**SCFPD27 COMMISSIONER MEETING**

**04/12/2025**

The April Commissioners meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm

Flag Salute

In attendance were Commissioner Slawson, Commissioner Nielsen, Secretary Bonn, Chief Gray, and community member Brad Tinius by Zoom. Commissioner Thurman was excused from the meeting for personal reasons and did not attend.

Commissioner Nielsen made a motion to accept minutes of 03/08/2025 as amended to include additional comments provided by Commissioner Nielsen. It was seconded by Commissioner Slawson and approved unanimously.

Finance Report:

Secretary Bonn presented 14 vouchers totaling $11957.36. This finance report includes finance data from February and March since the February data was not available at the March meeting. The finance report indicates that the primary cash account had a starting balance of $178,181.00. We received $8336.53 in deferred revenue bringing the total, after expenses, in our cash account to $176,329.98. Our secondary cash account remained the same at $209,633.33. Each investment account, of which there are 2, increased by $39.07 from $12150.56 to $12193.69. A deposit was made for $1,973.95 which included $778 from Department of Health as a pass-through grant for the Aid Unit, and $1,195.95 which was a refund from Vector Solutions.

Commissioner Nielson made a motion to accept the finance report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slawson and approved unanimously.

Prior to the Chief’s report the Commissioner meeting was attended by several members of the Fire Department. The team expressed strong support for Chief Gray, including his personnel decisions. They praised his leadership and the department's improvements over the past few years. The team also discussed the need for a stable command structure and the potential consequences of losing key personnel. Commissioner Nielsen responded that the inquiry into the Chief ‘s personnel decision was a focus on gathering facts and considering all input, rather than making any immediate decisions.

Chiefs Report:

April 9, 2025

From: John Gray, Fire Chief

This is one of the longest reports I have written because there is so much excitement! I am pleased to announce the re-hire of Rick Bennett who retired at the end of last year. I approved Rick’s application because of his continuing positive contributions to the Fire Department, his willingness to share wisdom and knowledge, being a helpful team member, and helping make the working environment fun and meaningful. Also, please welcome Kelly Dukes and Cary Dukes our newest provisional members until the Commissioners formally accept them.

Nominations for Assistant Chief. I have hopes that the Department will continue on the path we started together to improve and the Assistant Chief is an important part of this. Please send me your new nominations by text, email or talk to me. Otherwise, I may be talking to you.

1st Quarter Award for Training Points. And the winner is: Greg Bonn with 146 training points. In addition to Greg, the top five were: Dianna Bonn, 114 points; Anisa Daher, 96 points; Sparky, 93 points; and Dan Rike, 87 points. Greg chose the Gerber 600 multi-tool for the award. Remember, the winner for the quarter cannot win again during the calendar year. Points are earned for a wide variety of activities, even for attending the team building event the Friday before the training drill (Good Idea Dan!). At home, watch fire training videos. At the island, read our reference notebooks and the call debrief book, explore an engine and do the checklist, and much more. If you missed making some entries for the first quarter, include them on the second quarter.

Also, your 2024 records were moved from the notebook to your personnel files. And remember to check off training activities in your individual training record checklist. This is your way to direct your training needs and I use your checklists to determine the need for training events.

Fire Ratings Assessment. The on-site assessment by the Washington State Ratings Board occurred on April 8. The board serves the insurance industry by rating departments on a protection class scale of 1 to 10. One being the best. Currently, The Fire District’s protection class rating is 5. Five years ago, it was 6 and before that it was 8. The results are not in. Compliments were received about: our wildland fire suppression (maximum points earned), public education and prevention, the high number of firefighters that respond to a call and our water system. Suggestions were made to improve documentation, train officers, and encourage firefighters to attain Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2.

Foam Disposal. The State Department of Ecology is doing a project to collect and dispose of the firefighting foam that is hazardous. We have 60 gallons of it in 12 containers stored at the fire station. I have completed the needed administrative processes for the Fire District to participate. A third party contractor will be coming to island to collect it before July 1.

Fire Utility Boat Project. This 30-foot welded aluminum hull, made by Munson in 1994, with a drop down bow was moved by Greg Bonn and Dianna Bonn onto the barge and brought out to the island. Two outboard motors are mounted on the boat with the help of Tulalip Fire and was assessed by Rick Bennett. These motors have about 12,000 hours on them (that is a lot of hours). Estimates to make the motors serviceable is $10,000+.

