

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

Fire Station 1
October 14, 2015

Portsmouth, NH
1900 hours

- I. **Call to Order:**
Chairman Richard Gamester called the meeting to order at 1900 hours and led the pledge of allegiance. Along with Chairman Gamester, present were: Commissioner Jennifer Matthes; Chief Steven Achilles; Captain Ken Smith and Firefighters: Paul McKendry and Eric Detweiler.

- II. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**
Motion was made to approve the minutes of September 9, 2015 by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.

- III. **Public Comment Session:** None

- IV. **Recognition of Groups or Individuals:**
Chief Achilles noted Family Fun Day for department members and their families at Station 2 on October 17 from 11AM-5PM. He also commented briefly about the IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial held in Colorado Springs, CO. Several department members attended the memorial with the department covering some of their costs.

- V. **Reports:**
 - A. Fire Chief's Reports:
Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.
Report (071), 2015 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for September. The report shows the department responding to 124 Fire Calls and 251 Ambulance Calls for the month. To date, the department has responded to 1117 fire and related service calls and 2445 ambulance service calls. The Safety Message section focused on Fire Prevention Week and the installation of smoke detectors in the home. The Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (072), Fire and EMS Calls by District, identifies the number of calls broken down by districts for the month with district 1 having the highest call volume followed by district 2 and 3 being closely matched. EMS data shows the top two reasons for dispatch this month were

falls and motorized vehicle crashes. There were 3 reported cardiac arrests which is believed to be related to the 3 overdoses this month. Report (73), FY16 Budget, Chief noted being three months into the new fiscal year and still tracking positively. He made note of an increase in vehicle maintenance budget line which is a result of two accidents involving department apparatus and the change in the State's vehicle registration from March to October which typically requires some work to be done prior to inspection. Salaries for Uniform Personnel is slightly up due to the hiring an extra firefighter to cover a long term vacancy but with the retirement of a captain next year, it should balance out. Report (074), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in September along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to approve Chief's Reports 15-071 through 15-074, was made by Commissioner Matthes, seconded by Chairman Gamester, unanimous.

B. Staff Reports:

Chief Achilles spoke briefly about the radio system project which is facing some challenges. The water tower at Pease is now coming down and in the process of being replaced so the antenna scheduled to go there is now on hold. Another avenue was with Port Walk. They decided to buy the equipment themselves and because of their location downtown, there is a height restriction. Putting the radio system on their roof required HDC approval first and then what the antenna was going to be attached to on the roof exceeded the height restriction allowed so that is now on hold as well. This will now require a variance. 2-Way, our installer, will hold off until the issues are resolved. The Hobbs Hill tower is expected to be completed soon but basically it is out of our control at this point stated Chief Achilles.

VI. Old Business:

Chief Achilles provided an update on the Haven Well testing noting he is encouraging those who have received positive test results to meet with their own doctor to create a link and establish a guideline/plan. Chief met with NH Assoc. of Fire Chiefs regarding the need to change the legislative component of exposures and how they are handled since they are currently not covered by workers compensation until a problem actually occurs.

Chief and Truck Committee members visited Greenwood Emergency Vehicles to review the new fire engine and if all goes as planned, it will be ready in a couple of months.

Engine 6 continues to be out of service. Rails are due on Friday. Ambulance 2 also remains out of service due to the accident which caused frame damage. Coastal Truck has informed us that the new frame is in and that they would be working on it this week.

VII. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Achilles read the thank you note from Mrs. Gaskell wishing department personnel safety in all that they do. He also read a thank you letter from Vernis Jackson, Chair of the African Burying Ground Committee for the department's support and assistance in preparing for the events leading to the completion of the project.

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

VIII. New Business:

Chief Achilles spoke briefly about the department now having a Facebook page. Both Inspector Howe and Captain Murphy have been working on this project and are actively getting things added to the site.

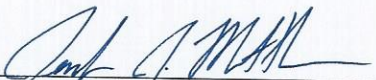
Chief noted the Vigilance Monument having a plaque added to it which will provide the public with a little more information about the monument and what it stands for. This plaque will complete this project.

IX. Public Hearings: None

X. Non-public Session: None.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1945 hours, made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Matthes, unanimous.



Jennifer Matthes, Clerk