



February 18, 2019

Fire Chief's Report

The VISTA fire Station 4 is again experiencing some HVAC (heating system) issues. There are multiple furnace units within this 14,000 sq foot large building. A similar HVAC problem last spring was found to be a refrigerant leak. The assumed leak was never found - despite the multiple service vendors' review and diagnosis of the system. The same leak result was found this past week. Refrigerant media was added on Thursday - which restored the heating operation there. Further leak-check diagnosis will again continue when the weather improves. The furnace heat pump appurtenances for this structure are positioned upon the (snow covered) roof there.

Additionally, the stand-alone furnace unit that is positioned above the PPE turn-out gear storage area has failed and was found to have a cracked exhaust chamber. This failure condition was first observed when an odd odor was noticed in the truck bays. Diagnosis finds that replacing that specific furnace unit would serve us best – as opposed to attempting to repair that existing now damaged unit. That specific furnace unit is 9 years old now and not worth repairing. We are seeking replacement cost quotes now.

Mr Brian Harris of TCA Architects in Bellevue did contact us on Friday Feb 8 to provide a preliminary update report regarding our facilities / grounds feasibility study progress. He is preparing a more formal report with some alternate considerations to ponder. Significant land use challenges confront us due to the ever evolving code language and wetland rules - and the outlook is not encouraging. Our vacant Terrys' Corner parcel is the most troublesome. Our Mabana fire station parcel has only very limited opportunities that may prove too costly and not serve our future needs. More to review once we see his final report.

Our A-Shift crews responded to a small motor boat fire involving a detached carport structure down in the Country Club neighborhood early Friday evening, Feb 1st. Crews made a quick stop to the fire conditions stopping the loss. Two (2) separate outdoor shed structures and a nearby pick-up truck had also suffered some fire exposure damage. We had a good turn-out of crews and apparatus – including a back-up Engine and a Tender from NCRFA, - who were briefly assigned to our Sta 2 for standby duty. The actual fire **ignition source itself** has not been fully determined. The boat engine was said to have had undergone some recent repairs / maintenance by the home owner about 24 hours prior. No electrical cords or battery charger device was found at the scene. The homeowners were not at home when the blaze was first reported by neighbors.

The Labor Relations Group did visit both Commissioner Evans and myself this past week to discuss our pending Community Paramedic vacancy. In general the union has indicated that there "may" be two interested paramedic employees. To clarify, this inquiry request was shared with the greater union membership – which includes the NCRFA members. We await a formal reply from the local.

The Labor Relations Group has proposed some alterations to our current Duty Officer Program. Our current agency policy (LEXIPOL 312) already allows for any qualified CIFR officer to fill this role - in times of need. The Labor Group was asked to forward some additional program language, wage stipend costs, residency requirements, etc, for future discussions. I would be quite supportive of the greater command level field experience opportunities afforded to our officer ranks by evolving our duty Officer Program, but it is also apparent that some of the rank / file labor group members are not fully supportive of this new Duty Officer staffing design proposal. There was also a mixed message about allowing our volunteer officers to continue participating. I suggested that any such Duty Officer program changes be postponed until both the full board and the new fire chief executive officer have had an opportunity to review this new proposal closer.

We've conducted some additional Part Time firefighter interviews this past month in an effort to bolster the rapid attrition in those ranks. Some of our current P/T firefighters have been hired full-time elsewhere.

I was advised by FEMA / AFG today the (FY2018) SAFER Grant season will open on Feb15 nd close on March 22. We could perhaps submit another **competitive grant application** if desired ? The SAFER Program is specifically designed to address the needs for local unstaffed fire stations. Possible funds for staffing for Station 1-5 ? Long term budget forecast ? Discussion ? FEMA awards would be announced by late 2019 / early 2020.

CH

Interim Fire Chief