The immediate goals of this project is to get the boat in the water, properly equipped for daytime and calm conditions and is readily identifiable as a fire department boat. As funding and equipment is available, more work will be done so it can run at night. This is not an all-weather rescue boat. My notion now is the boat does not leave the marina when there are small craft warnings, and that will evolve over time.

Two committees are being formed and you are welcome to participate in them. One is the Equipment/Work Committee that determines what equipment to get, when to install it and to get that work done. Greg Bonn and I are members. Lori Christopher is designing the paint and graphic design. Fund Raising Team. To bring the boat into service in all conditions, total of $54,000 is needed. We have received a grant for $24,000 (see below). So we are off to a good start. A grant application to the Stillaguamish Tribes was submitted for any amount between $3,900 to $50,000. An application to the Tulalip Tribes will be submitted in May, and a DNR grant (see below) will be submitted within the next two weeks. Great fund raising ideas are being developed by Dan Rike, Jennifer Verling, Alice, Nate and the Auxiliary Team

DNR Grants, An Update. The Fire District continues to receive the benefits of the DNR grants for wildland fire fighting. A quick review:

1. Last year, Andy Grove used the DNR equipment grant to build our foundation of wildland firefighting with progressive hose lays, forestry hoses and all the associated hardware plus the Nomex shirts everyone received and the pool of wildland fire helmets.

2. Lt. Mark Fulton, used this year’s equipment cache grant for additional Nomex shirts, chain saw chaps, gloves, safety glasses and other equipment. That equipment was received and thank you to Greg Bonn for bringing it to the island.

3. Chris Inman just installed a dry hydrant at the pond that provides an easy way for an engine to suck water from it. This effort was paid for by a DNR grant that also Included our purchases of two new Honda generators, a cable that connects these to double the output, three wireless radio headsets that the pump operators use on Rescue 27, Engine 27 and Engine 27A, and it paid for the fantastic instruction by Nich Sacha on wildland fire fighting techniques last spring.

Days ago, we received notification that DNR approved our latest grant application of $24,000 to start the work on the boat to repair the two outboard motors (labor and materials) and purchase a pump and deck gun Now, we are working on two new DNR grant opportunities that are important:

a. Personal Protective Equipment for wildland firefighting, up to $25,000. Our application will (1) provide all fire fighters new personally issued wildland fire helmets, Nomex shirts AND pants, and leather gloves. (2) new turn-out pants will be funded by the grant rather than the Fire District, leaving funding for other priorities, and (3) Add headsets and an intercom system in Engine 27 (Thanks Karl).

b. The 2 nd DNR Grant is the largest funding opportunity (up to $100,000) and again has a wildland fire focus. The themes for our requests: (1) Separate topics from the Commissioner’s long-range planning goals – these have planned funding, (2) Bring-on additional, new, priority assets, and (3) Fund several important topics that were low priority due to funding limitations. Look for an upcoming update letter for the details. Have a suggestion? Let me know.

New Bunker Gear. The commissioners approved the purchase of new bunker gear for the firefighters that need it. Helmets over 10 years old are being replaced. New helmets were ordered for Alice Moyal, Steve Slawson, Jonathon Thurman, Dan Rike, Summer Daugherty, Chris Inman and Kim Gleason. The cost of these was about $2,700. These will be arriving soon and a second order will be done soon when it is completed. SeaWestern is the vendor for the coats and pants. Nearly everyone got measured. Thank you for your effort in doing this. These are made when ordered. So expect 4 to 6 months for delivery.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Project. This project is coming to a finish after at least 3 years of effort that began with the arrival of the tank filling air compressor. Not including the compressor, this project had three main parts: masks, packs and tanks. Masks: the Fire Commissioners approved the purchase of 25 used Scott masks (Thanks Karl for finding these) and delivered. Packs: we had these for some time. Tanks: We had a hiccup with this part when the formal quote was way-more than the verbal understanding. We are still working this issue.

