



North County Regional Fire Authority

COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

February 12 , 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
Autumn Head, Human Resources Generalist

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

PUBLIC AND EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

The following individuals were present and gave public comment.

Mayor Don Vanney, City of Arlington – 9:27

Council Member Michelle Blythe, City of Arlington – 12:44

Council Member, Heather Logan, City of Arlington – 16:35

Mayor Sid Roberts, City of Stanwood – 20:35

Chris Peterson, Firefighter/EMT, North County Regional Fire Authority – 26:25

Anna Melillo, Firefighter Paramedic, North County Regional Fire Authority – 29:18

In addition to her verbal address, Ms. Melillo provided the following handout for the Board of Commissioners. [Public Comment Handout – A. Melillo](#)

Les Anderson, Resident, City of Stanwood – 33:27

Shawn Smith, City Administrator, City of Stanwood – 34:55

Public Comment from the above individuals can be viewed [here](#). Approximate time stamps for individuals indicated above.

In addition, the following electronic correspondence was received and requested to be entered as public record.

Council Member, Debora Nelson, City of Arlington – [Public Comment 02122025 Nelson, D](#)

Chief Thad Hovis, Retired, South County Fire – [Public Comment 02122025 Hovis, T](#)



North County Regional Fire Authority
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IAFF LOCAL 3438

Speaker: *Greg Koontz, President Local IAFF 3438*

Mr. Koontz addressed the commission to advocate for honoring the original commitment to appoint Dave Kraski as Fire Chief. He emphasized his long history working with Chief Kraski, acknowledging that while they haven't always agreed, they have consistently found common ground. Greg stressed that the merger between Arlington and North County was built on promises made to firefighters and the public, including leadership commitments. He expressed concerns that reconsidering Chief Kraski for the position could create unnecessary division and instability.

Greg clarified that this issue extends beyond Arlington—it affects all communities served, including Stanwood, Freeborn, Warm Beach, and Bryant. He highlighted the need for strong leadership, healing, and stability within the department and stated that Chief Kraski's appointment would provide continuity during a crucial period. He also recognized the service of outgoing Chief Cermak and expressed a desire to move forward positively.

Greg concluded by urging the commissioners to keep their promise, reinforcing that the firefighters overwhelmingly support Chief Kraski as the best choice for Fire Chief. He emphasized the importance of trust, unity, and a collaborative future for the department.

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

Mr. Normand addressed the commission, emphasizing the union's concerns about leadership, decision-making, and the need for stability in the fire department. He stressed the importance of honoring commitments made to firefighters and the public, particularly the promise that Dave Kraski would assume the role of Fire Chief upon Chief Cermak's departure.

Mr. Normand expressed frustration over what he described as a deteriorating work environment for firefighters, citing concerns about leadership, intimidation, and the impact on members' well-being. Chair Johnson interrupted at points to direct Mr. Normand away from personal attacks against Chief Cermak, leading to a brief exchange before Mr. Normand continued.

Mr. Normand also voiced opposition to any continued influence from the outgoing chief after his departure. He urged the commission to move forward with appointing Dave Kaski as chief, arguing that doing so would rebuild trust, demonstrate accountability to voters, and provide the department with a leader who aligns with firefighters' values.

He acknowledged Stanwood representatives' request for an open selection process but maintained that the commitment made to Chief Kraski should stand. Mr. Normand concluded by urging the commission to uphold its promises and ensure strong, reliable leadership moving forward.



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Chair Johnson announced that a special meeting – Board Workshop has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 19 at 4PM. This workshop will have a limited agenda with no formal action taken. The sole topic of discussion will be to discuss with legal counsel requirements for selecting the next Fire Chief. Chair Johnson noted that while public comment will not be on the agenda for this workshop, he reminded all that it remained an Open Public Meeting, and members of the public are welcome to attend. For those unable to join in person, the meeting will also be streamed live on YouTube for easy access. He thanked all those that gave comments today and indicated the Board looks forward to this important discussion.

Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan expressed thanks to all who gave comments today appreciating their openness and honesty.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

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

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

Chair Johnson announced a brief, 2-minute recess at 4:44pm.

Chair Johnson called the regular meeting back to order at 4:46pm.

SPECIAL JOINT PRESENTATION – NCRFA and FD21 – presentation only, no action

Deputy Chief Kraski and Chief Chad Schmidt (FD 21) shared a power point presentation regarding a potential new partnership for paramedic services between the agencies.

[See attached slide show presentation](#)

MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA.

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

Attachments: See [January 8, 2025, Draft Minutes](#); [General Fund Accounts Payable](#); [January Payroll](#)

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous



North County Regional Fire Authority
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QUARTERLY DIVISION PRESENTATION

[Human Resources 2024 Quarter 4](#) – presented by Director Jubb and HR Generalist, Autumn Head

[Operations Division 2024 Quarter 4](#) – presented by Deputy Chief Kraski

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Director Jubb gave a brief update to the Board of Commissioners on the ongoing Payroll Corrections project.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **MOTION TO AMEND THE NON-REPRESENTED PAY SCALE EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2025, AND DIRECT THE HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR TO AMEND INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES' PAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH ATTACHMENT 1.**

1st: [Commissioner Oakes](#) 2nd [Commissioner Cade](#)

Attachments: [Amend the Non-Represented Employee Pay Scale Effective March 1, 2025.](#)

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

- b. **MOTION TO DIRECT THE FIRE CHIEF AND HR TO ENGAGE A PROCESS TO RECRUIT AND HIRE AN ADDITIONAL CHW FUNDED SOLEY THROUGH NSACH**

1st: [Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan](#) 2nd [Commissioner Oakes](#)

Attachments: [CARES Program Expansion](#) – presented by Interim MSA, Matt Hickman

Discussion: none.

APPROVED: Unanimous

The Board met in Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140 for a discussion on matters relating to collective bargaining issues and negotiations; AND as allowed by RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the performance of an employee.

At 5:48pm, Chair Johnson announced a 42 min Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 6:30pm.



**North County Regional Fire Authority
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At 6:30pm, Chair Johnson called for a 10-minute extension of the Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 6:40pm.

At 6:40pm, Chair Johnson called for a 10-minute extension of the Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 6:50pm.

At 6:50pm, Chair Johnson called for a 5-minute extension of the Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 6:55pm.

At 6:55pm, Chair Johnson called for a 15-minute extension of the Executive Session. The regular meeting will resume at 7:10pm.

At 7:10pm, the Executive Session concluded with no action taken and the regular meeting was called to order.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief shared a verbal update with the Board. He explained and shared Unit Hour Utilization for the month of January. [See Report](#)

MOTION TO ADJOURN 7:20pm

1st: Commissioner Oakes

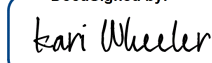
2nd Commissioner Cade

Discussion: None

APPROVED: Unanimous

Prepared by:

DocuSigned by:



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Kari Wheeler

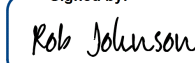
Commission Secretary

2/27/2025

Date Signed

Attest:

Signed by:



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Rob Johnson

Commission Chair

2/27/2025

Date Signed