

NORTH WHIDBEY FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Administration Building, 770 NE Midway Blvd., #1, Oak Harbor, Washington
MINUTES of the Special Meeting on March 13, 2018 at 1730

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Koorn called the meeting to order at 1730, also in attendance were Commissioner Goen, Commissioner Lamont, Chief Kirko, Battalion Chief Swiger, Interim Secretary Amber Damon, Lt. Brandhorst, FF Lawson, FF Jordan, FF Turner, Battalion Chief Zimmerman, Capt. O'Connor, Kris O'Connor and Mike Henderson.

FUTURE PLANNING

- Chief Kirko opened the meeting with presenting (3) options to the board that he sees moving forward, keeping things identical to what they are now, reduce our services and advance our services. These will all be based on financial necessity. The request for services has increased approximately 15% in the past 4 years. Do we cut back services? Do we increase our taxes? We don't have enough interactions with the public. Our advertising needs to be better and we need to receive more input from the public. How do we get them to interact? We will only be able to sustain as things are now for another few years. Better/More services will cost more. We have seen such a rise in calls that we need a more secured system. Some days we run under staff, some days we are over staffed with volunteer response.
- Commissioner Koorn asked the meeting attendee's what they see as critical for 2019.
- Chief Kirko – sees the duty crew and if we can continue to provide the services we are. Also, Capital projects such as station improvement/repairs are behind.
- Captain O'Connor – I see the number of calls increase, with less involvement from other agencies. There is a new manager at the parks. The equipment and people with the MSAR team are in good shape and doesn't see any major improvements or purchases in 2019. Within the next few years we will need to replace the tubes on M21, approximately 10-12k. The Sheriff's department is funded by boat registration, they don't have the funding for rescue calls or staffing.
- Battalion Chief Zimmerman – nothing to report except there is an increase in call volume and we need to get more people interested.
- Chief Swiger – What does the public want? We have approximately 19 duty crew staff, with 10 of them working 150-240 hours a month. The pay rate is a huge issue, people are leaving for better pay and less of a commitment elsewhere, less training required and less stress. We need to look at the purchase of new engines for the ISO rating. ST26 & ST24 are hurting for volunteers and building condition. Would like to see a citizens committee to determine what NWFR is here for and research the needs of the community. Station manning – the duty crew right now some are working 72-hour shifts. Stated that we have an advertisement out now looking for more part-time EMT/FF, only a portion of the cost comes from the hospital.
- Chief Kirko – commented that cyber emergencies play a different role than 20 years ago. Chief Kirko shared a comment from our Facebook posting regarding the part-time job openings about low pay and to high risk of job with lots of training required for the low pay.
- Commissioner Goen – What are we going to do with the VanDam property? Originally it was purchased to put another station on but most of the 5-mile radius coverage is water. The property already has water and perks for sewer. We could put a station there but what about staffing and equipment? Would we fall out of the ISO rating? Reducing services is short term & the public loses.
- Commissioner Lamont – If we don't increase our finances we will need to decline services to

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sustain.

- Chairman Koorn – Financing, recruitment, do we hire? DC, FF, Lt.? Chairman Koorn would like to add a training building within the next 5 years. What are the statics? How many shifts are open? How many off island transports? What will it take to fill shifts? Do we go for a levy lift? Property to be sold? VanDam and ST28.
- Chief Kirko – If we don't have a WH contract we would only be able to respond to AID calls with NO transports.
- Commissioner Goen – Doesn't want to see NWFR go backwards in services, it's not providing the services that cost it's the people to fill the shifts. How many calls would be cut if we have no Duty Crew? We wouldn't be able to cut completely, we would have to keep something to cover some calls. We either get rid of services or run out of money. How do we recruit? Fire/EMS/Both?
- Chief Kirko – Do we have 4 people responding out of one station? Need a better plan. Suggested breaking out meetings. There are safety issues with running back to back shifts.
- Chairman Koorn – Would like to schedule an April planning meeting to discuss Duty Crew and the WhidbeyHealth Contract in more depth. Requested from Chief Kirko to bring the following documentation, off island transports, split crews, open shifts, out of district calls, cost of what WH covers and what it really costs, 1st quarter numbers.

ADJOURN MEETING

- There being no further business and by mutual consent, the special meeting of the Board adjourned at 1830.

Attest:



Amber Damon, Interim Secretary to the Board