

The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
May 18, 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 and Richard Gamester; Fire Chief Todd Germain, Assistant Fire Chief William McQuillen, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Lieutenant Duncan Regonini and Firefighter Adam LaMonica.

Absent: Commissioner Michael Hughes and Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of April 13, 2021, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Mattes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Germain noted that he continues to receive numerous thank you cards, emails and phone calls in recognition and appreciation for our on-going efforts in helping to get the COVID19 vaccines out to members of the community.

Fire Commissioners extended their thanks to all of the staff involved in this effort.

VI. Recognition of Groups or Individuals: None.

VII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Chairwoman Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 21-046 through 21-049. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester.

Chief Germain reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (046), 2021 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for April. Chief Germain noted that the department responded to a total of 362 calls for the month: 112 Fire Calls and 250 Ambulance Calls. Both fire and EMS calls were down over last month however, still anticipate to be on track with 4500-5000 calls by year-end. Total year-to-date shows the department responding to 1,478 calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activity for the month noting a water rescue at Fort Stark in New Castle for a reported person in the water from an overturned kayak. Marine 1 was able to get in close to the rocky shore where the individual was pulled aboard and transported to the USCG Station where ambulance 1 was awaiting for the transport. He also reported on a chimney fire at 232 Wibird Street and an accident on 238 Deer Street involving a motor vehicle vs. a pedestrian. Report (047), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 112 fire calls for the month of April. Department responded to several brush/mulch fires due to the dry conditions. EMS activity was 250 with the top three responses being for alcohol abuse and effects, altered mental status (unknown cause) and abdominal pain/problems. There were 2 COVID confirmed calls and 48 non-transports. Report (048), FY21 Budget, Chief Germain reviewed the budget with the Commission and noted that we have included projections for all accounts including overtime through the end of the fiscal year. The FY21 Budget is being watched closely and currently projections show the department with a minimal surplus. Staffing is at minimum of 13 and we currently have 3 firefighter vacancies. Report (049), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of April 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 21-046 through 21-049, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Asst. Chief McQuillen reported on Operations and Training within the department. He noted crews training at PNSY – using their simulator for live fire training. This training is being conducted while on duty and PNSY FD is covering our station. The three Fastboards should be arriving on Monday and crews will begin training on that. The SCBA accountability system using the 3M retro-reflective material has been received and applied today. Currently working on the EOC upgrade project using funding from left over capital. Once completed, the EOC/Training Room will become more functional with improved hardware for projectors and screens and be easier to use when the

EOC is open or for training purposes. Asst. Chief McQuillen spoke briefly about the rescue in the river and not having clear communication between agencies and waterborne responders. Held a meeting bringing all agencies, including Coast Guard, NH Marine Patrol, area fire departments and lifeguards. Goal is to have all agencies being able to communicate with one another when a water incident arises. Need to know who is doing what and who can assist. Line of communication is now open. Marine Patrol will provide us with a schedule so we know when they are on the water and when they are not.

Chief Germain spoke on behalf of Deputy Chief Howe regarding Fire Prevention noting several projects happening within the city and construction projects continuing at a rapid pace. Prevention Officer Wheeler is at Shipboard FF training in Virginia this week.

Chairwoman Matthes expressed an interest in seeing the Fastboards and how they are used once they arrive.

VIII. Old Business:

Chief Germain updated the Commission on COVID Operations and vaccine clinics and provided a summary of what has been billed out to the State and PHN through April. Members continue to staff fixed sites around the state and we anticipate having two more small clinics at the high school for freshmen and sophomores.

