

The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department

051

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
June 14, 2022

Portsmouth, NH
1730 hours

I. Call to Order:

Chairwoman Matthes called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

Chairwoman Matthes made the motion to enter into Non-Public Session at 1730 hours in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Chief Germain's Contract and RSA 91-A:3, II (c), a personnel matter that would adversely affect the reputation of a non-board member. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes and passed unanimously.

Motion, to come out of Non-Public Session at 1755 hours and reconvene regular public meeting at 1800 hours, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Motion, to seal the minutes, was made by Chairwoman Matthes, seconded by Commissioner Hughes. On a roll call vote of 3-0, motion passes.

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, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Epping Fire Chief Don DeAngelis, Nottingham Fire Chief Jay Vilchok, Lancen & Sophie Lachance, Amber McHugh from The Port, Lieutenant Casluh "Cassie" Chamberlain along with her family, Captains: Jason Gionet and Rick Condon; Lieutenants: John Goodwin, Peter Gordon and Duncan Regonini; Firefighters: Ethan Grover, Joseph Wiley and Ian McFarland and several members from the department.

Commissioner Hughes had to end call and leave meeting due to work obligation.

III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Motion, to approve the minutes of April 19, 2022, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment Session: None.

V. Recognition of Groups or Individuals:

Chief Germain read thank you note the department received from a very appreciative family who our crews had been sent to their home for their young daughter who was recently diagnosed diabetic. Capt. Herrholz, FF. Dame and FF Cole were able to spend some time with them to help answer their questions about diabetes and use of equipment.

Chief Germain introduced our recent new hires: Firefighters McFarland, Grover and Wiley. Ff. Blaska was unable to attend due to AEMT class.

Chief took a moment to recognize Lancen & Sophie Lachance and Coach Amber McHugh from The Port, who has been instrumental in helping us put together our health and wellness fitness program as we unveiled the program 2-years ago. They were able to assist our members with proper fitness techniques, nutrition and various workout programs to help each firefighter reach their goals. This fitness program has been met with an overwhelming response and because of such, we will be keeping the program going. Chief presented The Port with a plaque in appreciation for their help in the Firefighters Health and Wellness Fitness Program.

Chief Germain took a moment to speak of one of the perks of being the chief of a fire department, getting to perform the swearing in of new officers especially when he has been through the process himself and can appreciate how hard it is to succeed. He has had the pleasure of swearing in officers of every rank during his time here as chief and with his retirement coming up soon, will most likely be his last opportunity to do so and how truly honored he is to be the one to conduct this historic ceremony.

Chief swore in Lieutenant Casluh Chamberlain who becomes the department's first female fire officer.

Chairwoman Matthes made the motion for a 10-minute recess for pictures at 1815 hours. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Meeting reconvened at 1826 hours.

VI. Reports:

A. Fire Chief's Reports:

Chairwoman Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 22-043 through 22-046. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester.

Chief Germain reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (043), 2022 Response Report for May 2022. The report shows the department responding to a total of 414 calls for the month: 105 Fire Calls and 309 Ambulance Calls. Total year to date shows the department responding to 1896 calls: 512 fire and related service calls and 1384 ambulance service calls. Chief Germain reported on some incidents of interest that occurred during the month along with the safety message regarding summer grilling fire safety tips.

