

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

Fire Station 1
May 13, 2015

Portsmouth, NH
1900 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Richard Gamester called the meeting to order at 1900 hours and led pledge of allegiance. Along with Chairman Gamester, present were: Commissioner Jennifer Matthes; Chief Steven Achilles; Deputy Fire Chiefs Carl Roediger and James Heinz; Captains: Kenneth Smith, Todd Germain, and Richard Murphy; Lieutenant Rick Condon; Firefighters: Russell Osgood, Paul Trivigno, Mark Herrholz, Steven Morse, Leonard Escamilla and his family.

Absent: Fire Commissioner Michael Hughes

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of March 24th, 2015, was made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.

III. Public Comment Session: None

IV. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Achilles conducted the swearing in of Firefighter Escamilla who will wear badge number 206. Meeting was paused for pictures with his family and the Chief.

V. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (024), 2015 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for March and April. The first report shows the department responding to 115 Fire Calls in March and 257 Ambulance Calls for the month. The second report shows the department responding to 106 Fire Calls in April and 254 Ambulance Calls for the month. To date the department has responded to 523 fire and related service calls and 1058 ambulance service calls. The Safety Message section in March reminds all home owners and businesses of the dangers of Carbon Monoxide and offers safety tips for CO alarm placement and recommendations for when an alarm sounds.

The Safety Message section in April is a reminder that May 17-23rd is the 41st annual EMS Week which celebrates EMS and its practitioners, on the important work that they do in responding to medical emergencies. Chief Achilles thanked department EMS personnel in attendance for their service and dedication. Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (025), Fire and EMS Calls by District, identifies the number of calls broken down by districts for the month with district 1 being the highest in call volume. Medical assistance and EMS calls with injury were the top reasons for EMS dispatch followed by motor vehicle accidents without injuries. District 1 was the highest in call volume for the month of April as well. Report (026), FY15 Budget, currently shows a surplus of about \$22K if actual costs match that of projected costs. We will continue to monitor the budget closely Chief stated. Report (027), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the months of March and April along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for those two months. Chief Achilles mentioned that we are at 11% without reducing staffing levels. Commissioner Matthes inquired about how the Overtime was at 11% without reduction in staff. Chief Achilles stated the budget was overall managed better, training was managed closely, and the number of unexpected events was less than in FY14.

Motion, to approve Chief's Reports 15-024 through 15-027, was made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Roediger reported on the number of projects happening within the City. The antenna at Port Walk was approved by the Historic Committee and it is hopeful that communications will be improving shortly. Commissioner Matthes inquired about the time frame of radio communications. Deputy Roediger answered stating that the project was waiting on parts and the reprogramming of radios. He also noted that there is a five story unit on Commerce Way, off of Portsmouth Boulevard, that could potentially be an antenna site.

Deputy Chief Heinz reported on operations and trainings happening within the department noting recent collaborative trainings one with Rye Fire at Rand Lumber and eight days of live fire training at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. The department is working with the Portsmouth Police Department to re-write their response to fires policy. The purchase order for the lighting improvement project at station 1 has been approved and will be moving forward. New hire Eric Carrier will be starting in the next couple of weeks and a conditional offer was sent to Casluh Chamberlain.

VI. Old Business:

Chief Achilles recognized the department's officers and firefighters who responded to the Islington Street fire on May 12th for a job well done.

The Haven Well tests are being conducted and there have been about 500 tests done and the results should be available by the end of June. Firefighter Russell Osgood was thanked for the legwork on the Haven Well test progress.

VII. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Achilles read thank you letters.

- Christopher Rose, Student Council Advisor with the Portsmouth Middle School, gave thanks to department personnel in supporting the PMS annual World of Work program.
- Amy Rodier thanked members of the interview board who displayed professional attitudes and represented Portsmouth Fire Department to its highest standards.
- Arthur H. Munson, Jr., First United Methodist Church Board of Trustees Chairman, conveyed his heartfelt thanks and very deepest appreciation to the firefighters of the department for their very timely response to the fire occurring at the church on April 6, 2015.

Motion, to accept and place on file, was made by Commissioner Matthes, seconded by Chairman Gamester, unanimous.

VIII. New Business:

Chief Achilles spoke briefly about the May 9th City Council Work Session, and the City's Public Hearing on the city's budget held on May 11th. Taxpayer attendance was very low and there was no pushback on the proposed 3% increase in the budget. The meeting was continued to May 20th. Chief Achilles wanted to remind the Commission that he will be presenting the self-assessment report on Monday the 18th of May at 1700. The assessment can be found on the City's website and the media does have a copy of it.

Chairman Gamester made the motion, to not approve of an outside study of any type. He is concerned about wasting taxpayer's money. Commissioner Matthes seconded the motion and agreed, the study would not be needed.

Chairman Gamester stated Commissioner Hughes was in California and unable to attend this meeting.

IX. Public Hearings: None

X. Non-public Session:

Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 1945 hours for reason identified in RSA 91-A:3, II (a), made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.

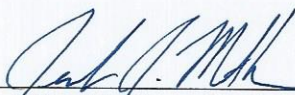
Motion, to come out of Non-public Session and return to public meeting at 2000 hours was made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.

Regular public meeting reconvened at 2001 hours.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 2015 hours, made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, unanimous.

Matthes



Jennifer Matthes, Clerk