

FIRE INSIDER



Snohomish County Fire District 17

Summer/Fall 2013

Chief's Corner

I want to update you on the progress the Granite Falls Fire Department has made on your new station since our newsletter a year ago. The station will be located at the 800 block of East Galena, directly across from the library.

At this point, we have site and floor plans as well as drawings for an exterior concept, which is pictured here:



In the next month or so, we plan to sign the property to let people know this will be the home of their new fire station. We were able to reconfigure the property site to double the amount of parking to accommodate more vehicles because of the public meeting room that is part of the facility. Our next step is to secure construction cost estimates, and apply for the needed permits. After that, we will be ready to ask voters to approve a bond sometime in the next two to three years. We are waiting to make sure our community is in a position to support this economically before going to ballot.

Purchase of the property and all the work to date has cost \$480,000 and has been paid out of existing funds.

This is important as it reduces the amount of the bond we will need to ask voters to approve. We also will consider selling the current station to pay down the bond when the time comes, as well.



Chief Jim Haverfield

Our current fire station is 107 years old, and is unsafe for emergency operations. It is possible that the building would not survive a natural disaster (think earthquake), which would impact our ability to reach you in an emergency. Second, the building's age could jeopardize the safety of our firefighters, which is another concern.

We will spend a significant amount of time educating our community about this project over the next few years. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me with your thoughts about the new station or other issues. I can be reached at jim.haverfield@gffd17.org, (360) 691-5553, or by sending a letter to me at the Granite Falls Fire Department, PO Box 1049, Granite Falls, WA 98252. We appreciate your time, and welcome the input!

Sincerely,

JIM HAVERFIELD
Fire Chief

Grants Supplement Tight Budget Dollars

The Granite Falls Fire Department recently received a grant for \$88,420 from the Department of Homeland Security to purchase a new Thermal Imaging Camera, and exhaust removal equipment for all of its diesel-powered vehicles. The camera helps us find people, or "hot spots" in smoky conditions. The exhaust removal system is important to remove harmful fumes from areas where firefighters work and sleep in the fire station when on duty.

Your fire department regularly applies for grants to purchase expensive equipment or supplies. While grants help us stretch your tax dollars further, they aren't a replacement for a steady revenue stream. In the past 10 years, Granite Falls Fire Department has been successful in securing almost \$650,000 in grants. The fire department has been awarded seven of the 10 grants for which it has applied.

2003 - \$123,408	800 MHz Radios
2004 - \$24,433	Station Generator
2005 - \$192,647	Water Tender
2007 - \$158,650	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus and Air Fill Station
2007 - \$3,971	Code Development & Enforcement
2008 - \$61,984	Washer/Extractor, Extrication Tools and Bunker Gear
2012 - \$ 83,999	Exhaust Capture & Thermal Imaging Camera
Total: \$649,092	



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Find Us on Facebook!

Granite Falls Fire Department
 has a Facebook page at
www.facebook.com/GraniteFallsFire.



We'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy Fourth of July! If you are celebrating with fireworks, please use lots of precaution to prevent injury or fire damage.

Financial Update

The last four years have been difficult for many people in our community – and your fire department is no different. Property values fell 44%, which has resulted in a \$260,000 revenue loss for emergency services in the last two years alone.

We have been able to maintain staffing and emergency service levels, but it hasn't been easy. We made substantial cuts to non-emergency programs, outside training, our swift water rescue team, and emergency equipment purchases.

We also looked for ways to partner with other agencies to share costs. For example, we

contract with the Lake Stevens Fire Department for paramedic service, public education and patient transport billing. This means that the Granite Falls Fire Department doesn't have to maintain these positions on our payroll, which is a significant savings for our taxpayers.

We are good stewards of your tax dollars, and have passed all financial and accountability audits by the state. Our financial philosophy is to operate under a balanced budget, and live within our means for day-to-day operations. As a result, our fire department hasn't needed to ask voters for a tax increase in this difficult economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve our community.



Fire Commissioners



Bill Gillam, Chairman



Kevin Hayes



John Gillett