

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

Fire Station 1  
December 16, 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 was: Commissioner: Michael Hughes; Chief Steven Achilles; Deputy Chiefs: Carl Roediger and James Heinz; Captains Kenneth Smith and Richard Murphy and Firefighters Russell Osgood, Mark Herrholz, Michael Rivet, and Scott D. Young.

**II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Motion was made to approve the minutes of November 17, 2015 by Commissioner Hughes, seconded by Chairman Gamester, motion passed.

**III. Public Comment Session: None**

**IV. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:**

Chief Achilles recognized the excellent job done by the crews that worked at the structure fire on 64 Market Street. Chairman Gamester also acknowledged it was impressive work, and noted the firefighters make the department look good.

**V. Reports:**

**A. Fire Chief's Reports:**

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (088), 2015 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for November. The report shows the department responding to 98 Fire Calls and 245 Ambulance Calls for the month. To date, the department has responded to 1234 fire and related service calls and 2964 ambulance service calls. The Safety Message section focused on following the City of Portsmouth Fire Department on our Facebook Page; where there will be news and updates about the City of Portsmouth NH Fire Department, as well as important fire and life safety information. Report (089), 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. There were 66 reported rescue calls and 51 false calls within the month. EMS data shows the top three reasons for dispatch

this month based on provider impression were traumatic injury, other illnesses, and psychiatric and behavioral disorders. Report (090), FY16 Budget, Chief noted being five months into the new fiscal year and currently showing a slight shortfall due to an increase in overtime for shift vacancies relating to workers comp injuries and disability leave. These two lines will be tracked after December. A couple long term vacancies returned to duty recently, which will help balance with overtime. Also noted was the decrease in diesel fuel cost to date. Report (091), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of November along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to approve Chief's Reports 15-088 through 15-091, was made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, motion passed.

**B. Staff Reports:**

Deputy Roediger reported on the investigation of the 64 Market Street fire. Spoke of the inspections Fire Inspector Howe is working on including 20-25 apartment inspections currently in the works at various stages, working with fire protection engineers on the egress issues, and building relationships with the apartment owners. The prevention department is spending quite a bit of time helping the Building Department with vague codes regarding underground garage ventilation issues in the City. The new radio system equipment is in place and should be cutting over and going live on December 28th. 2-Way Communications is scheduled to mount equipment at Hobbs Hill and Port Walk is complete. Working on getting Peverly Hill site on backup power. Chief Achilles noted that the portable radios will need to be reprogrammed with the switch from analog to digital.

Deputy Heinz reported on several trainings happening within the department. Dense smoke training at the Moose Lodge, ethics training, and new Engine 3 training are to name just a few held this past month. The CFO of Portsmouth Regional Hospital joined the ambulance crew as a ride along for an entire day this week. The annual tour of Irving Oil is taking place. Ongoing heroin meetings and efforts are moving forward. Common ground has been reached in the bike path plan for Middle Street and Lafayette Road. The Firefighters Charitable is working hard on the Toy Bank and Operation Warm. The Toy Bank is helping 50 families reaching over 150 children this year.

**VI. Old Business:**

Chief Achilles provided a quick update on the Haven Well testing with a report going to the city council on December 21<sup>st</sup>.

Chief noted the parking enforcement has moved from Station 1 to a different location.

**VII. Presentations of Written Communications:**

Chief Achilles read the thank letter from Pauline Johnson, daughter of Retired Deputy Chief Eugene Hersey.

Motion, to accept and place on file, made by Commissioner Hughes, seconded by Chairman Gamester, motion passed.

**VIII. New Business:**

Chief Achilles spoke briefly about the FY17 Joint Budget Committee. The committee first went over known numbers, and projected costs. Anticipating 2.7% budget increase but will know more after December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Chief Achilles went over the memo from Kelli Barnaby about Commission meeting minutes. The memo stated a primary, and secondary contact be listed. Motion to approve Tracy as the primary contact and Chief Achilles as the secondary contact made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, motion passed.

**IX. Public Hearings: None**

**X. Non-public Session:**

Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 1930 hours for reason identified in RSA 91-A:3, II (a), made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, motion passed.

Motion, to come out of Non-public Session and return to public meeting at 1950 hours was made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, motion passed. No votes taken.

Regular public meeting reconvened at 1951 hours.

**XI. Adjournment:**

Motion, to adjourn at 2000 hours, made by Chairman Gamester, seconded by Commissioner Hughes, motion passed.

  
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Jennifer Matthes, Clerk