Board of Fire Commissioners
April 6, 2021
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Room 1
Regular Meeting

Commissioners present: Bruce Dutch, Jennifer Spencer
Visitors: Rob Smith, Kyle Mosig, Neil Mosig, Dan Wallace, Bob Bennett, Kevin Rutty

1. Call to Order at 5:04pm

2. Acceptance of Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 2, 2021 and Special Meeting of March 11, 2021
   a. Motion by B. Dutch, seconded by J. Spencer, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 2, 2021. Motion passed.
   b. Motion by B. Dutch, seconded by J. Spencer, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of March 11, 2021. Motion passed.

3. Bill Approval: Recent submissions were reviewed and discussed.

4. Budget Recap: Current expenditures were reviewed.

5. Old Business:
   a. As follow up on resignation of Howard Bogue, J. Spencer nominated B. Dutch as Chairman of Fire Commissioners. One vote was cast. Nomination was accepted and passed.

6. Visitors Participation: Kyle Mosig, Interim Chief, noted there will be an election on April 6, 2021 to fill vacant positions of Chief, Asst Deputy Chief and Captain. He also noted the fuel pumps were not working this past weekend for three different members. The code would not register. It was noted that Public Works was working on the issue. K. Mosig to follow up and determine if there were some issues with the fobs. Fire index remains high. All burn permits and burn details on hold until fire index returns to safe level.

7. Fire Chief report: See above.

8. Fire Marshal's Report: None.

9. Building Report:
   a. B. Dutch noted that the bathrooms at Co #1 are now working since repairs have been done. There should be a smooth flow of debris as the pitch was addressed. One main bathroom is available, but caution should be used as the floor is not complete. The floor repair will be completed once B. Dutch is sure the system is working well. There is a need to purchase three new door locks for the bathrooms as well.

b. The Commissioners need to discuss how to address the cleaning of Co #1as EHAA has noted they are not responsible for cleaning. First Selectman Smith will determine the best way to resolve this issue.
c. The doors for both firehouses need to have the timers removed as soon as possible. J. Spencer did note this is planned with new budget year.

10. Equipment Report:
    a. It was requested to have Chevy S-10 and Ladder truck put on state website as soon as possible. These vehicles need to be removed from the grounds.
    b. The Seagrave fire apparatus also needs to be removed from Co #2 to make room for the new Fire Police vehicle. Discussion to be ongoing.
    c. The duty car is not safe for use. The Fire Department is requesting use of this vehicle for training with the new hydraulic tools. First Selectman Smith noted the Board of Selectmen need to approve this move. He will add this item to the next Board of Selectmen agenda. First Selectman Smith requested that the Volunteer Fire Department ensure that all equipment is removed from the vehicle as well as any fluids that could leak or be a hazard.

11. Correspondence: None

12. New Business:
    a. B. Dutch started a conversation regarding improving communications. He wants to "clear the air" so we can all move on and improve the relationships of Fire Commissioners, Volunteer Fire Department and Career staff. Everyone agrees better consistent communication is key with any group. It was noted S. Daigle had a letter that should be reviewed to address complaints so they can be discussed and addressed. B. Dutch suggested all three areas develop their own bullet list with all concerns that they feel may have led to the resignation of three officers. At the next meeting it is planned to review these lists, indicate any areas that have been addressed, set priorities for the remainder of the areas of concern and work on them as a united group. If indicated any concerns may be dealt with individually. The group needs to "put to bed" issues that were made up or blown out of proportion and continue with checks and balances going forward. Communication needs to go both ways. Consider ongoing use of active 911 and use of a white board for changes. It was noted in the past there has been equipment changed or moved and information was not disseminated to all volunteers causing issues. There again we need to be consistent with communication and follow through. Fire Commissioners are ultimately responsible for equipment. Please include the Fire Commissioners on any proposed changes or moving of equipment as a directive may be needed.
    b. J. Spencer asked if a meeting was needed between now and the Executive Board meeting. It was determined that one was not needed to give everyone time to compile their lists. The next meeting of the Executive Board is April 27th. K. Mosig noted they could try to start at 5:00pm so the Career staff could be there.
    c. Discussion took place regarding the Career staff and the need for a Captain. First Selectman Smith noted per the union contract a Captain needs to be full-time and in the union. LT. Kolasinski was asked and has worked in this capacity since the previous

Captain position was vacated. All career staff are very comfortable with LT. Kolasinski as lead lieutenant and follow the command structure. It was noted that LT. Kolasinski has done a great job.

d. Quint Grant: Discussion took place regarding which tanker could be retired with the ladder truck. There are specifications for what apparatus could be turned in. J. Spencer will get a copy of the contract from Steve Dorfman or LT. Kolasinski and let others know what is written.
e. B. Dutch noted the need to address the importance of getting the apparatus out, but it is difficult with fewer responding volunteers. This is an issue everywhere. The board needs to address the costs for the apparatus that are escalating and if the ability to get the apparatus out continues to decline then changes need to be made to keep costs reasonable. The board knows times and needs are ever changing, what the Town and Fire Department may need now may need to be adjusted in future. The group needs to appreciate the valuable information brought by everyone on the Executive Committee, Career Staff and Fire Commissioners in any discussions going forward regarding future purchases and budgets. At least now there is a capital budget plan set for the next few years and revisions can be made yearly with improved communication and open discussion. It is important to listen to everyone's ideas not just dismiss them. Everyone will not be happy, but goal is to have the majority of the group happy with future decisions. B. Dutch reminded everyone that the budget process begins every year in October and asked the Executive Board to please be sure to add this to their Executive Board meeting agenda and include representatives of the Career staff and Fire Commissioners. It should be noted that Commissioner Spencer did not want to make the decisions this year but be assured the requests from last year for the coming budget were presented and accepted by the Board of Finance. In the past, the Board of Finance has been very supportive of requests by the Fire Department. They appreciated the improved long-range planning so the Town can set aside the funding to meet the needs of the department in the future without raising the mill rate. The suggestions to consolidate two trucks to one is in the future and is out four years for the first change and two more in the ten-year plan. Previously the town was reserving approximately $150,000 a year and now will most likely increase that possibly to $250,000 due to escalating costs of apparatus.
f. J. Spencer noted there was a recent complaint about seeing an EHFD personnel on a local active scene smoking a cigarette. This was not appreciated by the reporting Town. Please be aware we have a Town policy where there will be no smoking in any town vehicles including fire apparatus and no smoking in any public buildings. Please be cognizant of how it looks when smoking at a scene and residents may not appreciate it.

13. Adjournment: Motion by J. Spencer, seconded by B. Dutch, to adjourn the meeting at 6:30pm. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Spencer
Fire Commissioner / Secretary