

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

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
August 11, 2026

Portsmouth, NH
1800 hours

I. Call to Order:

Commissioner Hughes called the meeting to order at 1800 hours.

II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:

Commissioner Hughes 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 Scott Egan, Acting Deputy Fire Chief Chad Putney, Administrative Manager Nancy Savini, member of the community Mr. Christopher Golumb, and members of the Portsmouth Fire Department.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of July 21, 2026 (26-090), was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session:

Mr. Christopher Golumb approached the Fire Commission Board with the following:

-Asking for the correct city emails to contact a commissioner. Once the meeting was adjourned, the Chief forwarded (in an email) the city emails for each of the commissioners.

-Inquiring as to why the Non-Public Meeting Minutes from June were not included with the regular meeting minutes. He was told those minutes are sealed and not for the Public. He also made reference to how his comments from the meeting were not entirely what he said. It was explained the minutes are not a transcript.

-Asking for the Rules that govern the Board of Fire Commission. He was told the draft is currently at the Legal Department for review.

-Asking where the Commissioners get their legal training on how to run a meeting and where the 3 minutes per public member came from. He was told the commission follow the City Councils guidelines for the three minutes rule and training is done on an annual basis with other department heads, commissioners and Human Resources.

V. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports (26-091 through 26-094). Motion was seconded by Commissioner Matthes.

Fire Chief McQuillen reviewed reports with the Commission.

Fire Commission Minutes of August 11, 2026 continued:

Report (26-091), 2026 Response Report for July 2026. The report shows the department responding to a total of 640 calls for the month: 274 Fire Calls with EMS Services and 156 Fire and Related Service Calls and 366 Ambulance Calls.

Chief spoke briefly about the following incidents of interest:

July 1 1533 E1 R7 A1 A4 MVA Spaulding South Bound at the split, vehicle crossed median and hit NB vehicle 2 patients transported.

July 16 1433 E3 Mutual Aid to Newington, Shattuck Way Fire in pipe insulation under pier, Operated for an hour.

July 19 1117 hours E3 and T2 to 3 Pleasant Street Carbon Dioxide issue in basement, companies ventilated and monitored for 2 ½ hours.

July 24 1706 Hours E3 and A1 in Marine 1, Chief 2 to Rye for crash notification offshore. Unfounded, Marine 1 arrived prior to USCG at request of Marine Patrol. Other assets unavailable. Companies operated for an hour and ten minutes.

July 24 0114 hours, E3 and C2 to 68 Portland Ave 2nd alarm building fire. Companies operated for an hour.

For July's Safety Message, The Portsmouth Fire Department and US Dept of Transportation Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration would like to remind you of the following:

August 11 is 811 day.

811 Day is an annual initiative led by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) to ensure the practice of safe digging is echoed in communities by calling 8-1-1, a nationwide toll-free number, before any excavation project.

As an agency committed to safety and protecting the nation's 3.3 million miles of pipeline, PHMSA recognizes the importance of damage prevention and seeks to eliminate excavation damage, which remains the leading cause of pipeline incidents.

Calling 811 or visiting www.call811.com, has proven to be the foremost preventive measure in excavation safety and damage prevention. Research has revealed that if someone calls 8-1-1 before they dig, they have a 99 percent chance of avoiding an incident, injury, harm to the environment and even death. In addition to 811 Day, PHMSA has partnered with several organizations including the National Energy Foundation (NEF), and the Common Ground Alliance (CGA) to develop several community outreach efforts and public awareness campaigns including: the 811 video and poster contests for elementary, middle, and high school students as well as social media and digital campaigns for National Safe Digging and National Safety Months.

Know what is below CALL 811 before you dig.

Report (26-092), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to fire calls for the month of July. EMS activity was 366 with the top

three responses being for head injury, abdominal pain and no apparent reason. There were 15 calls for fainting, 14 for weakness, 12 for nausea and 65 non-transports.

Report (26-093), FY27 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting FY27 is just beginning, looking strong and good. Report (26-094), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of July along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

In addition to the current month's reports, the Chief presented a new report (26-091) which includes a new set of stats; including a Fire Department Heat Map if Incident for July with the corresponding total incident details. If the commission finds it useful, the chief will include each month going forward.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 26-091 through 26-094, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Assistant Chief Gionet reported on facilities and operations happening within the department (26-095) which are as follows:

Apparatus / Equipment / Facilities

1. New Ambulance: Contract has been approved by Legal and completed with Greenwood Emergency Vehicles. Anticipated delivery date of early January 2027.
2. New Command Vehicle: The vehicle has been purchased, and we are waiting for an appointment to have it upfitted.
3. Station 2 roof project has been completed. Awaiting final acceptance from facilities.

Personnel

1. Current open positions: All vacancies have been either filled or conditionally filled. 1 new firefighter to start in late September due to relocation and awaiting background and physicals on 2 remaining conditional offers.
2. Interviews: I will be interviewing additional candidates for an anticipated opening at the end of August.

Training

1. I am currently working with Deputy Egan to begin transitioning training activities and tracking to the training division.

Other

1. All contracts with the NH Insurance Companies have been executed
2. The Ambulance data collection is underway and will be completed prior to the August 28, 2026 deadline.

Deputy Chief Putney reported (26-096) on Fire Prevention activity for the month of July with 39 permits issued and 51 inspections done and trending upward. Revenue collected for July 2026 was a little under \$10K.

Other Notable Items are as follows:

- 250th anniversary 4th of July fireworks went off without incident.
- FPO Wheeler and Scholtz hosted a Seacoast Community School PEAK Summer Programming for School-Age Children fire station visit at station 2.
- ADC Putney and FPO Scholtz attended an immense joint scene examination for the Pray Street fire, more to follow when investigation completes.
- Former WHEB site has full occupancy, three buildings, 72 market rate apartments.

VI. Old Business: None.

IX. New Business:

-Lt. Scott Egan was promoted to the position of Deputy Chief effective 8.1.26 (26-097). Scott was congratulated and wished well by all.

Motion, to promote Lt Scott Egan to Deputy Fire Chief per the Chief's recommendation, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously

-FF. Timothy Cole was promoted to the position of Lieutenant effective 8.17.26 which will include a week of training (26-098). Timothy was congratulated and wished well by all.

Motion, to promote FF. Timothy Cole to Lieutenant per the Chief's recommendation, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

-The Chief read FF. Strozewski's Resignation noting his last day will be 8.18.26 (26-099). Thanking him for his years of service to the Portsmouth Fire Department.

Motion, to accept FF. Strozewski's resignation, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

-Deputy Chief Egan's Employment Agreement (26-100) was presented to the Board to accept and to be forwarded to City Council.

Motion, to accept the Agreement as written and forward to the City Council for approval, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1829 hours, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.