

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

Fire Station 1, Training Room
April 11, 2017

Portsmouth, NH
1730 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:

Commissioner Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.

Chairwoman Matthes, Commissioner Richard Gamester, Commissioner Michael Hughes, Fire Chief Steven Achilles, Deputy Fire Chief James Heinz; Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, Firefighters: John Goodwin and Timothy Dame.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of March 15, 2017, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Presentation of Written Communications:

Chief Achilles read the thank you note from Hilary Hawkins, Chief Nursing Officer at Portsmouth Regional Hospital.

Motion, to accept and place on file, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

VI. Public Hearings: None.

VII. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Achilles recognized the work of personnel at the State Street fire on Monday. Still in the process of gathering pictures and logs. Believe it is the largest fire he, the Chief, has had in the past seventeen years. Could have been much different than what the storylines read. With one injury and no deaths and saving half a block, the quick response and attack on this fire was a job well done. Commissioner Gamester commended the staff as well for a really well done job. He added that in a 24-hour period he has never received as much public praise

and appreciation and very thankful no one was seriously injured. Calls and texts have come into him from people out of town as well. Chairwoman Matthes and Commissioner Hughes also offered their praise for a job well done and saving the building with Louie's. The teamwork and the management of the process was outstanding.

VIII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 17-30 through 17-033. Motion seconded by Chairwoman Matthes.

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (033), 2017 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for March. The report shows the department responding to 135 Fire Calls and 268 Ambulance Calls for the month. Up about 100 more incidents since February. Totals for the year shows the department responded to 1135 calls: 316 fire and related service calls and 819 ambulance service calls. Chief went on to outline some of the activity for the month with winter storm responses in the middle of the month, mutual aid provided to Seabrook for station coverage, motor vehicle accident at Market Street at the I95 North Bound, a fall from 5th floor balcony at Hilton Harbor Hill Condos transported in critical condition, and an appliance fire at Modern Laundry. The Safety Message section provided a reminder of open burning rules and fire permits which are always required for an open fire in Portsmouth. The Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (031), Fire and EMS Calls by Category, the department responded to 254 fire calls for the month of March and noted that there were 36 medical assist calls, 50 EMS calls with injury excluding vehicle accidents and 13 calls for power lines down. Report shows 7 motor vehicle accidents with no injuries and 7 with injuries, 11 calls relating to psychiatric/behavioral problems, 15 calls for cardiac conditions and 47 calls had no apparent illness or injury requiring transport. Report (032), FY17 Budget, Chief noted that we are tracking positively and will seek prior approval for any expenses over the \$200-\$300 range as we continue monitor and prioritize expenditures. Currently have one firefighter on long term illness. The State Street fire this week has not yet been factored into the calculations yet. We expect it to be high with the fire recall for the fire itself along with fire watch details that are needed in order to maintain custody of the scene as we are responsible for the building and property as we continue to monitor for hot spot and for the purposes of fire investigation. Report (33), 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 17-030 through 17-033, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Chief Heinz reported on the completion of trainings for dry suits, RAD, Crossroads. The City's IT department came in to provide training on computers and securing work stations. Participated in a Trauma STAT drill at Portsmouth Regional Hospital; all EMS recerts are complete; worked with Police and SWAT team on school shooter plans; tested all ground ladders; working on a dispatcher probation program for the fire side of dispatching; will be working with National Gypsum on a confined space drill which they have offered to pay for.

IX. Old Business: None.

X. New Business:

Chief Achilles led brief discussion on Chief Officer Contracts and working with each officer along with Atty. Closson and Commission Gamester. Deputy Heinz contract expires next year however felt it was important to get all three Chief Officers contracts lined up with a 3-year contract from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020. COLA and additional step increases are all that is accounted for in the contracts no other financial packages noted. Gamester added that 3-year contracts are what the City recognizes and we are following what they recognize. Chairwoman Matthes inquired about the beneficial aspects to have all three contracts expire at the same time and if there is any risk in doing so. Chief answered stating he would like to know DC Heinz is approved and not having to negotiate another contract next year. It also provides stability within the department knowing we have the three Chief Officers in place for the next three years.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to approve and accept the Employment Agreement between Fire Chief Steven Achilles and the Portsmouth Fire Commission for the term of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to approve and accept the Employment Agreement between Deputy Fire Chief Carl Roediger and the Portsmouth Fire Commission for the term of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

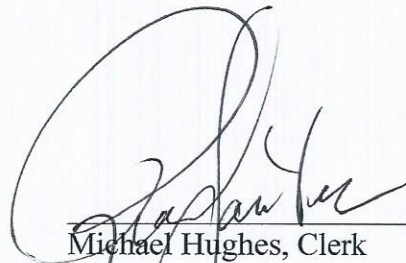
Commissioner Gamester made the motion to approve and accept the Employment Agreement between Deputy Fire Chief James Heinz and the Portsmouth Fire Commission for the term of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Chief Achilles led brief discussion on the Geraldine Webber bequest for the purchase of Safety Equipment which will be not be used to purchase operational equipment that is already factored into the budget and Capital Improvement Plan. It will be for safety equipment that is needed but was not planned for.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to move and approve the Fire Chief to purchase safety equipment of (2) 4-gas meters from the Webber Bequest at a cost of no more than \$3,000.00. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1845 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.



Michael Hughes, Clerk



Robert Gamester, V. Chair