



North County Regional Fire Authority

COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

May 28, 2025

4:00pm

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:11 pm.

The following attendees were present:

COMMISSIONERS

Ric Cade

Rob Johnson

~~Leonard Kelley~~, excused absence

Greg Oakes

Marilyn Oertle

Al Schreiber

~~Holly Sloan-Buchanan~~, excused absence

FIRE AUTHORITY STAFF

Dave Kraski, Fire Chief

Kari Wheeler, Board Secretary / Bus. Process Coordinator

Allison Jubb, Human Resources Director

Chair Johnson led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

Chief opened discussion and invited feedback from Commissioners with, "How are we doing?" He welcomed and encouraged Commissioners to reach out regularly if they had questions or feedback to offer. Consensus of the room is things are trending positive in the organization and notable morale has improved at the station crew level. Commissioner Oakes asked in turn how Chief is doing.

The Chief has begun meeting one-on-one with his executive level staff at regular intervals. There has been tremendous positive feedback on this.

The Chief expressed kudos to AC Goforth for his work promoting a residential sprinkler fire ordinance in the City of Arlington. Chief Goforth and 4 colleagues attended a recent Arlington City Council meeting and presented this topic. It is anticipated that the City of Arlington will be the first in Snohomish County to adopt a residential sprinkler ordinance.

• **Succession Planning and Retirement Forecast**

The Chief shared a report noting NCRFA workforce who are 50+ years of age and noting positions among the administrative team that anticipate retirements within the next 5 years. Expected or eligible retirements include Finance Director (3 years); Logistics (5 years); Human Resources Director (5 years); Battalion Chiefs (2 within 1-2 years; 1 within 2-4 years); Chief (3 years);

Discussed potential improvements to the promotional testing process based on review and feedback. Potential discussion that related certifications may not be required to test to



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encourage more applicants to engage the process, however, certifications may be required within 6 months of appointment.

- **Fire Levy, August 5th Communication and Messaging Update**

Theresa is working to schedule coalition and retirement center visits for Chief to speak. Station Open Houses have been scheduled; these events will include a Levy Q&A Session where Chief or other staff will be available to answer questions for community members. There was discussion regarding language in previous drafts of levy messaging using 500k as an example price for a home. It was noted that this example was below average home prices for our area. Chair Johnson asked to discuss Liz Loomis, Public Affairs retainer after August.

- **Negotiations for a new CBA with Local IAFF 3438**

Chief and Director Jubb updated the board that successful negotiations were nearing completion, and a new CBA would be going to the local for a vote by the end of the month.

- **Completion of ILA for Advanced Life Support with Fire District 21 (Update)**

*Chief received word last Monday, in meeting with the President of SnoCo EMS and WA Dept of Health, that an ALS license had not been issued and was not in place for FD21. The program (ILA) is ON HOLD until further notice or update. There is a current ILA in place to bill and true up. Director Krumm to bill FD21 for ALS 2024 services next week.
REQUEST – please inform the board when FD21 has been invoiced and payment received.*

- **Permanent assignment for Assistant Chief of EMS**

This project is complete with the official promotion of AC Matt Hickman. He is doing an outstanding job.

- **Explore revenue opportunities for the Training Center**

There is a meeting scheduled for the Training Center Committee (Commissioner Johnson, Commissioner Schreiber, Commissioner Cade) Friday, June 13 from 12:00pm to 2:00pm at the Training Center. Chief Kraski, AC ten Hoopen will attend. Chief Kraski has asked BC Koontz and Capt. Rice to attend and start the meeting with a short tour of the facility. Director Krumm will attend the 2nd and subsequent meetings.

A draft promotional brochure for the training center was shown to the board. Once completed this piece will be sent to agencies throughout Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom and King counties to promote awareness of the facility as a training resource. Kari Wheeler will work to finalize this piece as well as make necessary updates to the website.



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Discussion that the ILA with the Consortium Advisory Board, which oversees the joint training academy, expires at the end of the year. There is discussion among the CBA to move away from a "whole", ".6" or ".4" designation to a flat monetary value. Ex. "your agency's portion due". There is an effort to lower the cost of the academy (per student). There has been a significant increase in academy cost believed to be due to labor. There are too many instructors and shadow instructors.

- **Complete the strategic plan update**

The strategic plan is nearing completion and should come before the board by the end of June.

- **Budget Management and fiscal responsibility**

Chief Kraski presented a budget update that had been prepared by Director Krumm.

NOTE – all areas of the budget are trending under-budget at this time, except professional services.

QUESTION – Where is the NASCH Grant shown in the budget?

CONSIDERATION – noted that a previous consideration had been raised to consider a 2-year budget.

- **Build relationships with our partner Cities and the Stillaguamish Tribe**

Chief shared that he aims to attend 2 council meetings per month in the respective Cities we serve, Arlington and Stanwood. In addition, he plans a quarterly touch with each Mayor AND the City Administrator.

SUGGESTION – extend the invitation for Commissioner Kelley (Stanwood) and Commissioner Oertle (Arlington) OR Commissioner Sloan-Buchanan (Arlington) to attend those respective meetings in Chief's absence as a representative for North County.

The Chief reached out to a representative at the tribe. They will be ready for a conversation this fall about the possibility of a Public Safety Building.

NOTE – there was conversation to consider a "true-up" of the 911 room charge from \$1 per night to \$2-\$3 per night.

- **Payroll Project Update**

Waiting on the union's financial analyst to sign-off on the methodology for payroll corrections. Once that is completed, HR and Finance will meet with all employees individually, "the payroll roadshow".

- **HRIS – RFP**

The RFP has been published. Anticipated that NCRFA will move to 2 pay cycles per month.



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- **Voluntary L&I Audit**

Autumn is taking the lead on this project. There was emphasis on unknown/unlabeled chemical storage. Topics in review include – infection control plan, eye wash stations, accident prevention plan.

- **Surplus of the Boat**

Plan to surplus a boat to Tulalip Bay Fire & Rescue for use as a training vessel. There will likely be an ILA with NCRFA to receive 5 years of marine service from Tulalip, or, similar.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

QUESTION – Commissioner Cade would like us to inquire with AC ten Hoopen if there is a date we can cancel our contract, if needed, with Pierce.

COMMENT – Commissioner Cade raised the consideration of pursuing accreditation for 2026.

MOTION TO ADJOURN 3:59 pm

1st: Commissioner Oakes

2nd: Commissioner Cade

Discussion: None

APPROVED: Unanimous

Prepared by:

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Kari Wheeler

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Kari Wheeler

Commission Secretary

6/12/2025

Date Signed

Attest:

Signed by:

Rob Johnson

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Rob Johnson

Board Chair

6/12/2025

Date Signed