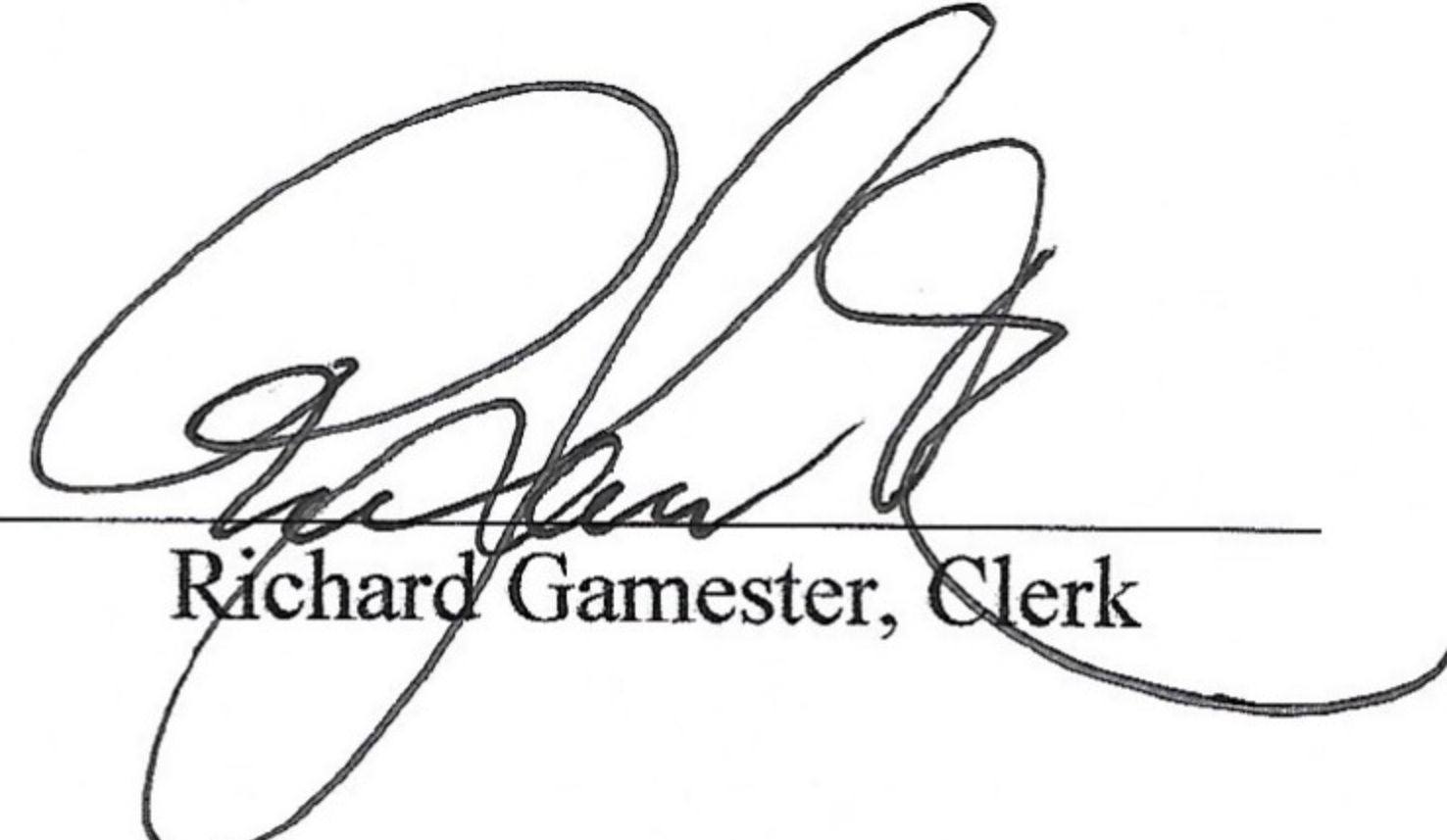
IX. New Business:

Chief Germain presented two intent to retire letters. One from Lieutenant Osgood who plans to retire May 31, 2021 and the other from Firefighter Sylvester who plans to retire July 31, 2021. Both have served the community for over 26 years and will be hard to replace.

Motion, to accept these two letters of retirement with regret, and thanked them for serving the City of Portsmouth, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1830 hours, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.


Richard Gamester, Clerk