

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

Fire Station 1, Training Room  
November 15, 2016

Portsmouth, NH  
1900 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1900 hours with Commissioner Gamester leading the pledge of allegiance. Along with Chairwoman Matthes and Commissioner Richard Gamester, present were: Fire Chief Steven Achilles, Deputy Fire Chiefs: Carl Roediger and James Heinz; Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, Captain Rick Murphy and Firefighters: Wayne LaCaillade, Steve Morse and Michael Rivet.

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

Motion, to approve the minutes of October 19, 2016, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

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

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

Deputy Heinz spoke briefly about the breast cancer fundraiser that several department members participated in called bubble soccer. Fire played police in this event.

**V. Reports:**

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

Chairwoman Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 16-091 through 16-094. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gamester.

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (091), 2016 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for October. The report shows the department responding to 121 Fire Calls and 264 Ambulance Calls for the month. To date, the department has responded to 1,175 fire and related service calls and 2,982 ambulance service calls. This activity is tracked by calendar year. The Safety Message section focused on residents and business owners having their heating systems inspected and maintained as we head into the winter months. The Service

Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (092), Fire and EMS Calls by Category, noted that there were 28 medical assist calls, 11 motor vehicle accidents with injuries and 5 motor vehicle accidents with no injuries, 8 calls relating to alcohol abuse and effects, 14 calls for trauma or injury to the head/scalp and 12 calls relating to psychiatric/behavioral problems. There were 3 drug overdoses for the month. Sunday and Monday was reported to be the busiest days of the week for October. Report (093), FY17 Budget, Chief noted that we are tracking positively with continued monitoring of expenditures in place. November we will have Paramedic and AEMT refresher training which the department provides coverage and overtime for. Once we get into January we will have a better idea of how the budget is tracking. Report (094), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of October along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 16-091 through 16-094, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Roediger reported on inspections for the month with the completion of all school inspections done this week. One school building continues to have issues (Lister Academy) due to the building's age. The City owns this building and it needs a lot of work. Recently toured all schools with Ken Linchey outlining the various areas of concerns and what needs to be done. Little Harbor School has recently been updated and came out really nice. The Dondero School is next along with the High School. The High School is also scheduled to have solar panels installed. Currently, seeing solar panel installations in residences within the city where the entire face of the roof is being covered. Working with the City's Inspections Department in adding firefighter safety guidelines to the installation guidelines where clear paths along the sides and ridge of the roofs are needed along with wiring conduits etc. in place. Portwalk's communication transmitter site had no environmental system in place when the system failed. Didn't take into account the heat that the communication system puts out when it was installed which caused an overheating issue in the room. They put in a temporary cooling system but are looking at a more permanent means to keep the room cool.

Deputy Heinz reported on operations and trainings happening within the department noting four new HazMat Technicians, Paramedic and AEMT recertifications will be wrapping up this week, Lieutenants Condon and Herrholz attending Command and Control of Multi Alarm training at the National Fire Academy and department members will be doing some confined space training with National Gypsum. Working with US Coast Guard on

obtaining a tactical ops channel for direct access to us. Attending neighborhood outreach meetings to continue to stay in touch with what their concerns are.

**VI. Old Business:**

Chief Achilles commented on FY16 encumbered funds for Paramedic Program where he currently has one member who applied and was accepted, Eric Carrier. Half of the cost for the program will be paid this year and half from FY18. Another member has applied and is awaiting acceptance. Shift coverage will not be covered but all other expenses will be. The Paramedic Stipend will be granted once the 18-month course is completed successfully.

The improvement to the Communication System in Dispatch is estimated to cost \$1.8M. Looking at key areas throughout the City where a new enhanced system will deliver uninterrupted service but even with the best coverage there will be some gaps Chief Achilles noted.

A Chevy Colorado Pickup was purchased to replace car 4 which is now a Tahoe. This will be the Fire Inspector's vehicle and it is the first time getting a pickup for the Prevention Bureau.

Chief Achilles followed up on the status of SERT Paramedics. He met with labor and the labor attorney to come up with a solution. Chief noted that he spoke with Atty. Closson and he stated there is no need for further actions by the Commission as the grievance has been withdrawn. Grant applications for the purchase of ballistic protective equipment for fire department first responders along with operational level training will be made available in the spring.

**VII. Presentations of Written Communications:**

Chief Achilles read a thank letter from the Richie McFarland Children's Center Events Coordinator Jessica Carbonneau, for our participation in their 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Touch-A-Truck fundraiser.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to accept the thank you letter and place on file. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

**VIII. New Business:**

Chief Achilles mentioned the resignation letter he received from Firefighter Mercaldi effective November 20<sup>th</sup>. We will be looking to fill the vacancy created by this resignation from the current list.

Station 3 renovation was identified in Capital for \$610K however it has not been approved. Because it would be bonded, it would need to go to City Council for

approval. Chief met with Dan Hartrey to walk through Station 3 and identify our needs. Dan will write a RFP for the improvements. Once proposals are received then we will have better idea of costs and be able to ask City Council for approval he stated.

Through Emergency Management, Chief noted work being done on updating plans (LEOP, RERP, etc.) and will be creating a new tab on the City's webpage for Emergency Management which will include links to information.

**IX. Public Hearings:** None.

**X. Non-public Session:**

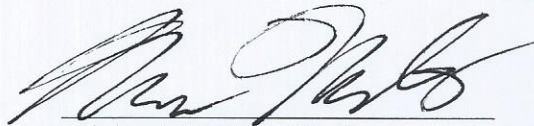
Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 1930 hours for compensation discussions as identified in RSA 91-A:3, II (a), made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Motion, to come out of Non-public Session and return to public meeting at 1945 hours was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously. No votes taken.

Regular public meeting reconvened at 1945 hours.

**XI. Adjournment:**

Motion, to adjourn at 1946 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.



Michael Hughes, Clerk