



North County Regional Fire Authority

COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

January 22 , 2025

4:00pm

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

The following attendees were present:

COMMISSIONERS

Ric Cade
Rob Johnson
Leonard Kelley
Greg Oakes
Marilyn Oertle
Al Schreiber
Holly Sloan-Buchanan

FIRE AUTHORITY STAFF

John Cermak, Fire Chief
Dave Kraski, Deputy Fire Chief
Kari Wheeler, Board Secretary / Bus. Process Coordinator
Randy Krumm, Finance Director
Allison Jubb, Human Resources Director

Commissioner Chair Johnson led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

There were no public or employee comments.

IAFF LOCAL 3438

Speaker: Kirk Norman, Vice President of North County Professional Firefighters

- *Expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the commission.*

Key Points Raised:

- ***Call for Leadership Change:***
 - *The labor group previously expressed the need for immediate leadership change, citing issues with morale, trust, communication, and stakeholder relationships within the Fire Authority.*
 - *Concern that the commission has not responded or acted upon these issues.*
- ***Culture Survey Findings (2021 and Follow-Up):***
 - *A culture survey conducted in 2021 revealed significant mistrust and failed communication between firefighters and leadership.*
 - *Results were reportedly downplayed, with employees hesitant to name individuals due to fear of retaliation.*
 - *A follow-up survey confirmed low trust levels, with Chief Cermak overwhelmingly identified as the primary source of distrust and miscommunication.*
- ***Leadership Critique:***
 - *Chief Cermak was described as a driven leader with a toxic, disingenuous leadership style.*



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- *Concerns were raised about his ability to manage agency challenges and prioritize safety and well-being over personal projects.*
- **Operational Issues:**
 - *Stations face issues such as undrinkable water, minimal staffing, and cross-staffing inefficiencies.*
 - *Financial concerns were raised about the growing training center debt and the lack of offsetting contracts.*
- **Impact on Firefighters and Stakeholders:**
 - *External stakeholders are frustrated with the lack of honest collaboration.*
 - *Internal employees have linked Chief Cermak's behavior to clinically diagnosed PTSD.*

Request for Action:

- *The labor group requested a response from the commission regarding transitioning leadership in alignment with commitments made during the RFA merger.*
- *Emphasized that firefighters and stakeholders are asking for change, noting that further inaction damages the Fire Authority.*

Question to the Commission:

- *When will the commission honor its commitment to the citizens and firefighters by transitioning leadership?*

Chair Johnson stated, "We always honor our word as a Board". Chair Johnson indicated that the Local would hear from the Board when the Board is ready to give more specifics. Chair Johnson thanked the Local for the report.

MOTION TO AMEND ITEM 7 – EXECUTIVE SESSION, CITING THE SECOND TOPIC AS SET FORTH IN RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) TO REVIEW THE PERFORMANCE OF A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE.

1st: Commissioner Cade **2nd** Commissioner Schrieber

Discussion: Chair Johnson indicated the need for an additional discussion during the first scheduled executive session, therefore, the discussion for matters related to collective bargaining issues (noted on the presented agenda) would be tabled to a future meeting.

APPROVED: Unanimous

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

1st: Commissioner Cade **2nd** Commissioner Schrieber

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous



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MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEM A, JANUARY 8, 2025 MINUTES.

1st: Commissioner Schreiber **2nd** Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan

Attachments: See [January 8, 2025, Draft Minutes](#).

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEM B, GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE.

1st: Commissioner Schreiber **2nd** Commissioner Kelley

Attachments: See [GF Accounts Payable](#).

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

The Board met in Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) to discuss with legal counsel pending or potential litigation; AND as set forth in RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g) to review the performance of an employee.

At 4:10pm, Chair Johnson announced a 30 min Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 4:40pm.

At 4:40pm, Chair Johnson announced a 20-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 5:00pm.

At 5:00pm, Chair Johnson announced a 20-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 5:20pm.

At 5:20pm, Chair Johnson announced a 10-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 5:30pm.

At 5:30pm, Chair Johnson announced a 5-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 5:35pm.

At 5:35pm, Chair Johnson announced a 5-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 5:40pm.

At 5:40pm, the Executive Session concluded with no action taken, and the regular meeting was called back to order.



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MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 01222025-01

1st: Commissioner Oakes **2nd** Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan

Attachments: See [RESOLUTION 01222025-01](#).

Discussion: none.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Cade – Yes

Commissioner Johnson – Yes

Commissioner Kelley – Yes

Commissioner Oakes – Yes

Commissioner Oertle – Yes

Commissioner Schreiber – Yes

Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan – Yes

Resolution 01222025-01 is adopted, unanimous.

MOTION TO DIRECT HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR JUBB AND FIRE CHIEF CERMAK TO IDENTIFY RESOURCES AND OPTIONS FOR THE BOARD TO SELECT AN INTERIM FIRE CHIEF, AND TO PRESENT TO THE BOARD NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 26, 2025, THE SECOND COMMISSION MEETING NEXT MONTH.

1st: Commissioner Schreiber **2nd** Commissioner Cade

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

QUARTERLY DIVISION PRESENTATION

[Community Risk Reduction, 2024 – Quarter 4](#), presented by Assistant Chief Steve Goforth

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

[Camp Blaze](#), presented by Captain Becky Wilbur

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

a. [December 2024 Financial Report](#) – presented by Finance Director, Randy Krumm

b. **MOTION TO AMEND PAGE TWO (2) OF THE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE CONSORTIUM ACADEMY COSTS AS TBD AFTER EACH CLASS TRUE UP AND AGREED BY THE ILA FIRE CHIEFS.**

1st: Commissioner Oakes **2nd** Commissioner Schreiber

Attachments: [Training Center Fee Schedule Amendment](#)

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous



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CHIEF'S REPORT

[See Report](#)

Chair Johnson asked Secretary Wheeler to make a note that he would like a final Levy decision on the February 12, 2025 agenda for possible action.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board met in Executive Session as set forth in RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g) to review the performance of an employee.

At 6:25pm, Chair Johnson announced a 20-minute Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 6:45pm.

At 6:45pm, Chair Johnson announced a 15-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 7:00pm.

At 7:15pm, Chair Johnson announced a 15-minute extension of Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 7:15pm.

At 7:15pm, the Executive Session concluded, and the regular meeting was called back to order.

Chair Johnson stated that there was no action taken or direction given at this time. He anticipates the Executive Session discussion will continue, either with a special meeting called, or, at the next regular Commission meeting.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Oakes remarked on the positive progress being made with FD 21, they are gaining good momentum.



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MOTION TO ADJOURN 7:21pm

1st: Commissioner Oakes

2nd Commissioner Oertle

Discussion: None

APPROVED: Unanimous

Prepared by:

DocuSigned by:

Kari Wheeler

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Kari Wheeler

Commission Secretary

2/13/2025

Date Signed

Attest:

Signed by:

Rob Johnson

A23111691B944A7...

Rob Johnson

Commission Chair

2/13/2025

Date Signed