All of our Sno911 radios were recently re-programmed. One slight change in operating the portables that you will like is the ABC switch on the top. Remember the confusion about its purpose and it was hard to remember? Well no longer, the ABC switch does what many of thought it should do, selects the Zone. We use Zone A, Fire Tac 3. Now when the radio is on another zone, like the Fire Training Channel, Zone A can be switched by using the ABC switch to zone A. Also, 5 new batteries for the portables were received. These were marked with the year and installed on the portable radios.

Emergency Preparedness. The Auxiliary Team is actively working this topic. One part of this is our siren notification system. Did you know that of the 3 sirens. located at the fire station, G-tank and M-tank, the two sirens on the water tanks have equipment from the 1950’s and parts are very hard to find? We have started the planning for upgrading the sirens and maybe adding one to N-Division and U-Division. As we plan this, we are considering that the sirens would be mainly used for emergency notification to the community (commonly done everywhere else). For the first responders, their smart phones and issued pagers are the dominant ways of notification.

Old Business:

* SCBA – The cost for SCBA recertification was originally quoted at $140 per tank, however, when the official quote came in, the cost would be $550 per tank. The planned shipment was stopped to allow the Commissioners time to revisit the costs. After much discussion of all options, Commissioner Slawson recommended that the Commissioners take $14000 from the building maintenance fund to cover the cost to recertify the SCBA’s and hold on painting the building until next year. Commissioner Slawson made a motion to send 38 SCBA bottles for recertification by moving only the amount necessary from building maintenance to cover the additional cost. Any additional money would remain in the building maintenance budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nielsen and approved unanimously. The department plans to budget for 7 new bottles annually for the next 5 years to replace all 38 bottles gradually.
* Web Site – The cost for the domain name will be $0 for the 1st year and $25 every year after plus an additional $17-$29 per month for the service. The consensus is that the basic plan at $17 per month should be sufficient. With an estimate of 2 hours per month spent maintaining and updating the website, the yearly cost should be approximately $1400, however this is a flexible figure as it is dependent on the time spent updating it. Commissioner Thurman has opted to forgo his compensation to allow funding for the website. Commissioner Nielsen made a motion to move forward with the Hat Island Fire/SCFD27 website. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slawson. A roll call vote ensued. Commissioner Nielsen voted aye. Commissioner Slawson voted aye. No apposed. The motion passed. The Commissioners will decide on a domain name. Secretary Bonn will get a vendor number assigned to Nate and get employment contracts ready.
* Boat – The boat was transported to the island by barge on April 8th, without any cost, and the Chief is working on securing funds for its repairs and maintenance.
* I-Pad – It has been programmed with protocols, electronic reporting capabilities, and a printer for patient reports. The iPad is set to go live on July 1stEMS.

New Business:

* Tax Levy Lid Lift – Commissioner Slawson been in contact with the attorney and the State Auditor to try and get the Levy Lid Lift on the November ballot. We currently get $0.82 out of every $1.50 that is received in property taxes from our District. We will be asking for an additional $0.68 per $1000 of assessed value.
* New Chief recruitment – Get the paperwork together to start a hiring process for a new Chief.
* 50-year Birthday planning – start planning and gathering items, potentially including old photos, etc for the department’s 50th birthday in 2028.

Policy updates – Commissioners discussed a list of policies that need to be written or updated, such as travel expenses and use of emergency vehicles, among other things. A policy meeting will be held on a future date.

* New Chief recruitment – Get the paperwork together to start a hiring process for a new Chief.
* Rural Conference – Commissioner Slawson attended the Rural Conference and reported that it was incredibly helpful in networking with other departments and vendors.
* Building Maintenance - Commissioner Nielsen would like to get a cost estimate for fire protection/suppression to mitigate the requirement of keeping a truck parked outside of the station. Commissioner Nielsen will look into getting an estimate. Secretary Bonn will reach out to the county permitting department to ascertain whether a final for occupancy was ever issued for the addition.
* State/County pool – Secretary Bonn spoke with the county, at the request of Commissioner Nielsen, regarding our investment in the State pool. She found that the State Pool and the County Pool are being combined into one County Pool. The commissioners then discussed the poor returns from their current investments and will consider exploring better investment options.

Commissioner Slawson made a motion to close the meeting. Commissioner Nielsen seconded it. The meeting was closed at 5pm

No Executive session or pension meeting.