

Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting – June 15, 2009

Chair Fred Hackenyos called the meeting to order at the Main Firehouse at 7:01 p.m.
Present: F. Hackenyos, H. Smith, B. Quagliaroli, R. Gemme, G. Bland, R. Leach, and Chief Bellmore.

Secretary's Report

Bland moved, Quagliaroli seconded to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2009 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Leach moved, Quagliaroli seconded to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2009 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Reports

The Commission reviewed the reports for April and May 2009. Leach moved, Bland seconded to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Calls & Activities

The Commission reviewed the Calls and Activities Reports for April and May.

Personnel Committee

- Recruitment & Retention – A meeting was held on May 14th. Chief Bellmore showed the Commission a draft of a recruitment brochure. A committee consisting of Firefighters are working on ideas to enhance our recruitment of volunteers. The brochure was created by Windsor Marketing.
- By-Laws & Department Policy Manual – no action
- Substance Abuse Policy – no action.
- Firefighter Positions
 - Casual Part-Time Step 1 Positions – no action.

Budget Committee

2009/2010 Budget Proposal- Budget passed at the May 13th Town meeting.

Chief's Report

- FY2009 Fire Grant Application – Has been submitted. Grant monies would be used to purchase structural fire fighting gear.
- 2009 Fire Prevention Grant – After receiving approval from the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, application has been submitted. Grant monies would be used to purchase fire prevention materials and videos.
- 2009 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Application – decision to be made as to whether or not to apply for this grant this year.
- Chief Bellmore has received information that stimulus monies will be available in the form of grants to build or add on to fire stations. The grant must be submitted by July 10. He will do more investigating as to whether or not this would be worthwhile to pursue.

- Radio Equipment – The FCC deadline on wideband operations is January 2013. Chief Bellmore will meet with the consultant used by the Police Department to discuss continuing on a digital based system. Funding for a portion of Phase 1 in 2009/2010 capital expenditures.
- Department Directive – Succession of Authority – Chief Bellmore submitted the final draft for review. One typo was corrected. Gemme moved, Leach seconded to approve the Directive as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Unfinished Business

New Business

Correspondence

- A thank you letter was received from high school teacher, Joseph Grimard, in response to presentations made by District Chief Tom Romano and Firefighter Gail Domin to the Integrated Earth Science classes.
- A letter has been received from Attorney Timothy A. Daley regarding the final distribution of the estate of Vera M. O'Shaughnessy. This money has been placed into the appropriate accounts per Town of Suffield guidelines.
- Discussion of Changes in Commission Rules & Regulations – The Commission discussed approval of volunteer applications in the event a full quorum was not available at a Commission meeting. Three options were discussed: 1) Amending current rules and regulations to state that in the absence of a quorum, the Chairman and at least two other members present at the regularly scheduled meeting could act on approval of volunteer applications; 2) a telephone call could be made during a regularly scheduled meeting to a Commission member to obtain a quorum vote; 3) allow the Chief and Chairman to tentatively approve the application upon receipt and then bring application to a vote at the next Commission meeting.

Leach moved, Quagliaroli seconded to go with option 3. The motion passed unanimously. Chief Bellmore will also look into the legality of phone conversations to provide a quorum vote.

Commission members were asked to review the Commission Rules and Regulations and bring any suggested revisions to the July meeting.

Other Business

Vehicles, Facilities, Equipment

Vehicles

- 1980 Pumper Truck – Chief Bellmore has drafted an ad for the sale of the truck. This will eventually be placed on the Town website and other state websites. It was suggested that Craig's List might also be a venue to be considered.
- Engine 3 rear axle housing – no action.
- Engine 2 –An engine oil pan leak has been repaired.
- Rescue 1 – transfer case seal needs repair. No action.
- Update on radio equipment for 4-wheel drive pickup – equipment has been ordered. Utility Communications out of Hamden was the low bidder.

Facilities

- Parking Lot Lighting for Station 2 - work is complete. Awaiting final meeting and report.
- Ground Water Monitoring Program – the Fire Department is using absorbent socks to try to eliminate the benzene being detected in the groundwater at Station 2. A retest of the water will be done during the summer.

