

035

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

Fire Station 2  
George Pierce Training Room  
April 9, 2024

Portsmouth, NH  
1800 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Chairman Gamester called the meeting to order at 1800 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 Eric Detweiler and Firefighter Gregory Tufts.

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

Chairman Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.

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

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

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

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

**VI. Reports:**

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

*Commissioner Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 24-030 through 24-034. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes.*

Report (030), 2024 Response Report for March 2024. The report shows the department responding to a total of 378 calls for the month: 103 Fire Calls and 275 Ambulance Calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month noting two responses to Pease, one for a gulfstream jet with flap issues and another for a KC-46 with its refueling boom still extended out. Both planes landed without issues. Also noted were two mutual aid calls, one to Dover for a second alarm barn fire, and one to Kittery for a second alarm fire in a residence. The safety message focused on 9-volt batteries and the proper storage and disposal of them. Report (031), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 103 fire calls for the month of March and EMS activity was 275 for the month with the top three responses being for syncope/fainting, weakness, and abdominal pain/problems. There were 5 calls for suicidal or self-harm ideation or thoughts, 3 drug overdose/abuse and 59 non-transport. Report (032), Fire Prevention Activity, moved to Staff Reports for Deputy Howe to report on. Report (033), FY24 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting current staffing remains at a minimum of 13. With the budget being extremely tight, a spending freeze continues to be in place with only

necessary expenses being approved. Report (034), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of March along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

*Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 24-030, 24-031, 24-033 and 24-034, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

**B. Staff Reports:**

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Fire Prevention activity, Report 24-032, noting 26 permits issued and 71 inspections done along with several meetings and trainings that Fire Prevention Officers Wheeler and Putney participated in. Chairman Gamester inquired about outdoor dining permits. DC Howe replied stating he and city staff have had multiple meetings regarding permitting of outdoor dining and requests are starting to come in.

*Commissioner Hughes made the motion to accept Fire Chief's Report 24-032, Fire Prevention Activity. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Matthes and passed unanimously.*

Chairman Gamester asked that the Fire Prevention Report be moved from Fire Chief's Reports to Staff Reports for future meetings. Chief McQuillen acknowledged and would implement the request.

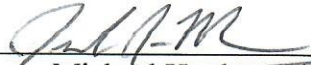
Assistant Chief reported on facilities and operations happening within the department noting station 2's heating issues have been resolved; engine 3 will be going to Seabrook tomorrow for work on electrical issues; quote for a new ambulance should in by end of the week to get that in the process. Lead times are taking 26-30 months on average. Firefighter Guile will be starting on Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup> leaving one vacancy at this time to fill. Lt. Exam is being held Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> with 5 candidates participating. Personnel assisted the PNSY with their graded exercise on board one of the subs and provided with a tour of the vessel after the training. In the process of scheduling of our annual live fire training exercises at the shipyard.

**VII. Old Business: None.**

**VIII. New Business: None.**

**IX. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 1830 hours, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

  
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Michael Hughes, Clerk  
Jennifer Matthes, v Chair