

# NORTH HIGHLINE FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS MEETING



## June 28, 2021

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the regular North Highline Fire District Fire Commissioners' Meeting for June was called to order via GoToMeeting (virtual online meeting) at 6:00 PM by Commissioner Liz Giba with Commissioner Julie Hiatt and Commissioner Dominic Barrera participating. Also attending via GoToMeeting were Chief Mike Marrs, Assistant Chief Wayne Metz, Assistant Chief Ray Pettigrew, and Shauna Sheppard.

Chief Marrs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

### Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Hiatt moved to accept the minutes of the May 24, 2021, regular meeting as presented. Commissioner Barrera seconded. Motion carried (3-0).

### Accounts Payable

Commissioner Hiatt moved to approve the June 2021 accounts payable vouchers as follows:

- 2160101 to 2160101 in the amount of \$7.49 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Labor & Industries
- 2160102 to 2160103 in the amount of \$663.20 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Payroll
- 2160201 to 2160205 in the amount of \$301,986.91 - June Month-End Vouchers
- 2160301 to 2160301 in the amount of \$161.40 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Taxes

Commissioner Barrera seconded. Motion carried (3-0).

### Correspondence

- None

### Public Comment

- None

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Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Hiatt reported that she has not had any further communication with the King County Council about her invitation to experience the 4th of July in North Highline at her home.

Local #1461

- None

Financial Reports

The Board received copies of the May 2021 Treasurer's and Cash Flow Reports. Chief Marrs reported that we are tracking well; all financials are in line with projected budget numbers.

Chief's Report

Chief Marrs reported on the following:

- COVID-19 Update – (a) Cases continue to fall while vaccination rates continue to rise. The state expects to re-open on June 30<sup>th</sup>. People who are not vaccinated should wear masks in public and social distance. (b) Vaccinations at Farmers' Markets and other sites are slowing down, and King County Health is winding down the vaccination events. (c) Research continues to show that the vaccines are very, although not 100%, effective. There is a slight reduction in protection against some of the variants. (d) The state is also tracking vaccine breakthrough – those who get COVID-19 after being fully vaccinated. (e) Commissioner Hiatt asked about vaccines for young people. Chief Marrs responded that those between 12 and 18 can be vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine. Clinical trials for infants to 11-year-olds are occurring. Vaccines will not be available for this age group until the results are known.
- Firefighter Hiring Update – (a) Assistant Chief Metz reported that of our five new Fire Academy graduates, Austin Tschernaga was the valedictorian and made Chief's Company, and Ethan Stewart earned the Top Rung and Chief's Company awards. Matthew Margot and Ashley Harshell began shifts this past week and both are great additions to our crews. Commissioner Giba said she is happy to hear about the quality of our candidates and their early success. (b) We have conditionally hired five more candidates for the next academy starting in August 2021. We lost one candidate because of the psychological evaluation. Another declined our conditional offer of employment.
- Fourth of July -- As high temperatures and drought conditions continue, we are very busy and staffing continues to be a challenge. Yesterday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, we had an apartment fire and a commercial fire. Commissioner Giba asked if King County might follow Thurston County in banning fireworks on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Chief Marrs said there has been talk about banning sales and discharge. So far it has been limited to talk.
- Police - The last legislature passed several police reform bills. Police will no longer be going in ahead of us on certain types of calls. This is a major change. We are concerned that, although we are not prepared to deal with violent, aggressive individuals, that responsibility is going to land in our lap. We are working with our legal teams to formulate our position. Commissioner Giba asked when this change will take effect. Chief Marrs replied that there is a significant amount of ambiguity. He will forward a PowerPoint presentation that provides some details. PowerPoint on file with the minutes.

Attorneys Report

- None

Unfinished Business

Aid Car Staffing – Commissioner Hiatt and Chief Marrs have been working on budgeting. We have been able to manage line item up-staffing and are moving toward full-time Aid 318 staffing. We expect retirements and promotions to increase our daily staffing. Our agreement with the union specifies how many people can be off at any time for the initial time-off bidding. After that, if it does not cause overtime, firefighters can have the day off. We do not want to hire more people just to let more people off. We agree with the union about the need for increased staffing, but do not agree about how that staffing should be allocated. The union wants a MOU guaranteeing Aid 318 staffing by the end of 2022. That does not look possible without the union’s commitment that staffing levels will be where they need to be without additional time off. Otherwise, overtime would become the standard way of staffing Aid 318. Although increasing staffing at straight time is more economical, we will continue to use line-item overtime until we find a resolution.

New Business

Commissioner Giba asked about the cooling shelter. We have not sent anyone there. However, Chief Marrs contacted them after the apartment fire. They were willing to accommodate four households in need of accommodations. As it turned out, those households did not need to go to the cooling shelter because the Red Cross was able to help them.

Good of the Order

- None

As there was no further business, Commissioner Dominic moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hiatt seconded. Motion carried (3-0), and the meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,




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Secretary of the Board




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Chairman, Commissioner




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Commissioner




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Commissioner