

076

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

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
August 10, 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, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Executive Assistant Tracy Freeman, several Members of the Department which included Captain Gionet, Lt. Nelson, Firefighters: Detweiler, Carrier, Pelletier, Scholtz, Griswold, Godfrey, Haskell, Terrill, LaCaillade, Davis, Stinson, and ret. Firefighter Sylvester.

Absent: Commissioner Michael Hughes

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of July 20, 2021, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Mattes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session:

Chairwoman Matthes opened the Public Comment Session and asked if anyone wished to speak.

Firefighter Morse, President of Local 1313, spoke briefly just to follow up from last month's commission meeting regarding the promotion process and asks that the Fire Commission consider selecting one of the candidates from the top 2 scorers on the list and recognized that Firefighter Detweiler was not on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Chairwoman Matthes asked if there was anyone else that wished to speak. After no response, the Public Comment Session was closed.

V. Presentations of Written Communications:

Chief Germain spoke of our department assisting with the Senior Center cookout in helping to serve food and bus tables to over 200 people. It was a huge success we are told. Chief read the thank you note we received from Ms. Lucero.

Commissioner Gamester made the motion to accept the thank you note and place on file. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

VI. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Commissioner Gamester followed up on Firefighter Morse's comments under the Public Comment Session to perhaps clarify any misunderstanding that may have occurred in regards to Firefighter Detweiler not being on the agenda for tonight's meeting and asked Chief Germain to speak on that behalf.

Chief Germain noted that this matter is currently in arbitration right now with both candidates filing together. The attorneys for us and Local 1313 have spoken about this and both agreed and relayed that no further action was needed and did not need to act on the other candidate (Detweiler) knowing that he too would not be recommended by the Commission for promotion.

VII. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Commissioner Gamester motioned to discuss Chief's reports 21-072 through 21-075. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes.

Chief Germain reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (072), 2021 Response Report with Service Activity and Safety message for July 2021. The report shows the department responding to a total of 452 calls for the month: 144 Fire Calls and 308 Ambulance Calls with fire service calls up 29% over this time last year. Total year to date shows the department responding to 2747 calls: 806 fire and related service calls and 1941 ambulance service calls. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activity for the month noting a structure fire at 124 Congress Street. When companies arrived they found fire burning inside the door of a storefront under renovation. Fire was quickly extinguished with cause being due to improper storage of oil soaked rags. Another incident reported on was for a lightning strike at 2 Dunlin Way which caused moderate smoke conditions within the home. Report (073), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 144 fire calls for the month of July. EMS activity was 308 with the top three responses being for abdominal pain/problems, alcohol abuse and effects and weakness. There were 4 calls for drug overdose/abuse and 53 non-transports. Report (074), FY21 & FY22 Budgets, Chief Germain reviewed the FY21 budget noting the department ending the year with a surplus. A list of encumbered funds was included and Chief noted that Finance asked him to put together another list of additional equipment the department may need as end of the year funds are reviewed city-wide. City closes out FY21 around the end of August. Chief went on to review FY22 Budget which mostly represents up-front funding at this time. Report (075), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of July along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month. Also noted was increased staffing for two weeks to have three ambulances in service to provide coverage to Newington who had an ambulance out of service. This coverage was not exclusive to Newington

though. Worked out well and firefighters managed it with making sure ambulances had paramedics on them at all times.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 21-072 through 21-075, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Assistant Chief reported on training and operations happening within the department noting the upgrades in technology being made in the training room at Station 2 which also operates as the City's Emergency Operations Center. He also brought the Commission up to date on the HVAC upgrades at both Station 1 and Station 2. Once completed, it will allow for both stations to be monitored and alarms to be sent when system issues arise so that we are notified when this occurs. This is something that is not currently happening. Asst. Chief McQuillen went on to add another project that he is working with Department of Public Works on which is the replacement of Station 1's overhead doors. Doors are currently commercial grade run on residential tracks and with them being so heavy, it causes many problems with them falling out of the tracks or bending the tracks each time they go up and down. New doors will be lighter and insulated keeping with a similar look to what they are now to fall within HDC approvals. Funding for this project is through the Capital Improvement Plan. Personnel are currently being trained on the loaner apparatus which we will have until our new ladder arrives which is now expected to be late November.

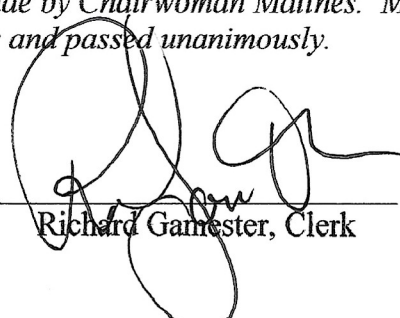
Deputy Chief Howe reported on Prevention noting several projects happening within the city and very busy with construction projects noting just a few like the old Wren's Nest and three 5-story buildings being planned on Russell Street in the Portsmouth North End. Legal Department is currently reviewing the proposed changes that we are recommending under City Ordinance, Chapter 1, Article 13, Municipal Enforcement Procedures.

VIII. Old Business: None.

IX. New Business: None.

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