

**The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department**

Station 1
August 12, 2002

Portsmouth, NH
1900 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Hughes called the meeting to order at 1900 hours and led a voluntary Pledge of Allegiance. Along with Commissioner Hughes, present were Commissioners Gamester and Wentworth, Acting Chief LeClaire, Deputy Chief Achilles and Local 1313 President Firefighter McQuillen.

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion to accept the minutes of the June 19, 2002 made by Commissioner Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Wentworth, unanimous.

III. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Motion to accept Chief's Reports 046-050, made by Chairman Hughes, seconded by Commissioner Wentworth, unanimous.

B. Officer's Reports: None.

C. Other: None.

IV. Old Business: None.

V. Presentations of Written Communications: None.

VI. New Business:

Acting Chief LeClaire noted to the Commission the retirement of Firefighter Morris on July 31, 2002 creating a vacancy in the department. Would like to make an offer to a candidate who interviewed in our last round of firefighter interviews and is a strong candidate who stood out above some of the others. He's an EMT-I and FF2. Comm. Gamester asked why we weren't hiring another paramedic and Deputy Achilles responded by saying that paramedics are not readily available. The State's listing only had 8, and when contacted, only 2 showed any interest. The Commission agreed to continue with the process of offering the position to the candidate who had already completed the interview process with us last time.

Minutes from August 12, 2002 continued:

It was noted that Firefighter Fox is pregnant and is on light duty assignment per her doctor's request. It is expected that she will remain on light duty throughout her term pregnancy creating another vacancy. This vacancy is currently being filled with overtime during the night shifts and during the day shift, remains open unless someone else calls in an absence then overtime is required to fill the position. It was recommended that we hire another firefighter to cover this vacancy for the time Firefighter Fox is on light duty to alleviate overtime costs. It was also noted that there is a possibility that there will be another firefighter retiring within the next year. Commission took it under advisement.

Gerry Goyette, the department's mechanic, is leaving Thursday, August 22. The position was posted with three applicants interested. Not having a retiree to do the work part-time will require shift personnel to do it. The thought is to hire 2 on a part-time basis, non-union, and set it up like Fire Alarm is currently. One would be hired as the Mechanic and the other as the Assistant Mechanic. By doing the work in-house it remains cheaper than outsourcing it.

New cars are in and both have been set-up with lights and radios and are ready for use.

New ambulance went out to bid. Three bids were received with the lowest bid coming in at \$98,244 from Professional Vehicle Corp. The new ambulance is similar to that of Ambulance One. A committee, consisting of firefighters and officers, was established and provided valuable input throughout the process with specs, layout and answering of questions.

- Motion made to accept the ambulance bid of \$98,244 from Professional Vehicle Corporation, by Commissioner Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Wentworth, unanimous.

A Cutt Street resident is angry with us regarding some fire alarm work that had to be done near his home which required us to trim a few trees, not on his property but on State property, and he is complaining that the State provided this buffer zone for him and would like us to replace the trees. This complaint is under investigation.

Chief LeClaire also advised the Commission that the Capital Plan would need to be changed in future meetings to account for a new fire engine. Currently, the Capital Plan does not have us funded for a new engine until 2007 and our fleet will not be able to wait that long. The balance of FY02 Capital for Turnout Gear has been released.

Minutes from August 12, 2002 continued:

Deputy Achilles spoke briefly about the RIT Grant, which ends at the end of August. With this grant we have been purchasing safety and rescue materials. Recently we have outfitted each company with chainsaws for rescues. Also purchased was a night vision camera to assist us in searches done at night, or in areas with low lighting, which does not solely depend on heat, like the Thermal Imaging camera. If it meets our needs then we hope to purchase 2 more for each company (\$299.00 a piece).

VII. Recognition of Groups of Individuals:

Chief LeClaire extended his gratitude to all department personnel for a job well done. Very cooperative in house and in the field and things seem to be running smoothly. Both he and Deputy Achilles have taken a more hands off approach and are allowing the Captains and Officers to do more of what they have been hired and trained to do which they appreciate.

VIII. Public Hearings: None.

IX. Non-public Session:

Motion to enter into Non-public, for personnel matters, made by Chairman Hughes at 1930 hours, seconded by Commissioner Gamester, unanimous.

Motion to accept and follow recommendations of the Fire Chief and pursue the posting and the hiring of Executive Secretary, made by Commissioner Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Wentworth. Vote taken: 3-0.

Motion to come out of Non-public made by Chairman Hughes at 2030 hours, seconded by Commissioner Wentworth, unanimous.

X. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 2033 hours made by Chairman Hughes, seconded by Commissioner Gamester, unanimous.

Richard Gamester, Clerk