horton stated there is the option to not do it to residents, but only non-residents.

Commissioner Miller stated he is not in favor of sending residents to collections.

Chairman Koorn stated he is good with option 3 for residents, and option 4 for non-residents.

(Option 3: Bill insurance company. If no insurance, bill liable party. If not paid, close)

(Option 4: Bill insurance company. If denied or no insurance, bill liable party. If unpaid, take next step – collections)

Commissioner Miller agreed.

Chairman Koorn stated admin needs to find a collections agency and requested clarification on the 22% processing fee of the settlement versus billed portion prior to signing the contract.

### **Strategic Plan**

Prior to the board meeting, the commissioners were given a copy of the strategic plan prepared by Chief Merrill.

Chief Merrill stated internal interviews, external surveys, focus groups, reviews with the chiefs, etc. were conducted to gather information for the strategic plan. There are some minor changes that need to be made then a final copy will be provided back to the board members. He is happy to answer any questions the board may have tonight, and a lot of work went into this document.

Commissioner Smith stated he appreciates the time and effort Chief Merrill put into it. He asked how much time was spent on it.

Chief Merrill stated the focus group met twice a month for five months, there were some home visits and many hours spent on statistical research etc.

Chairman Koorn thanked Chief Merrill for his work and stated the document he prepared is a lot more usable than what the district would have received going with an agency.

### **Administrative Staff Wages**

Chairman Koorn proposed adding 3% to the 5% administrative wage increase for 2026, making the total an 8% increase from 2025. He stated that Secretary Spydell's position was at the executive exempt threshold which is under what an 8% increase would have been, so her salary should be adjusted to equal the 8% increase as well.

Chairman Koorn motioned to approve the additional 3% increase for admin wages, including Secretary Spydell's salary, effective for hours worked starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026; motion seconded by Commissioner Miller.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **VFIS Risk Control Survey**

Chief Swiger stated the district's insurance company came out and conducted a risk control survey and stated the district is doing great.

### **Fire Chief Report**

Chief Swiger stated he needs a commitment from a commissioner for battalion chief interviews starting 9:00 a.m. on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Miller stated he would be there.

Chief Swiger reminded the board there will be a Meet & Greet with the battalion chief of training and safety candidates starting at 6:00 p.m. on February 18<sup>th</sup>, at Station 25.

### **Deputy Chief Report**

Chief Merrill discussed a recent structure fire the district responded to and shared that the 2026 Firefighter Academy is scheduled to begin on February 23<sup>rd</sup> with 13 recruits attending.

### **Battalion Chief of Operations/Support Report**

Chief Horton reviewed the manpower and incident response reports for the month of January.

## **Good of the Order**

Commissioner Smith asked for an update on the Ault Field property.

Chief Swiger stated he emailed the state Monday and has not heard back yet.

Secretary Spydell stated the title transfer processing fee check was just recently cashed in January.

Commissioner Smith asked if the district should start working in the direction of planning what to do with prepping the property.

Chief Swiger suggested waiting until after the design conference.

Chairman Koorn recommended waiting until the district has the deed in hand.

Commissioner Smith stated he is suggesting to start prepping bids.

Chairman Koorn agreed that starting the paperwork is a good idea but not having contractors survey the land yet. He suggested looking into contracts for logging and gravel, and agreed the board needs to start talking and thinking about plans for the property.

**At 8:17 p.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting into executive session until 8:25 p.m.**

### **1. 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 8:25 p.m. Chairman Koorn called the meeting out of executive session into regular session.**

**No decisions were made.**

## **Adjourn Meeting**

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

**Motion carried unanimously.**

The Regular Meeting of the Board adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Attest:



Natasha Spydell

Board Secretary/Accounting Manager