

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

Fire Station 1, Training Room
April 12, 2016

Portsmouth, NH
1900 hours

I. Call to Order:

Commissioner Gamester called the meeting to order at 1900 hours and led the pledge of allegiance. Along with Chairman Gamester, present were: Commissioner Michael Hughes, Fire Chief Steven Achilles, Deputy Fire Chiefs: Carl Roediger and James Heinz; Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, department members and family members of Acting Captain William McQuillen and Acting Lieutenant Mark Herrholz, and members of the public.

Excused Absence: Chairman Jennifer Matthes

II. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of March 8, 2016, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hughes made the motion to suspend the rules and move to Item VIII. New Business, for the appointment and swearing in of a Captain and Lieutenant. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment Session: None.

IV. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Achilles took a moment to recognize Captain Germain and the other members who served on the oral board for the Captain and Lieutenant testing. Very impressed with the quality and caliber of members participating.

V. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 16-029 through 16-032. Motion seconded by Commissioner Hughes.

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (029), 2016 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for March. The report shows the department responding to 98 Fire Calls and 272 Ambulance Calls for the month. To date, the department has responded to 304 fire and related service calls and 833 ambulance service calls. This activity is tracked by calendar year. Chief Achilles noted that there were 20 motor vehicle accidents, 4 minor fires, 17 chest pain calls, 10 overdoses and 37 traumatic injuries such as cuts, fractures and sprains for the month. The Safety Message section focused on grilling safety. The Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (030), Fire and EMS Calls by Category, with 54% of occurrences being for rescue calls. EMS data shows the top three reasons for dispatch this month being traumatic injuries (cuts, broken bones, head injuries, etc.), chest pain and/or discomfort and other illness/injury. There were 2 reported cardiac arrests and 10 drug overdoses this month. 44% of the runs this month occurred within the home/residence. Report (031), FY16 Budget, Chief noted the implementation of cost saving strategies continuing however some lines are still projected to be over due to an increase in overtime for shift vacancies relating to a workers comp injury and several disability leaves. Salaries for uniform personnel are projected to be over in part due to the hiring of the additional firefighter to cover an extended military leave but the individual came back earlier than expected. So we were carrying an additional firefighter up until the resignation of McDonagh and Capt. Hogan's retirement. With Captain Hogan's retirement on April 1, 2016 and the promotional appointment of the new Captain and Lieutenant, we hope to be able to save some overtime costs which were anticipated on needing to fill the vacancy. Overall, the department shows a slight surplus at this time. Report (032), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of March along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 16-029 through 16-032, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Roediger reported on prevention and the radio build out that has gone on-line as of last Wednesday. All components are in place as planned with the simulcast upgrade. Now checking for areas for weak spots that may have limited communication.

Deputy Heinz reported on operations of the department stating the promotional process for Captain and Lieutenant was very challenging with 1/3 of our firefighters taking part in the process. Evaluators from Hampton, Dover and Manchester assisted us with the oral boards. Seabrook drill took place last week and rolling out EMS in the warm zone to all firefighters' and

officers' this week. This program teaches how to treat injuries while the active scene is being secured.

VI. Old Business:

Chief Achilles updated the Commission on the status of the fire boat. Received Homeland Security grant funds in 2006 for the purchase of the boat. Platform was to do fire operation with rescues however, activity level hasn't reached as high as we anticipated it to be. We have averaged 6-7 calls a years he said and not all incidents involved a patient. Under grant terms, we can transfer ownership to another New Hampshire agency or return the boat back to the state. Guilford Fire Chief is considering taking it and is prepared to accept it. Chief noted that he wrote a memo to the City Manager of Portsmouth to receive City Council's vote to surrender the boat due to the cost of the original purchase. Also advised the City Manager of the need to find funding to secure a smaller water rescue boat that has the capabilities of getting into areas where the Coast Guard can't like Mill Pond and Sagamore Creek. Chief said currently the boat costs \$14K or more in maintenance and firefighters receive a stipend for holding certification in boat operator. Unknown at this time if the stipend would disappear or not. Commissioner Gamester inquired about the backing out of Guilford on the boat if we would then return it to the state and Chief replied it would be possible.

Commissioner Hughes made the motion to transfer ownership of the fire boat to the Town of Guilford Fire Department. Commissioner Gamester seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chief provided an update on the Rye Fire Department and the "sharing of services". A municipal agreement was drafted to consolidate the administration of the two departments. The Town Administrator of Rye brought it to his selectman's meeting for a vote on whether or not to move it forward. At the end of the meeting, no vote was taken in either direction. Chief asked the Commission if they wanted to move forward, if still interested, or wait until more information comes from the Town of Rye. Commissioner Gamester recommended that we wait and listen to what they have to say, holding off until they have another meeting or one hears differently from the Town of Rye.

VII. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Achilles read the thank you notes from Brianna Laimond, Salem Fire Department and Congressman Frank Guinta.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to accept these thank you notes and place on file. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

VIII. New Business:

Chief Achilles took a moment to welcome family members and members of the public and provided a brief outline of the promotional process that took place.

Chief Achilles first spoke of William McQuillen. He was ranked number one in the Captain's Promotional Exam process, hired in 1990 and promoted to Lieutenant in 2008. He provides outstanding leadership skills, is active in the department, union and with the public and is a resident of Portsmouth. It is my recommendation that we appoint William McQuillen to the rank of Captain.

Motion, to promote William McQuillen to the rank of Captain with the Portsmouth Fire Department, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Chief Achilles called up Captain McQuillen and he was sworn in.

Chief Achilles spoke next of Mark Herrholz. He also ranked number one in the Lieutenant's Promotional Exam process, hired in 2000 and is active in various capacities within the department, community and union and is a resident of Portsmouth. It is my recommendation that we appoint Mark Herrholz to the rank of Lieutenant.

Motion, to promote Mark Herrholz to the rank of Lieutenant with the Portsmouth Fire Department, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

Chief Achilles called up Lieutenant Herrholz and he was sworn in.

A 5-minute recess followed for pictures and meetings with family members.

Meeting reconvened at 1915 hours.

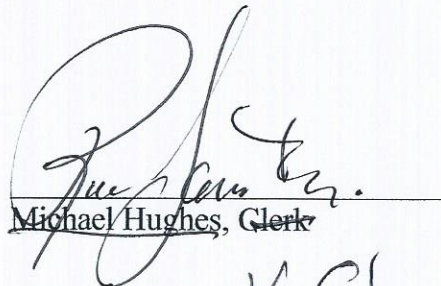
In anticipation of some vacancies that may occur in June and / or August, Chief Achilles stated that he would be meeting with three candidates who participated in the firefighter's oral board last time to evaluate and possibly put in place if a vacancy occurs. They would still need to be current on the State's list however, the State will be conducting their exam in June with a new list to follow.

IX. Public Hearings: None.

X. Non-public Session: None.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 2005 hours, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.


Michael Hughes, Clerk
V. Ch 412