

The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
March 9, 2021

Portsmouth, NH
1800 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1800 hours.

II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:

Chairwoman Matthes led the pledge of allegiance.

Present were Commissioners: Jennifer Matthes, Richard Gamester and Michael Hughes; Fire Chief Todd Germain, Assistant Fire Chief William McQuillen and Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe; Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, Firefighters: Philip Davis, Shaun Sullivan, Brian Foster, Jonathan Gould, Nolan Godfrey along with members of the department and family members of Philip Davis and Shaun Sullivan.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of February 9, 2021, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

Chairwoman Matthes made the motion to suspend the rules and move to item VI, Recognition of Groups and Individuals. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

V. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Germain read the thank you note from Dr. Rachel Roemer and provided a brief review of the incident that took place.

VI. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Germain provided a brief outline of the expectations required in order to pass probation here with our department and each of these two firefighters have successfully passed.

Chief Germain swore in Firefighter Philip Davis and Firefighter Shaun Sullivan.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion for a 10-minute recess for pictures at 1810 hours. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Meeting reconvened at 1820 hours with item V. Presentations of Written Communications.

After meeting reconvened and continued, Assistant Chief McQuillen followed up with the recognition of three new hires, Firefighters: Nolan Godfrey, Brian Foster and Jonathan Gould

VII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Chairwoman Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 21-029 through 21-032. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes.

Chief Germain reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (029), 2021 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for February. Chief Germain noted that the department responded to a total of 323 calls for the month: 96 Fire Calls and 227 Ambulance Calls. Both fire and EMS calls were slightly down from last month but noted it was a shorter month. Total year-to-date shows the department responding to 713 calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activity for the month noting a rollover at the traffic circle, fire on West Road and two mutual aid calls. Report (030), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 96 fire calls for the month of February. EMS activity was 227 with the top three responses being for weakness (no specific cause), syncope/fainting and abdominal pain/problems. There were 3 calls for drug overdose/abuse and 2 COVID or COVID suspicious calls. There were 54 non-transport. Report (031), FY21 Budget, Chief Germain reviewed the budget with the Commission and noted that we have included projections for overtime through the end of the fiscal year. The FY21 Budget is being watched closely and currently projections show the department with a slight surplus. Staffing is at minimum of 13. Report (032), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of February along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month and Shift Coverage for COVID related impacts and billable amounts for Public Health and State POD Vaccination Clinics that our department has assisted with.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 21-029 through 21-032, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Asst. Chief McQuillen reported on Operations and Training within the department. He spoke briefly about the administering of COVID19 vaccines to

the senior population and the scheduling of the 2nd doses. While that is ongoing, we are also working with the State and the Public Health Network. Trying to reach as many as possible and our department members have been instrumental in helping out when not on duty. Asst. Chief McQuillen noted that he has been working with Exec. Asst. Freeman on the billing portion of each clinic and has been successful in getting that done. Station 1 renovations are moving forward with the downstairs bath being remodeled and becoming ADA compliant, the upstairs bathroom expected to be complete this week and kitchen to begin next week. Anticipate the completion in 2 weeks. Technology upgrades at Station 2 EOC are out to bid. The upgrades will include updating the screens and projectors along with establishing video conferencing capabilities. Funding for this project is coming from a reallocation of IT Capital for radios that weren't needed and HSEM funding.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Prevention noting several projects happening within the city and not seeing a slowdown in permitting for construction. Working with the Health Department on licensing for outdoor dining as the weather begins to warm up and we continue to be in this pandemic. Hotel inspections began last year and continues. Working with owners and contractors to resolve outstanding issues found during these inspections. Permitting fees on pace to exceed \$105K.

VIII. Old Business:

Chief Germain noted that he continues to get emails, phone calls and letters thanking us for our efforts in vaccinating the public. We have been able to reach over 1,000 people and staff has been great. This weekend, Saturday 3/13, there will be a clinic at the high school to vaccinate school employees. He went on to say that some of our members also assisted the state with their vaccination clinic at the Loudon Speedway. Chief offered his gratitude to the men and women of our department for all of their help in getting the vaccines out and into arms. Fire Commissioners also extended their thanks to all of the staff involved in this effort.

IX. New Business: None.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1850 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.


Richard Gamester, Clerk