

The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department

086

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
October 10, 2023

Portsmouth, NH
1800 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1800 hours.

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 William McQuillen, Assistant Fire Chief Jason Gionet, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Captain Brian Ryll, Firefighters: Wayne LaCaillade and Annie Cole.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of September 12, 2023, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Presentation of Written Communications:

Chief McQuillen read thank you letter received from National Passport Center Director Cooley,

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

VI. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 23-079 through 23-083. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes.

Chief McQuillen reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (079), 2023 Response Report for September 2023. The report shows the department responding to a total of 433 calls for the month: 110 Fire Calls and 323 Ambulance Calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month, noting seven simultaneous storm related calls with the thunderstorms

that rolled in on Sept. 8th, a MVA with a car versus a motorcycle resulting in serious injuries, oven fire at Dunkin Donuts on Lafayette Road and a MVA on Ocean Road that resulted in patient extraction and who unfortunately, later succumbed to injuries sustained when at the hospital. The safety message focused on Fire Prevention Safety Week and cooking safety. Report (080), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 110 fire calls for the month of September. EMS activity was 323 with the top three responses being for syncope/fainting, alcohol abuse and effects and trauma or injury (head/scalp). There were 2 calls for suicidal or self-harm ideation or thoughts, 5 drug overdose/abuse and 69 non-transport. Report (081), Fire Prevention Activity, noting 42 permits issued in the month of September along with 52 inspections done and various meetings attended. Report (082), FY24 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting the recent approval of firefighter and officer bargaining agreements and supplemental funding done in salary and stipend however, not overtime and with the increase in salary is an increase in overtime rate which will have impact on the overtime accounts when leave is taken and shift coverage is needed to fill the vacancy. Also mentioned with the two contracts settled, an error in implementation on one of the holidays that were not factored in and not having insurance rates at the time of the budget submission and seeing it the first quarter of the fiscal year. Will have to watch budget closely and have currently reduced shift coverage staffing to 14 and taking A3 out of service for now since call volume was decreasing. Report (083), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of September along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month. With the two contracts settled, retro pay on overtime was taken from OT-Recall line. Again, supplemental funds were not applied to overtime lines.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 23-079 through 23-083, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Assistant Chief reported on facilities and operations happening within the department. Station 3 boiler issue this past weekend resulted in the replacement of a control board and Fall PMs have been performed on the heating systems at Stations 1 and 3. New utility vehicle is at NEVO with work anticipated to be completed in the next day or two and will be placed in service once completed. Three new firefighters will start Monday, October 16th. Two additional candidates have completed their physicals and are awaiting their background checks. Hope to have them start within a week or two. Department personnel utilized a building that was scheduled for demolition at the corner of Maplewood and Deer Street for various drills and training evolutions. EMS recertification cycle has begun again for those needing to renew their EMS licenses for 2024. Department participated in the Pease Triennial Airport Emergency Plan Drill which simulated an aircraft mishap by providing EMS for the drill.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Prevention noting several new projects and the various meetings that he and Fire Prevention Officer Putney attended including the quarterly Seacoast Fire Inspector's Breakfast which has been ongoing now for a couple of years and is hosted by different seacoast area departments. These quarterly meetings of fire inspectors provide for a collaborative approach on various topics including problems and resolutions, statewide trainings, sprinkler requirements and other happenings within the State's Fire Marshal's Office.

VII. Old Business: None.

IX. New Business:

Chief McQuillen presented Firefighter Godfrey's letter of resignation.

Motion, to accept Firefighter Godfrey's resignation, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

Chief McQuillen spoke of the Gift and Donation Form for a 1920 American LaFrance Fire Truck that was fully restored by Bayberry Vintage Auto in Hampton and owner, James Dunaway, General manager of BVA, reaching out to us having seen our Kearsarge Engine. This 1920 American LaFrance Truck drives and is operatable and can be used in parades, or at fire prevention events, etc. The annual cost for maintenance will be approximately \$100 for oil changes and polishing. The appraisal was done when they considered auctioning it off prior to making this donation to us. Will be stored inside at station 1 if Commission accepts this donation. Commissioner Hughes inquired about the special term of occasional use by the donor for special events at the donor's expense. Chief McQuillen has legal reviewing the special terms of this donation but anticipates with the City insuring the truck, liability would fall on Portsmouth Fire to provide a firefighter to drive it if the use was for a special event of the donor and cost would be at the donor's expense.

Motion, to accept the donation of the 1920 American LaFrance Fire Truck from James Dunaway General Manager of Bayberry Vintage Autos LLC and move to City Council for final acceptance, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1836 hours, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.



Michael Hughes, Clerk