

048

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

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
July 14, 2020

Portsmouth, NH
1730 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

Motion, to enter into Non-public session at 1730 hours in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (c), for matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect the reputation of a person, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Motion, to come out of Non-public session at 1805 hours and reconvene regular scheduled meeting at 1815 hours, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:

Chairwoman Matthes led the pledge of allegiance.

Present were Commissioners: Jennifer Matthes, Richard Gamester and Michael Hughes; Fire Chief Todd Germain, Deputy Fire Chiefs: James Heinz and Patrick Howe; Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, Captain Jason Gionet, Lieutenant Garrett Miller, and Firefighters: Tim Dame, Steve Morse, Tim Cole, Garrett Gelineau, Wayne LaCaillade and Shaw Terrill.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of March 10, 2020, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Germain read the thank you letters received from Janis and Ralph Smith, which recognized and commended the department's EMT program, and Greenland Fire Chief Ralph Cresta for providing mutual aid assistance during a 3rd alarm fire at 1024 Portsmouth Ave.

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

VI. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Germain read an email he received from Firefighter Gallagher of his decision to retire on July 25, 2020. Firefighter Gallagher has served the department for almost 27 years.

Motion, to accept Stephen Gallagher's letter of retirement, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

Deputy Heinz introduced Firefighter Garrett Gelineau who started with the department on March 30, 2020.

VII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Chairwoman Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 20-041 through 20-044. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester.

Chief Germain reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (041), 2020 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for June 2020. The report shows the department responding to a total of 381 calls for the month: 111 Fire Calls and 270 Ambulance Calls. Chief noted that based on the number of calls last year at this time, we are only under 2%. June has been a very busy month after a slow down over the past couple of months due to COVID and the recommendations in place. Total year to date shows the department responding to 2066 calls: 575 fire and related service calls and 1491 ambulance service calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activity for the month noting a motor vehicle accident/fire at 100 Arboretum Drive for MVA that left the vehicle several feet off the roadway in to the woods and on fire, another motor vehicle accident at 293 Maplewood Ave with a single vehicle into a utility pole, and an equipment fire at the Schiller Station on 400 Gosling Road where a bucket loader was fully involved and near a large pile of wood chips. The safety message focused on grilling safety. The Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (042), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 111 fire calls for the month of June. EMS activity was 270 with the top three responses being for weakness (no specific cause), cardiac/chest pain, and anxiety attacks/acute stress reactions. Chief noted that as of last Monday, we went 34 days without a call for COVID related symptoms. This past week we have received 3 "potential" COVID related calls. There were 4 calls for drug overdose/abuse and 62 non-transports. Report (043), FY20 Budget, Chief Germain reviewed the budget with the Commission and noted the anticipated surplus of over \$200K. This is largely impart due to retirements after the budget was formulated, firefighter vacancies not filled

right away and overtime for earned time significantly reduced due to COVID19 impacts. We did request to encumber about \$25K from the FY20 budget (which is equal to the transfer from parking that didn't take place) to be used for paramedic training, shipboard firefighter school (which was cancelled in May due to COVID19 and is being rescheduled for the fall) and implementing a 5-year preventative maintenance contract for the new generator at station 1 and extending the warranty as well. The FY21 Budget will be watched closely and staffing will be adjusted as we learn of expenditures and surplus. Report (044), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of June along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month. Commissioner Hughes inquired about federal funds for COVID19 related costs. Chief replied noting that the City is working with FEMA and submitting overtime and expenses that relate to COVID19 on a monthly basis and will be reimbursed at 75% from FEMA with GOFERR picking up the remaining 25%. Freeman has been handling this for us and for the City and is working with the Asst. Finance Director and our HSEM Rep. on these monthly grant submission to FEMA

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 20-041 through 20-044, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Chief Heinz reported on Operations and Training within the department. He noted the new Engine 1 being in service and all members receiving training on it, the new generator project at Station 1 has been completed, apparatus pump tests have been completed along with radio tests and PM done. Gear washer inspection and PM has been done, SCBA face pieces have been fit tested, air pack flow testing and inspections have been completed.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Prevention noting several projects happening within the city: 64 Vaughn Mall, State & Pleasant Street, Bridge Street lot pop-up, Music Hall considering holding shows several times a week along Chestnut Street, Water Country reopens Wednesday with reduced capacity, working with restaurant owners reviewing seating plans under COVID19 guidelines and have been very busy meeting these requests for various restaurants and the use of open space. He also noted that after many hours spent in planning for the Trump Rally, the event was cancelled.

IX. Old Business:

Chief Germain spoke briefly of COVID19 and the awareness that it's still out there. Protective measures have been implemented within the department and with every response. A mask is worn at every call and each patient gets a surgical mask upon arrival. Testing is taking longer than what was done previously due to other states like Florida and Texas sending their samples to our labs for quicker turnaround.

Commissioner Hughes asked if we have enough PPE supply to make it through should another wave hit us and Chief replied yes, at this time we do. Chief went on to add that we are looking into obtaining washable department cloth masks for personnel to wear to help reduce the burn through rate of surgical masks.

X. New Business:

Chief Germain updated the Commission on the new Engine 1 which was delivered in April and is now in service. Did have a problem with a frayed wire the other day which had to be repaired. Former E1 will be re-lettered to E6.

The new Tower has been ordered. A lot of great input from those who were part of the Tower Committee. This Committee was established to get the input and feedback from firefighters and officers who are actually the ones using the vehicle. We find establishing such committees has been working out very well.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1915 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Hughes', written over a horizontal line.

Michael Hughes, Clerk