

089

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

Fire Station 1, Training Room  
September 12, 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:**

Chief Achilles led the pledge of allegiance.

Chairwoman Matthes, Commissioner Richard Gamester, Commissioner Michael Hughes, Fire Chief Steven Achilles, Deputy Fire Chiefs Carl Roediger and James Heinz. Inspector Patrick Howe, Officers: Todd Germain, Jason Gionet, Russell Osgood. Firefighters: Duncan Regonini, Timothy Dame, and John Goodwin. Members of Captain Gionet's and Lieutenant Osgood's family were also present.

**III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

*Motion, to approve the minutes of August 8, 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:** None.

**VI. Public Hearings:** None.

**VII. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:**

Chief Achilles requested the confirmation of his recommendation to promote Lieutenant Gionet to the rank of Shift Captain and Firefighter Osgood to the rank of Shift Lieutenant by the Commission.

*Motion, to approve the promotion of Lieutenant Gionet to Shift Captain made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to approve the promotion of Firefighter Osgood to Shift Lieutenant made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

Chief Achilles swore in both Captain Jason Gionet and Lieutenant Russell Osgood. A 5-minute recess was granted afterwards for pictures with family and friends.

Regular meeting resumed at 1742 hours.

**VIII. Reports:**

**A. Fire Chief's Reports:**

*Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 17-085 through 17-088. Motion seconded by Chairwoman Matthes.*

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (085), 2017 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for August. The report shows the department responding to 113 Fire Calls and 313 Ambulance Calls for the month. Totals for the year to date shows the department responded to 3221 calls. Report (086), Fire and EMS Calls by Category was reviewed by Chief Achilles. Report (087), FY18 Budget, Chief Achilles provided status update and noted the department is 16.66% into the fiscal year and 25.59% spent. He explained this variation can be attributed to some expenses that are front loaded in the beginning of the year as one time payments and that a few salary and overtime lines are tracking high. Otherwise current projections are where he expects at this time of year. Report (088), Overtime Analysis, was discussed. Chief Achilles provided an update on the hiring of firefighters to fill the two vacancies in shift personnel. Conditional offers have been made and accepted. He also stated he has made a request to Acting City Manager Colbert-Puff to temporarily adjust current staffing level from 61 to 62 in anticipation of multiple long-term vacancies between now and end of FY18. All Commissioners supported request to minimize impact on overtime budget.

*Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 17-085 through 17-088, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

**B. Staff Reports:**

Deputy Chief Roediger reported on the city-wide radio upgrade project. The majority of the new hardware and software has been installed and both police and fire are operating on the new system. Some fine tuning and troubleshooting has occurred and is expected. We will evaluate level of improved coverage over next month or so, but it appears coverage has improved.

Deputy Chief Heinz reported on the following: department purchased 4 upgraded portable radios so that now all front-line and reserve apparatus have latest technology regarding radios, the USCG provided an overview of helicopter operations with a duty shift, Lieutenant Ryll has been providing all shifts with EMS training, Primex has delivered a safe driving course to all shift personnel, the Tri-annual Pease Disaster Drill will be held Saturday September 16, with our department playing a large role, the ballistic protective equipment will go in-service following training that is expected in



the next month or so, and he anticipates live training at the Banfield property site in the next couple weeks.

**IX. Old Business:**

Chief Achilles presented an update on both unions request for contract extensions. On August 2, Commission Chair Matthes received a joint letter from both 1313 and 4039 requesting a bilateral agreement of a one-year extension with only a COLA adjustment. Chief Achilles supports this request and has been working with the City Manager and Human Resources Director since. Late in the day on September 12, 2017 the Chief received an MOA from the Human Resources Director providing a one year extension, to expire on June 30, 2019. The agreement does not set any binding precedent on either party, provides a COLA adjustment on July 1, 2018, that all other terms of current contract are in effect, and it requires City Council approval. After brief discussion motions were made:

*Motion, to approve Memorandum of Agreement between the Portsmouth Fire Commission and the Portsmouth Professional Fire Officers' Association, made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to approve Memorandum of Agreement between the Portsmouth Fire Commission and the Firefighters Association of Portsmouth, made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

Chief Achilles will forward to both unions for their ratification. If accepted by both or either, he will request them to go before City Council.

In other Old Business, Chief Achilles reported that the new ambulance was in-service at Station 1 and that he anticipates the Station 3 Renovation Project to begin within the next few weeks.

**X. New Business: None.**

**XI. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 1815 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.*

  
Michael Hughes, Clerk