

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

Fire Station 2  
George Pierce Training Room  
October 14, 2025

Portsmouth, NH  
1800 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Commissioner 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 Mathes; Fire Chief William McQuillen, Assistant Fire Chief Jason Gonet, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Administrative Manager Nancy Savini, and Capt. Gordon along with other Fire Department personnel.

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

*Motion, to approve the minutes of September 9, 2025, was made by Commissioner Mathes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

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

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

**VI. Reports:**

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

*Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 25-081 through 25-084. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Mathes.*

Fire Chief William McQuillen reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (081), 2025 Response Report for September 2025. The report shows the department responding to a total of 612 calls for the month: 252 Fire Calls with EMS Services and 141 Fire and Related Service Calls and 360 Ambulance Calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month, noting on 9/3/25 1350 hours Engine 3 and Chief 1 respond to Dover on a 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm, RIT assignment, with companies clearing within 20 minutes. On 9/18/25 1152 hours, Engine 1, Rescue 7, Truck 2, Ambulances 1 & 3, Chief 2 responded to a multi vehicle accident on 95 North Exit 7. A tractor trailer lost its wheel causing a spinout accident in North and Southbound lanes. Minor injuries with 2 patients and involved a search of Atlantic Heights below the highway for debris/damage. On 9/28/25 1458 hours, Engine 3 dispatched on a still alarm, upgraded to Engine 1, Truck 2, ambulances 2 & 4, Chief 1, and HazMat 1. Initially called for an alarm issue for third time in ten hours which turned out to be a broken sprinkler pipe and a coolant line leaking. Hazmat team called in, leak stopped, and water shut off. DES arrived and supervised cleanup. Crews

operated for 3.5 hours. Captain Gordon spoke briefly how well the situation was handled and how the processes were reviewed with the entire staff afterwards.

The safety message focused on this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign (October 5-11) "Charge into Fire Safety: Lithium-Ion Batteries in your Home". Portsmouth Fire Department along with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) campaign stresses how important it is to BUY, CHARGE, and RECYCLE safely when it comes to lithium-ion batteries.

Report (082), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 252 fire calls for the month of September. EMS activity was 360 with the top three responses being for Cardiac Rhythm Disturbance, Anxiety Attack, and Injury (head/scalp). There were 13 calls for Stroke/CVA, 12 for chest pain, 12 for weakness, and 52 non-transports. Report (083), FY26 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget stating the % spent to date is 31% with the budget being 25% into FY26, noting annual expenses recorded in period 1 skew the % expense which will even out as we go through the year. Report (084), 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.

*Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 25-081 through 25-084, was made by Commissioner Mathes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously*

B. Staff Reports:

Assistant Chief Gionet reported (085) on facilities and operations happening within the department in the month of September:

New engine has been installed in Ambulance 3 and it has been placed back in service, we had several repairs to multiple fire apparatus at the end of September and all repairs are complete and all apparatus is back in service and inspected.

Station 2 Roof Replacement: there will be a pre-construction meeting on 10/15/2025 with the roofing contractor and the city project manager to review the installation of the new roof at Fire Station 2.

We currently have 4 open positions. With 1 Firefighter beginning on October 27, 2025, 1 conditional offer we are waiting to hear back on and there will be 2 interviews on 10/29/2025 in an effort to fill the 2 remaining vacancies.

Update on the National Fire Academy program: Awaiting to hear if the Government shutdown will impact the ability for the class to be held in November. EMS refresher training is ongoing for those expiring this coming March to include ACLS and PALS refreshers for the paramedics.

Deputy Chief Howe reported (086) on Fire Prevention activity for the month of September. There were 41 permits issued, 67 inspections done, 28 prevention related meetings, and 38 approvals (not associated with FD permits). Other items of note: FPO Wheeler spoke about fire safety with "Dull Old Men's Group" at the Senior Center, Fire Prevention Bureau attended the Fire Inspector's Breakfast in New Castle, FPO Wheeler participated in the Senior Wellness Expo at the Community Center, FPO Putney met with stakeholders regarding the single exit stair issue for residential building, and Fire Prevention met with Public Works regarding private hydrant maintenance, flow testing for fire protection system designs, and water supply requirements for NFPA 13 D Fire Suspension Systems.

*Motion, to accept Staff Reports 25-085 through 25-086, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

**VII. Old Business:** None.

**IX. New Business:**

*Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 6:25 PM in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to come out of Non-public Session at 6:40 PM 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 today's Non-public session, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes. On a vote of 3-0, motion passes*

*Regular monthly meeting convened at 1840 hours.*

Contract ratifications, for both Chief McQuillen and Asst Chief Gonet, were discussed in the Non-public Session.

*Motion, to accept the Two Year Employment Agreement for both Chief McQuillen and Asst. Chief Gonet and forward to City Council for approval, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

**X. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 1843 hours, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

  
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Jennifer Mosher-Matthes, Clerk