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

Commissioners present: Jennifer Spencer, Bruce Dutch, Tim Reynolds
Visitors: Rob Smith, Ray Swol, Neil Mosig, Kyle Mosig, Bob Bennett

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Bruce Dutch at 5:00pm.
   Chairman Dutch mentioned comments he received from residents regarding the June meeting. Some were uncomfortable with the way things went. He wanted to see how everyone was seeing things. There was no intent to put anyone on the spot or feel bad. He wanted the issues to be out front so they could be dealt with, and we could do some problem solving versus trouble making. Don't find fault with solutions.

2. Acceptance of Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 1, 2021
   a. Motion made by J. Spencer, seconded by T. Reynolds, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2021. Motion passed.

3. Bill Approval: Recent submissions reviewed and discussed.

4. Budget Recap: Current expenditures reviewed. No current budget to review. Fire Department will continue to be conservative in expenditures until a final budget is passed.
   a. It was noted a small group can be formed with career staff and volunteer representatives to develop specifications for Utility and conversion of old utility thus not delaying any further the purchase of new apparatus.
   b. J. Spencer requested First Selectman Smith to review the award the Town received: The Chicago-based Government Finance Officers Association of the USA and Canada has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in financial reporting to the Town of East Haddam for its comprehensive annual financial report for fiscal year that ended June 30, 2021.

5. Old Business:
   a. Discussion took place regarding closure of floor at Company 1 firehouse as no further plumbing issues have developed. The determination was made to repair the floor and shower capabilities in the female bathroom and convert the original bathroom to a janitor /mop closet with room for storage which is lacking at Company 1. B. Dutch will reach out to D. Angersola for confirmation.
   b. The staging of the Town ambulance at Company 2 was again discussed. The group is in total agreement that being able to stage the ambulance inside at Company 2 from 6:00am to 6:00pm, Monday thru Friday, would significantly improve response times to an EMS emergency. The current process is the crew needs to respond to Company 1 on Town Street and many times return to the Moodus section of town to get to the actual call. This

delay is, at a minimum, 7 minutes time and otherwise exponentially increasing the liability if responses are delayed. The first responders will go to the scene to await for the ambulance that has all the equipment needed for an emergency. Jim Santacroce has been approached and in an email to the chief indicated there is nothing that needs to be done to accomplish staging of the Town ambulance. As expected, and is practice, the ambulance will be inside unless it is being cleaned and/or the firehouse is being cleaned. All precautions will be taken to assure safety measures are taken to care for medications requiring temperature control. A copy of the information was given to First Selectman Smith and there are plans for the First Selectman and R. Swol to attend an EHAA meeting to discuss the plan again.

c. Also discussed was the importance of adequate staffing especially from EHAA and R-1 responses from the Fire Department. EHAA has had many hours with expected staffing for coverage and no technicians were on duty but the town and Fire Department were not made aware. If the Fire Department career staff is not at full capacity the Town, Fire Department and EHAA all know this ahead of time. If there are no technicians to staff the ambulance on Saturdays, the First Selectman can call in career staff per the R-1 response guidelines.

6. Visitors Participation: None

7. Fire Chief's Report:
   a. Standard Operating Guidelines (SOP) are expected to be followed by volunteer and career staff. As the SOP's are being worked on First Selectman Smith has asked to be involved with the meetings as some will need to be tailored to career staff when regarding staffing and expected apparatus to be utilized according to staffing on any day.
   b. Reviewed info on staging of Ambulance.
   c. It was determined that Engine 2-15 will be the appropriate apparatus to retire when Quint has arrived.
   d. There was a boat drill held with all 3 boats in the river and waterways. The new motor for the Jon boat has come in and we now have a spare if needed for an emergency.
   e. Noted issues with the bay door being left open at Company 1. This is being worked on and the correction is in the proposed budget.
   f. Is there any way the jet ski can be returned to the Fire Department? First Selectman Smith will look into this. There is understanding if it can be used by Fire Department the machine will need to be checked mechanically.
   g. A committee will be formed to get specifications for new Utility, as well, they will better define the needs for the tablets requested and will review at next commissioner meeting.
   h. They are waiting for the new monitor at Company 1 and Company 2 for view of security cameras and CAD system for 911 live.
   i. Craig Mansfield has several pagers to hand out this coming week for a trial by some Officers.
   j. Who is responsible for the Career staff? First Selectman Smith says the First Selectman is responsible but some general guidance can be from Volunteer Chief. Discussions will take place as needed. Of importance is the need to reduce how many people they are to take direction from. If there are any issues on scene, please let First Selectman know.

k. T. Reynolds presented an article regarding career and volunteer staff working together. Improvements have been ongoing, and SOG/SOP need to be worked on.
l. The Chief is asking to sign off on career staff timecards. He wants to see if there are patterns developing that may need to be corrected and possible discipline. The timecards are all electronic and have been for a while. They need a fingerprint to sign in. Any discipline will be done by First Selectman. There have been some concerns with new career staff which were handled per guidelines. The Chief also asked to be notified if there are any callouts so volunteers can pay more attention and help as needed. It was noted that volunteers are on call 24/7 anyway. The Chief does get the monthly schedule and is requesting the schedule be for 3 months at a time.
m. Concerns were noted again about staffing. The career roster needs 2 more per diem staff. Applications are low for the position at this time with just 1 or 2. The importance of filling the roster was noted.
n. It was requested that career staff check the ambulance every morning. This is done. It can be missed if they get a call at the beginning of the shift. It was noted there was an issue with no bedpan available.
o. There is a large tent at the Goodspeed landing which can accommodate 200 people.
p. LED lighting has been completed at both fire houses. A few issues are being addressed.
q. Does anyone know the results of the water test. B. Dutch noted the water is potable and no treatment needed.
r. Out of service signs are still needed for each firehouse.
s. There is an issue with Salem and Gardener Lake with political issues which is affecting a response from their RIT team. Chief will continue to assure we have a RIT team available.
t. July 19th Route 82 will be closed. A detour will be in place for 2 months. Next year a detour will go into effect for Baker Lane bridge replacement.
u. There have been 2 medical calls involving hoarding situations. Classes on dealing with this are being planned. Lt. Kolasinski has worked with Middlesex Hospital and R. Swol to get training as soon as possible.
v. A critical call occurred recently. First Selectman Smith offered Employee Assistant Program (EAP) to employees of the Town. Unfortunately, there is no longer a Critical Incident Stress Team available to volunteers. There is however a new law saying any first responders / fire fighters can be covered for time out of work if related to PTSD.

8. Fire Marshal's Report: None

9. Building Report: Thank you to B. Dutch for obtaining a refrigerator and air conditioner for Company 2. Other building issues have been discussed.

10. Equipment Report: Hose testing to be done August 23. The Chief asked for the use of the hydrant at Brownell. B. Dutch noted this has already been approved in conversation with Lt. Kolasinski. The dry hydrant at Grove Street still needs repair.

11. Correspondence: B. Dutch read a resignation letter from J. Spencer which will be effective after new Fire Commissioner is chosen for appointment by Board of Selectmen or August 3, 2021. J. Spencer was thanked for her work as Fire Commissioner.

12. New Business: Reminder that smoking is not allowed in the vehicles or on Town property. J. Spencer to get copy of smoking guidelines.

13. Adjournment: Motion made by T. Reynolds, seconded by J. Spencer, to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Spencer, Secretary