Report (044), Fire and EMS Call Summary Report, shows the department responded to 111 fire calls for the month of May. EMS activity was 309 with the top three responses being for syncope/fainting, head trauma or injury and alcohol abuse and effects. There were 4 calls for drug overdose/abuse and 39 non-transport. Have seen an uptick in mental health related calls as well. Report (045), FY22 Budget, Chief Germain reviewed the budget which is still tracking with a small surplus due to the number of vacancies we still have not been able to fill. Impacts on this budget reflect an extra pay period this month along with \$7500 for station 1 boiler, ladder testing, Truck 5 tires and \$7K in new hire physicals. Report (046), Overtime Analysis, provided a breakdown of how overtime was used in the month of May along with a summary of what was charged to OT-Recall for the month.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 22-043 through 22-046, 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. Several projects at station 1 have been completed with the front ramp and 2 new water lines replaced in that same project and the front hall and stairwell have been repainted. Station 1's boiler failed which the domestic hot water runs from so a hot water tank was brought in for temporary use while a new boiler has been ordered. HVAC at station 3 should be complete with the inefficiencies now addressed. Meetings with facilities continue and should see some projects that were placed on the back burner due to staffing shortages back on the schedule to get done with new crews onboard. Driver Operator training for pump and aerial are ongoing this month. Classes are through the fire academy but are being sponsored and held here at station 2. NH HSEM contacted us to let us know that we passed all segments in the Seabrook Station graded drill this past April. Hiring process is on-going. Three conditional offers made after this last round of interviews. Shift training on EMS and Rescue Operations continues. Last month, Max Chaisson, Ret. Manchester FD District Chief came in and spoke on mental health and addiction recovery.

Commissioner Gamester inquired about the number of vacancies remaining. AC McQuillen noted that he has one in the system and three coming in for ride alongs which, if all works out, would fill the remaining openings at this time.

Chairwoman Matthes asked if we were still covering dispatch shifts. Chief noted that we are still assisting them however, the number of department members providing the coverage has diminished some.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Prevention and the many construction projects happening within the City and those coming to a close. Some noted were: 230 Commerce Way – a 2-story, 25,000 sq. ft. office building with a veterinarian clinic on the first floor; Portsmouth Regional Hospital looking to add 1-story 8,700 sq. ft. radiation and oncology addition; 140 West Road – 2-story, 35,000 sq. ft. members only-which will include golf simulators, indoor putting green,

car racing simulators, flying simulators, axe throwing, game/arcade room, restaurant and bar. FPOs Wheeler and Putney attended NFPA Conference in Boston last week. FPO Putney presented a class in conjunction with the Inspections Department regarding the basics of fire alarm and sprinkler plans review and inspections.

VII. Old Business:

Chief commented briefly about the passing of the FY23 Budget which included the wage adjustment and additional overtime.

IX. New Business:

Chief spoke about a donation account for equipment. A neighbor of one of our Fire Captain's recently died and his daughter wanted to establish, in lieu of flowers, for donations to be made to the Fire Department for emergency equipment. We have received \$250 in cash/checks in memory of Adam Price Sr.

Motion, to accept the donation of \$250 in memory of Adam Price Sr. for the purchase of emergency equipment, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

Chief Germain read Firefighter Matthew Stinson's letter of resignation.

Motion, to accept Firefighter Matthew Stinson's letter of resignation, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Chief Germain read Firefighter Robert Richards letter of retirement. Ff. Richards retired June 1, 2022 serving the City of Portsmouth for 30-years.

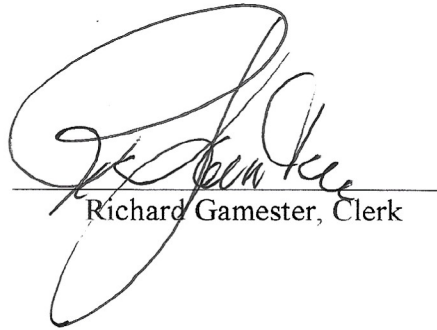
Motion, to accept Firefighter Robert Richards letter of retirement, was made by Chairwoman Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.

Chief Germain presented his letter of intent to retire effective September 1, 2022 to the Commission and thanked the Commission for the honor and privilege to rise up through the ranks and eventually lead the department.

Motion, to accept with regret, Chief Germain's letter of intent to retire and to approve his contract extension to bring him to his retirement date, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1855 hours, was made by Commissioner Gamester. Motion was seconded by Chairwoman Matthes and passed unanimously.



Richard Gamester, Clerk