

Phone survey results from interview with North Highline Fire Commissioner Julie Hyatt, 9/16/21

Interview conducted by Northshore Fire Commissioner Eric Adman

North Highline Fire District, King County Fire District # 11, is just south of Seattle and north of Burien. It covers 3.5 square miles and has 18,000 residents, many of whom are low-income. They have 2 stations. FD11 is ¼ the size of Burien, but has 1/10th of the revenue.

1. Q: Did you merge with another Fire Department or contract for service? A: Contract with the City of Burien Fire Department.
2. What year did that happen? See below

8 years ago, FD11 contracted with the City of for Fire Chief and Battalion Chief services only. FD11 paid for 35% of the Fire Chief and Battalion Chief. FD11 has a levy and a benefit charge, but still had a hard time raising enough revenue to pay their bills.

2 years ago, the City of Seattle was considering annexation of FD11. FD11 decided to go with an increased scope contract for services and now contracts for all services. All firefighters became Burien Fire Department employees. FD11 sold all assets to Burien for \$1.00.

3. What were some of the reasons you chose that action?

- Potential Seattle annexation
- Could not afford to provide services without partnership with Burien
- \$1.5 million deficit per year prior to full contract
- Very busy stations

4. Did you get the services you needed? Why or why not?

Yes. All services are provided by the City of Burien. All North Highline employees became City of Burien employees. The employees are happy and have a better contract.

5. What were some of the challenges?

- Promotions, seniority levels, vacations
- Logo/uniforms/rigs. Rigs kept logos, uniforms changed.
- Contingency plan in case FD11 is annexed by Seattle.
- Equipment and vehicle standardization.

6. Are you satisfied with the input your agency has regarding provision of services?

Not 100%. The FD11 commissioners have no authority over the fire chief. They just pay the contract amount for services.

7. Are you satisfied with the cost of the services you are receiving?

Yes. FD11 receives one bill each month from Burien for 3 areas – apparatus, personnel, and overhead. FD11 pays hourly for district secretary services. The district secretary is now an employee of Burien.

8. Would you take the same action again?

Yes