

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

Fire Station 2, George Pierce Training Room
November 13, 2018

Portsmouth, NH
1730 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:

Chairwoman Matthes led the pledge of allegiance.

Present were Commissioners: Jennifer Matthes, Richard Gamester, Chief Steven Achilles, Deputy Fire Chiefs: Carl Roediger and James Heinz, Firefighters: Terrence Bedell, Gregory Tufts, Nicholas Haskell, Karl Granoth, Lieutenant Scott Egan, fire department personnel, family and friends.

Absent: Commissioner Michael Hughes

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of October 9, 2018 was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Presentation of Written Communications:

Chief Achilles read the thank you notes from the Jenkins Family and Jean Schiller In-Focus Team Captain with Home Depot.

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

VI. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Achilles took a moment to recognize Firefighters Bedell, Tufts and Haskell who all have successfully completed their probationary period. He also took a moment to recognize the promotion of Firefighter Scott Egan to Lieutenant.

Chief Achilles swore in Firefighters Terrence Bedell, Gregory Tufts and Nicholas Haskell and Lieutenant Scott Egan.

Chairwoman Matthes made the motion for a 5-minute recess for pictures at 1743 hours. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Meeting reconvened at 1750 hours

VII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 18-099 through 18-102. Motion seconded by Chairwoman Matthes.

Chief Achilles reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (099), 2018 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for October 2018. The report shows the department responding to a total of 403 calls for the month: 138 Fire Calls and 265 Ambulance Calls. Fire calls were slightly up from last month however ambulance calls were slightly down from last month. Total year to date shows the department responding to 4123 calls: 1197 fire and related service calls and 2926 ambulance service calls. Chief made note that based on these numbers we still anticipate being close to 5,000 calls by year end. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activity for the month noting a vehicle fire at Hanover and Fleet Streets and a lightning strike on Maplewood Avenue where lightning struck a tree next to the house which traveled along a fence and underground into the residence. No fire but moderate damage. The Safety Message section focused on carbon monoxide safety. The Service Activity and Safety Message report was submitted to the Portsmouth Herald for publication in local newspapers. Report (100), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 248 fire calls for the month of October with 110 of the calls being for rescue responses which gets deducted from the total of fire calls. EMS activity was 265 with the top three responses being for abdominal pain and/or problems, psychiatric/behavioral problems and chest pain. There were 4 calls for drug overdose/abuse and 57 non-transports. Report (101), FY19 Budget, Chief Achilles reviewed the budget with the Commission and noted the department is tracking in the good and would see a savings this year in Salaries Uniform Personnel due to retirements after the budget was submitted and currently showing a savings in overtime for workers comp and disability leave. Report (102), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of October along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 18-099 through 18-102, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Chief Roediger left meeting to attend to an emergency response with fire personnel.

Deputy Chief Heinz reported on Operations and Training within the department. He noted the annual radio programming and maintenance was complete and Paramedic and Basic refresher training has been done. Lt. Ryll provided I Am Responding training to department personnel which is a paging system that we hope to implement to replace our current paging system. Deputy Heinz had Lt. Ryll speak further about IaR. Lt. Ryll outlined the program and its capabilities and how it would benefit our department. Deputy Heinz commented also on the training conducted at St. Pat's which went well. Firefighter Karl Granoth started employment with us on 11/5 and is currently attending paramedic school. Ff. Granoth was introduced to the Commission. Deputy Heinz took a moment to recognize Firefighters Eric Carrier and Shane Anderson on completing the Paramedic Training Program. He went on to add that they placed number 1 and number 3 in the class. They now serve as Paramedics for the department. The department currently has 27 Paramedics.

VIII. Old Business:

Chief Achilles noted the retirement of Lt. Thomas LaMontagne on October 31st who worked for the department for 34 years. A work session was held last week on the FY20 budget. Requests for each department's initiatives are being asked for which our department will focus on two areas: adding additional firefighters to the shift and adding an additional fire inspector.

IX. New Business:


Chief Achilles noted that the conditional offer made to Nathan Lyman, a Firefighter/Paramedic in Utah, has been accepted and he is just waiting on his background check to be completed. He is registered nationally and his Paramedic license has already been changed to NH. We anticipate his start date to be early next month.

Chief Achilles spoke briefly about the \$2,000 donation made to the department from Ms. Oreen Audette who has some fond memories of Portsmouth Fire one in particular spoke of a Christmas Day in 1952 where her father passed away on Thanksgiving Day in November that same year at the age of 48. His passing left behind a struggling family. Much to her amazement, as one of the ten children left behind, the Fire Department arranged to have Santa arrive at their home on a fire truck and gave "Christmas" to the children and handed out gifts to each of them. A memory she stated, has never forgotten about.

Motion, to accept the \$2,000.00 donation made by Oreen Audette with sincere gratitude, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1821 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.



Richard Gamester, Clerk