

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

Fire Station 2  
George Pierce Training Room  
April 8, 2025

Portsmouth, NH  
1800 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Chairman Gamester called the meeting to order at 1800 hours.

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

Commissioner Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.

Present were Commissioners: Richard Gamester, Michael Hughes and Jennifer Matthes; Fire Chief William McQuillen, Assistant Fire Chief Jason Gionet, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Lieutenant Brian Wade.

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

*Motion, to approve the minutes of March 11, 2025, 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 Hughes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 25-030 through 25-033. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Matthes.*

Fire Chief McQuillen reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (030), 2025 Response Report for March 2025. The report shows the department responding to a total of 488 calls for the month: 203 Fire Calls with EMS Services and 124 Fire and Related Service Calls and 285 Ambulance Calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month, noting mutual aid to N. Hampton for a building fire; several power outages across the city with wires down and trees on structures during high wind event; and mutual aid to Hampton for a 1<sup>st</sup> alarm fire.

The safety message focused on large apartment buildings and the alerting of fire alarm systems warning residents of danger and knowing the locations of all exit stairs. Report (031), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 203 fire calls for the month of March. EMS activity was 285 with the top three responses being for weakness, abdominal pain/problems and anxiety attacks. There were 4 calls for suicidal or self-harm ideation or thoughts, 2 drug overdose/abuse and 71 non-transports. Report (032), FY25 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting we are still tracking about 1% to the good and have projected expenses to fiscal year end. Report (033), 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 25-030 through 25-033, 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: Engine 3 has returned from repair work; Truck 5 is having piston repairs done and should return at the end of the week; and department completed pre-delivery inspection on the new ambulance this past Monday and will take 3-4 weeks to put in service; staffing is full, Probationary FF Wall has safely returned from deployment, Cpt. Kenneway and Lt. Wade have been conducting Firefighter Fire Ground Safety and Awareness training for all personnel; all personnel have completed their EMS recertifications.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Fire Prevention activity for the month with 41 permits issued and 68 inspections done. Other items of note, FPO Wheeler and Putney hosted NH Fire Prevention Society's board meeting and attended the Seacoast Fire Inspectors breakfast in Rochester and a kitchen hood and suppression class. FPO Wheeler attended the Portsmouth Restaurant and Bar association meeting with Portsmouth PD. Meeting with Legal, Planning and Inspection Departments on co-living arrangements and working with city departments and the PHA on affordable housing project on Sherburne Rd (former Lister Academy site)

**VII. Old Business: None.**

**IX. New Business:**

*Motion, to regretfully accept, Tracy Freeman's retirement letter effective May 1, 2025, with sincere gratitude for all her hard work and dedicated service for the past 24 years to the department, the City, and its residents. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

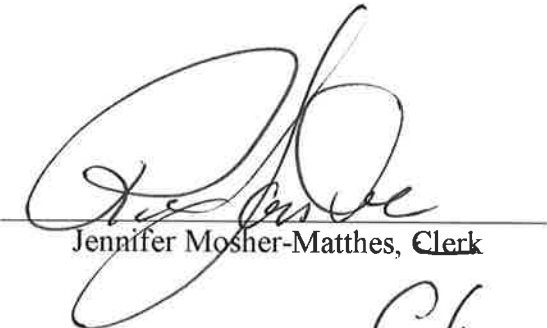
Chief McQuillen spoke briefly on the process in finding Tracy's replacement, with a total of 19 applicants responding to the vacancy post. Chief McQuillen, Asst.

*Fire Commission Minutes of April 8, 2025 continued:*


Chief Gionet and Human Resource Specialist Shawna Judd interviewed three internal candidates and top three external candidates. An offer was made to Nancy Savini who currently works for the Finance Department. Together with the Finance Director, we will be working on her transition to the Fire Department as soon as possible.

**X. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 1825 hours, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*



Jennifer Mosher-Matthes, Clerk



Chair