NORTH HIGHLINE FIRE DISTRICT
COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MAY 18, 2026
SPECIAL MEETING

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the North Highline Fire District (NHFD) was held in person and remotely on May 18, 2026, pursuant to proper notice. In person were, Commissioner Julie Hiatt, Commissioner Dominic Barrera, Commissioner Terri Robison, Chief Jason Gay, Assistant Chief Wayne Metz, and District Secretary Christina Parker.

Attendees: Firefighter Ian Watkins

Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Commissioner Hiatt.

Flag Salute.

Chief Jason Gay led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Approval.

Commissioner Hiatt moved to accept the meeting agenda as presented. Commissioner Robison seconded. Motion carried (3-0).

Presentations / Announcements.

Presentation

Assistant Chief Metz provided an update regarding the Call Summary. Among the most notable incidents reported were a residential triplex fire and a recreational vehicle fire.

Announcements

- None

Public Comment.

- None

Correspondence.

- None

IAFF Local #1461

- None

Commissioners' Reports.

- Commissioner Hiatt reported that her brother-in-law experienced a stroke several weeks ago. She discovered him during this medical emergency. Commissioner Hiatt expressed her appreciation for the prompt response of the emergency crews, who recognized that he was suffering from a stroke. He was swiftly transported to the hospital by Medic 4, where a clot was successfully removed. According to Commissioner Hiatt, he is now nearly back to his normal state of health. She conveyed her profound gratitude for the collective response of everyone involved in this incident.

Financial Reports.

The Board received copies of the **May 2026** Accounts Payable Report.

Chief Gay conducted a review of the monthly expenses and provided commentary on the Q1 2026 Budget Proposal. He emphasized the upward trend in personnel fees, which are elevated due to ongoing personnel challenges, including employees currently on injury leave.

Commissioner Hiatt expressed her concerns regarding the personnel costs. She requested detailed information on the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) costs, which significantly contribute to the high percentage figures.

Commissioner Barrera sought further clarification on personnel costs, particularly in light of the unanticipated overtime (OT) that has contributed to the situation. Chief Gay responded that the issue is not solely due to OT, as it also includes some unexpected retirements. Commissioner Barrera then inquired whether the excess amount will continue into Q2.

Chief Gay estimated that the financial situation would stabilize once staffing levels normalize and mentioned plans to increase the budget allocation for Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters (LEOFF-1) members due to rising long-term care costs. While minimal changes might be observed in Q2, he anticipates adjustments will be made once the department reaches full staffing, adding that we will have five (5) personnel on shift after the July graduation, with four (4) more starting the next academy in February 2027.

Chief's Report.

Operations

Assistant Chief Wayne Metz delivered an operational update that included various training initiatives, including the upcoming Captains test and Battalion Chiefs testing. Additionally, our organization contributed to the Ports' triennial drill by providing our equipment and personnel.

Fire Prevention

No update.

Chief Gay reported on the following:

- Facilities – Chief Gay addressed the topic of bunker gear extractors and dryers, noting that Station 18 has the setup. Station 19 poses extra challenges related to the exhaust system of the dryer cabinet.

- Equipment – No updates

  Personnel – On May 6, 2026, the initial negotiation meeting was held regarding the CBA for 2027-2029. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for early June.

  During the meeting, the District proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Local 1461 pertaining to specialty staffing for specific high-priority special events. The District would like to allocate additional staffing for the FIFA event, and the inclusion of the White Center Pride event description to ensure that the community continues to receive the expected services.

  Chief Gay also confirmed the installation of the Plymovent systems at the north stations is scheduled for June 29.

  The Chief also informed the Board that Highline Hospital (St. Anne's) has discontinued its Cath Lab services. Consequently, in certain cases, patients will need to be referred to Valley Medical, which is a regrettable diversion to a facility located farther away. This issue was brought to the Chief's attention by the paramedics.

- Events - **May 18 – 21, 2026** (Wenatchee) **2026 WFC Convention**

- Other – Chief Gay provided an update during the Labor Management Meeting held on April 16, 2026, indicating that progress has been made with the advancement of nine policies that have been updated and implemented. There are a few remaining policies for review and approval, and numerous others that necessitate revision; however, forward progress continues to be made.

We are currently undergoing an audit of North Highline for the years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Chief Gay expressed his gratitude to Christina for her diligent efforts in supplying all the required information to the auditors. She has been working with three auditors who were assigned. This represents a considerable workload in addition to her regular responsibilities and the Annual Report due at the end of the month.

Chief Gay delivered an update regarding the LEOFF I Long-Term Care (LTC) status, noting that the policy is being utilized with associated reimbursement expenses. This expense line will be reviewed in detail during the upcoming budget season.

Chief Gay provided additional remarks regarding the Annual Report, noting that King 2 plans to make their Annual Report accessible online. He expressed a desire to explore the possibility of making the North Highline Annual Report available on the website as well, to facilitate transparency with the community and easier public access to the information.

Commissioner Robison inquired if Transamerica provided a reason for the rate increase? Chief Gay referred to the Secretary of the Board, who stated that this increase applies statewide and is contingent upon the claims experience for all long-term care insurance policies.

Consent Agenda Approval.

Commissioner Barrera moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Robison seconded. Motion carried (3-0).

Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Barrera moved to accept the minutes of the April 27, 2026, Regular Board Meeting. Commissioner Robison seconded. Motion carried (3-0).

Voucher Approval for May 2026.

Commissioner Barrera moved to approve the May 2026 accounts payable vouchers as follows:

260401001 to 260401002 in the amount of $564,418.21 for payment on April 30, 2026. Commissioner Robison seconded. Motion carried (3-0)

Unfinished Business.

- None

New Business.

- None

Good of the Order.

- None

As there was no further business, Commissioner Hiatt moved to adjourn. Commissioner Barrera seconded. Motion carried (3-0). The meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary of the Board

Julie Hiatt
Chairperson, Commissioner

Dominic Barrera
Commissioner

Terri Robison
Commissioner