

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

001

Fire Station 2  
George Pierce Training Room  
December 10, 2024

Portsmouth, NH  
1730 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Commissioner Gamester called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:**

Commissioner Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.

*Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 1730 hours in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (i) for discussion of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of Emergency Functions.*

*Motion, to close and come out of Non-public Session at 1850 hours and return to public session, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to seal the minutes of Non-public Session, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes. On a roll call vote of 3-0, motion passed unanimously.*

Regular monthly meeting convened at 1852 hours.

Present were Commissioners: Richard Gamester, Jennifer Matthes and Michael Hughes; Fire Chief William McQuillen, Assistant Fire Chief Jason Gionet, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Lieutenant Brett Nelson and Firefighters: Wayne LaCaillade and Eric Carrier.

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

*Motion, to approve the minutes of November 12, 2024, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

**IV. Public Comment Session: None.**

**V. Recognition of Groups or Individuals: None.**

**VI. Presentation of Written Communications: None.**

**VII. Reports:**

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

*Commissioner Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 24-090 through 24-093. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester.*

Fire Chief McQuillen reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (090), 2024 Response Report for November 2024. The report shows the department responding to a total of 447 calls for the month: 118 Fire Calls and 329 Ambulance Calls. Calls for EMS were up this month from last month. Chief noted that next month he would add additional fire numbers to give a truer picture of fire activity and movement. Currently, the monthly fire and related services number does not account for fire apparatus responding to EMS calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month, noting mutual aid response to Rye for 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm building fire, a brush fire and homeless camps on fire behind Ledgewood Drive, a motor vehicle accident with patient entrapped with trauma alert activated to the hospital, mutual aid to Brentwood for brush fire and a motor vehicle crash on I95 South. The safety message focused on NFPA and home decorations and Christmas tree safety. Report (091), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 118 fire calls for the month of November. EMS activity was 329 with the top three responses being for abdominal pain/problems, syncope/fainting and alcohol abuse and effects. There was 1 call for suicidal or self-harm ideation or thoughts, 4 drug overdose/abuse and 80 non-transports. Report (092), FY25 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting two vacancies currently along with savings within the salary lines due to difference in pay rates from retirements to new hires along with acting conservatively the first half of the year to see how things play out. Report (088), 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 accept Chief's Reports 24-090 through 24-093, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

**B. Staff Reports:**

Assistant Chief Gionet reported on facilities and operations happening within the department. The building security project is still ongoing and waiting for equipment to come in. Bid process has started for station 2's roof replacement with work anticipated to begin early spring. Truck 5 is back in service after repairs to springs and suspension, new ambulance is expected by end of February and Marine 1 has been removed from the water for the winter season and will be undergoing annual maintenance before returning to the Port Authority for storage. Two conditional job offers were made and they are beginning the background and physical process. Firefighters Reagan, Wiggin, and Strozewski are finishing their 18-months of Paramedic school and will be sitting for their National Registry certification exams in the next few weeks.



*Fire Commission Minutes of December 10, 2024 continued:*

This will bring the department to a total of 32 Paramedics. Vehicle extrication training was conducted for all new personnel and SIM Lab training is finishing up as part of the annual EMS refresher training for personnel.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Fire Prevention noting 29 permits issued, 50 inspections and 21 prevention related meetings for the month of November. Other items noted were FPOs Putney and Wheeler attended a Carbon Monoxide Summit at the Fire Academy and attended the Port & Vessel Security Class at the PDA. FPO Putney met with The Player's Ring about egress and safety and FPO Wheeler attended the Restaurant and Bar Assoc. meeting at the Police Department. Preparation and permitting has started for First Night fireworks and 361 Hanover St. is coming before TAC with the proposal consisting of adding 3 new buildings as well as renovation and expansion of the existing. Some residential expected.

**VIII. Old Business:** None.

**IX. New Business:** None.

**X. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 1910 hours, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Matthes and passed unanimously.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Hughes', is written over a horizontal line.

Michael Hughes, Clerk