

# NORTH HIGHLINE FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS MEETING



**September 19, 2016**

---

The regular North Highline Fire District Fire Commissioners' Meeting for September was called to order at 7:00 PM by Commissioner Liz Giba with Commissioner Dominic Barrera present. Also in attendance were Ernie Brown, Barbara Dobkins, Bob Lawson, Gill Loring, Mike Marrs, Wayne Metz, Bob Price, Charlotte Ryan, and Brian Snure.

Chief Marrs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dominic Barrera moved to accept the meeting agenda as presented. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried (2-0).

Dominic Barrera moved to excuse Julie Hiatt from the September regular meeting. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried (2-0).

## Meeting Minutes

None.

## Accounts Payable

Dominic Barrera moved to approve Vouchers 1609101 through 1609338 in the amount of \$608,266.10. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried (2-0).

Correspondence

- **Medic One Foundation Annual Dinner/Auction**

The event will be held Friday, October 7, 2016, which benefits the Medic One Foundation. Individual tickets are \$150 each or a table of 10 is \$1,500. A copy of the invitation is on file with the minutes.

Public Comment

Barbara Dobkin stated her apprehension about the proposed King County homeless shelter. She said she was concerned about the impact on EMS services in the community. She wondered if King County could pay for the increased costs for protection.

Gill Loring also commented on the proposed King County homeless shelter. He said that anyone in the county could use the facility – not just those in our area. He also said he hoped either the County or the Salvation Army could help offset the added expense.

IAFF Local #1461

Ernie Brown introduced himself (President) and Bob Lawson (Vice-president) of Local #1461, which represents both King County Fire District 2 and North Highline firefighters. He handed the Board three letters and explained each one in turn:

1. Dated September 19, 2106 from Bob Lawson (Vice-president): Local #1461 thanked the Board for approving the purchase of new thermal imaging cameras and defibrillators; however, the process took so long from the initial approval that the final cost was an additional \$2,000 to our taxpayers.

While not in the letter, he also brought up the Union's frustration with the slow process of purchasing replacement ballistic vests. He said that the purchase was approved in May, and now it's September. He said our vests expired in 2014, and now it's 2016. He said this is a safety concern for the firefighters, and they must be replaced.

2. Dated September 2, 2016 from Colby Cruz (Trustee): Mr. Brown stated that the #1 killer of firefighters is cancer. Their gear can be covered in carcinogens after they return from a fire and must be cleaned properly. Captain Thorsteinson researched the purchase of new bunker washers last August, but we still don't have them.

He then gave the Board a booklet published by the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters called Healthy In, Healthy Out (outlining the best practices for reducing fire fighter risk of exposures to carcinogens). He explained that the

temporary plan of cleaning gear is to have a Battalion Chief put the dirty clothing in a garage bag, and drive it in their car to Station 28 to be cleaned. He said that because the current practice is so slow, sometimes a firefighter will take their gear home to be washed, which then exposes their family. He felt that Captain Thorsteinson brought management a solution and not a problem, and he wondered what was taking so long. He apologized for breaking the chain of command, but said he is frustrated that things haven't happened yet.

Because this is such a huge safety issue, the Union is ready to file a claim with Labor and Industries. However, they are willing to wait to see a proposed time line to remedy the matter.

Commissioner Barrera replied that this issue is important to him as well. He became aware of it in a conversation he had with a Captain during Jubilee Days, and he brought up the issue at our next meeting (see minutes of 7/18/2016). He said the Board takes healthy workplace issues very seriously. The delay in purchasing the equipment was due to infrastructure challenges. There is now a plan in place to move forward.

Commissioner Giba thanked Mr. Brown for bringing the issue to the Board's attention. She said the Board doesn't always know the day-to-day challenges firefighters face unless we are in communication.

Mr. Brown then brought up the current negotiation progress. He said there was some discrepancy between what the District's labor attorney said about mediation during their last negotiation meeting, He stated that because it is always better to work together than to work against each other, the Union will agree to mediation and won't file their proposed Unfair Labor Process (ULP) if management agrees to mediate.

3. Dated September 9, 2016 from Ernie Brown (President): This letter addresses the consolidation between North Highline Fire District and District 2. Part of the 2009 agreement called for a 4-station operation, and Local #1810 made concessions to help achieve that goal. However, District 2 has now stated they don't want a 4-station operation. Therefore, the positions of Training Officer and Fire Inspector should be reinstated.

The Board thanked Mr. Brown for his report. Copies of the above-referenced documentation are on file with the minutes.

#### Commissioners' Report

None.

Financial Reports

None.

Chief's Report

None.

Attorney's Report

None.

Unfinished Business

Chief Marrs said that he attended the community meeting on Thursday, September 15 regarding the proposed homeless shelter (see minutes of 9/12/2016). Because the facility was standing room only and not everyone had a chance to voice their opinion, King County will be holding an additional community meeting. Thursday's meeting was to listen to citizens' concerns but there was no discussion, and they are still planning to open the facility on November 1. The Chief restated his concerns about changing the current use of the property in such a short time frame.

After a discussion on specific safety concerns, Mr. Snure (the department's attorney) suggested the Board write a letter listing those concerns. When asked about obtaining current copies of the architect's plans to convert the building to a shelter, he said we could submit a public disclosure request. After further discussion, Dominic Barrera moved to instruct Mr. Snure and Chief Marrs to draft a letter to King County outlining the fire district's concerns and priorities about the proposed homeless shelter, and to submit a public request for records pertaining to the code change of the building. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried (2-0).

Commissioner Giba asked that a representative from the fire district attend the next NHUAC (North Highline Unincorporated Area Council) meeting on October 6. Chief Marrs said that he would ask Fire Marshal Pettigrew attend their meeting.

The Secretary presented the Board with a Proxy Authority form from the Washington Fire Commissioners Association (WFCA). Dominic Barrera moved to authorize Commissioner Hiatt to vote on their behalf at the upcoming WFCA conference. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried (2-0). Both commissioners signed the form.

New Business

None.

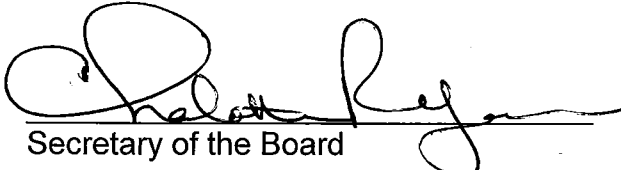
Executive Session

A 15-minute executive session was called at 8:05 PM to discuss union negotiations per RCW 42.30.140(4)(b). The session was extended an additional 10 minutes at 8:20 PM.


The meeting reconvened at 8:30 PM.

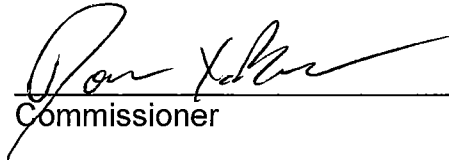
As there was no further business, Dominic Barrera moved to adjourn. Liz Giba seconded. Motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Secretary of the Board

  
Chairman, Commissioner

  
Commissioner

  
Commissioner