Personnel:

Application(s) for Volunteer Membership

- Leach moved, Gemme seconded to accept the applications of Brian Richardson, Daniel Bryll, Brian Herring, Mark Provera and Neal Donahue for volunteer firefighters. Approval is pending the results of background checks and physical examinations. The motion passed unanimously.

New Recruits – Status Report

- Daniel Bartini – Explorer
- Amanda Thibedeau – currently a Support Firefighter
- Nicholas Fasano – completed Firefighter 1 course – upgraded to Firefighter
- Candice Breslin – dropped out of Firefighter I class. Has expressed interest in completing the course.
- Colby Tyler – completed Firefighter 1 course – upgraded to Firefighter.
- Ashley Thibedeau – Explorer
- Eric Soto –started training
- Jeffrey Leonard - Explorer

Resignation or Change in Membership Status

- Patrick Bucior – letter send on May 5 with no response. Bland moved, Gemme seconded to drop from the Explorer program. The motion passed unanimously.
- Mark Pearson – no response from letter. Gemme moved, Quagliaroli seconded to drop. The motion passed unanimously.
- Stephen Sorrow – Chief Bellmore read a notice of retirement effective June 30. Leach moved, Bland seconded to accept the retirement of Stephen Sorrow and to grant him life membership in the Suffield Fire Department. The motion passed unanimously.

Other

Executive Session

Leach moved, Quagliaroli seconded, to move into executive session on personnel issue at 8:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Recording Secretary left meeting at this point.

Commission returned to regular session at 8:50 p.m.

Adjournment 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Leach
Secretary

Attachment A: Succession of Authority Policy

ATTACHMENT A:

I. Purpose

To identify succession of authority and procedures to be follow in the absence of the Chief or the Acting Chief

II. Scope

Includes both Administrative and Operational duties and responsibilities.

III. Administrative Duties and Responsibilities

- A) Scheduled Leave
 - a. The Chief has the discretion to retain authority during short term leaves when readily available and able to return in a reasonable time if needed.
 - b. The chief has discretion to appoint one or more full time employee(s) to perform the administrative duties and responsibilities.
 - c. Acting Chief will consult with the chairman of the Board of Fire commissioners before taking any scheduled leave
- B) Unscheduled Leave
 - a. In the event the Chief is unavailable due to sickness, injury or other extenuating situation and is unable to appoint a successor then the next highest ranking full time employee will assume the administrative duties and responsibilities. When there is more than one person at the same rank, the employee holding the rank the longest as a full time employee will take over
 - b. The above process will apply in the event the Acting Chief becomes unavailable due to illness, injury or other extenuation situation.
 - c. The Chairman of The Board of Fire Commissioners will schedule a meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners within two weeks from the unscheduled leave date to discuss and take appropriate action on appointing an Acting Chief.

IV. Operational Duties and Responsibilities

- A) Operational duties and responsibilities during emergency operations will follow the normal chain of command being the highest ranking officer in charge.

V. Procedure

A) Scheduled Leave

- a. Chief to notify the person who will be in charge and review duties to be carried out during absence.
- b. Chief to notify members by posting notice.
- c. Chief to notify the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners and identify person who will be in charge.
- d. Chief to notify First Selectman.

B) Unscheduled Leave

- a. If the Chief is unable to appoint a successor due to a sudden illness or injury the person on duty shall notify the highest ranking full time employee.
- b. The highest ranking full time employee will:
 1. Make a reasonable attempt to confirm the Chief is or will be unable to carry out his duties.
 2. Once confirmed the next highest ranking full time employee will take on the Chief's administrative duties and,
 3. Notify the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners and the First Selectman.
 4. Notify members of the department and inform them of the Chief's absence and he/she will be assuming the Chief's administrative duties and responsibilities.
 5. Meet with department officers to explain the progression of authority in administrative and operational functions and address questions and concerns they may have
 6. Communicate with Town officials as needed to be able to carry out administrative duties.
 7. Maintain communications with the Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners

- C) The Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners will schedule a meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners within two weeks from the unscheduled leave date to discuss and take appropriate action on appointing an Acting Chief.