

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

Fire Station 2  
George Pierce Training Room  
November 12, 2024

Portsmouth, NH  
1730 hours

**I. Call to Order:**

Commissioner Gamester called the meeting to order at 1730 hours.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:**

Commissioner Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.

*Motion, to enter into Non-public Session at 1730 hours in accordance with RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Grievances Filed by Local 4039 & Local 1313 and a Personnel Matter, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to close and come out of Non-public Session at 1755 hours and return to public session, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

*Motion, to seal the minutes of Non-public Session, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester. On a roll call vote of 2-0, motion passed unanimously.*

Regular monthly meeting convened at 1800 hours.

Present were Commissioners: Richard Gamester and Jennifer Matthes; Fire Chief William McQuillen, Assistant Fire Chief Jason Gionet, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Howe, Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman, Firefighters: Christopher Pratt, Eli Gosselin-Smoske, Brandon Gregori and their family members along with members of the department.

**III. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

*Motion, to approve the minutes of October 8, 2024, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

**IV. Public Comment Session: None.**

**V. Recognition of Groups or Individuals**

Chief McQuillen took a moment to recognize Firefighters: Pratt, Gosselin-Smoske and Gregori who have successfully completed their 1-year probationary period. Chief did the honor of swearing in each of them.

*Commissioner Gamester motioned for a 10-minute recess for pictures. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Matthes and passed unanimously.*

Regular meeting reconvened at 1820 hours.

**VI. Presentation of Written Communications: None.**

**VII. Reports:**

**A. Fire Chief's Reports:**

*Commissioner Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 24-084 through 24-087. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester.*

Assistant Chief Gionet reviewed reports with the Commission.

Report (084), 2024 Response Report for October 2024. The report shows the department responding to a total of 443 calls for the month: 128 Fire Calls and 315 Ambulance Calls. Calls for Fire and EMS were up this month from last month. Assistant Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month, noting two mutual aid calls, one to N. Hampton for a 1<sup>st</sup> alarm building fire and another to Greenland for a 1<sup>st</sup> alarm building fire. Marine 1 was called for a jumper on bridge which ended with subject being taken into police custody on land and two calls for motor vehicle accidents on I95 South. One in Greenland with multiple fatalities and the other with heavy entrapment and one fatality. The safety message focused on NFPA and cooking fires with the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday which is the peak day for home cooking fires with more than three times the daily average for such incidents. Report (085), Fire and EMS Call Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 128 fire calls for the month of October. EMS activity was 315 with the top three responses being for abdominal pain/problems, no apparent illness or injury and weakness. There were 5 calls for suicidal or self-harm ideation or thoughts, 4 drug overdose/abuse and 77 non-transport. Report (086), FY25 Budget, Assistant Chief reviewed the budget. Report (087), 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 24-084 through 24-087, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

**B. Staff Reports:**

Assistant Chief Gionet reported on facilities and operations happening within the department. The building security project is wrapping up. Car 3, Deputy Chief Howe's vehicle, is now in-service. His old car has been transferred to DPW for their use. Truck 5 is in for repair for rear suspension problems. This truck is a 2007 and nearing its life cycle which is why we are continuing to see problems Asst. Chief stated. The new engine ordered last year was pushed out to September 2026 however, after several calls to the dealer they were able to readjust the schedule for a November 2025 arrival time. The department currently has two vacancies with two candidates to be interviewed next week. One probationary firefighter has been deployed for a year. Probationary Firefighter Sweeney returns from his deployment next week. Lt. Chamberlain has been training members on auto extrication skills with the help of National Wrecker. Capt. Kenneway has been providing EMS training at the simulation lab and on airway techniques. Paramedic refresher takes place on Friday. Marine 1 will come out of the water around the first week of December.

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Fire Prevention noting 33 permits issued, 58 inspections and 16 prevention related meetings for the month of October. Other items noted both he and Prevention Officer Putney attended the inspector breakfast hosted by Newington Fire, FPOs Wheeler and Putney attended a Fire Alarm and Security seminar, and 18 Fire Prevention Week visits with safety education provided to 698 children. Expansion of a Public Works building is working through TAC and we are currently working with DPW and Planning on the 100 Durgin Lane project relative to access and street names.

**VIII. Old Business:** None.

**IX. New Business:** None.

**X. Adjournment:**

*Motion, to adjourn at 18 hours, was made by Commissioner Hughes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Gamester and passed unanimously.*

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Michael Hughes, Clerk