

The Board of Fire Commissioners
Portsmouth Fire Department

042

Fire Station 2
George Pierce Training Room
May 14, 2024

Portsmouth, NH
1800 hours

- I. **Call to Order:**
Chairman Gamester called the meeting to order 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 and Administrative Manager Tracy Freeman.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance with Attendance:**
Chairman Gamester led the pledge of allegiance.
- III. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**
Motion, to approve the minutes of April 9, 2024 was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Chairman Gamester and passed unanimously.
- IV. **Public Comment Session:** None.
- V. **Presentation of Written Communications:**
Chief McQuillen read the thank you note from Julie & Bob Shea and the thank you letter from Deputy Fire Chief Robert Atwater of Durham Fire.

Motion, to accept and place on file, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Chairman Gamester and passed unanimously.
- VI. **Reports:**
 - A. **Fire Chief's Reports:**
Commissioner Matthes motioned to discuss Chief's reports 24-038 through 24-041. Motion was seconded by Chairman Gamester.

Report (038), 2024 Response Report for April 2024. The report shows the department responding to 1,629 calls year to date. There were 400 calls for the month of April: 109 Fire Calls and 291 Ambulance Calls. Both fire and ambulance calls were up this month from the previous month. Chief spoke briefly about some of the activities for the month noting a mutual aid response to Greenland for a 2nd alarm fire on Sanderson Lane and within a short period of time, another call came in for a fire in the garage at Portwalk Place. Also noted were two mutual aid calls to Rye for 2nd alarm fires with one at Webster at Rye and the other along the beach at 1677 Ocean Blvd, two calls for marine 1 with a jumper from the high-level bridge and a sailboat into the Memorial Bridge, and a mutual aid call to Greenland for a 2nd alarm fire on Post Road. The safety message focused on laundry and how important taking care of your clothes dryer is to the safety of one's home. Report (039), Fire and EMS Call

Summary Reports, shows the department responded to 109 fire calls for the month of April and EMS activity was 291 for the month with the top three responses being for sepsis or septic shock, abdominal pain/problems and cardiac: chest pain. There were 3 drug overdose/abuse and 54 non-transport. Report (040), FY24 Budget, Chief reviewed the budget noting the last month showing a decrease in expenses, so we have increased minimum staffing from 13 to 14 mid-April with only routine maintenance and necessary purchases still in place. Other adjustments have been made to a couple of training exercises while working with PNSY for upcoming training in June. Report (041), 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.

Motion, to accept Chief's Reports 24-038 through 24-041, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Chairman Gamester and passed unanimously.

B. Staff Reports:

Deputy Chief Howe reported on Fire Prevention Activity and it being a busy month noting 41 permits issued and 81 inspections done along with Fire Prevention Officer Wheeler passing the IAAI Certified Fire Investigator program, meeting with PHA regarding a potential project at 1035 Lafayette Road and continued meetings with the outdoor dining group. Chairman Gamester inquired about the revenue collected for the month and asked what the average revenue is a month. DC Howe answered it being dependent on projects happening within the city so it can vary. Chairman Gamester inquired about the new ordinances and if he has seen a decrease in outdoor dining applications. DC Howe replied that some areas on the upper end of Congress Street are no longer permitted and some spaces along other areas of downtown will be smaller in their outdoor seating capacity, but it is still under review and we are meeting weekly on this.

Assistant Chief reported on facilities and operations happening within the department noting no new issues with facilities at this time, pump testing has been completed and all apparatus has passed, the new ambulance scheduled for purchase in FY25 should have final pricing and plans by the end of the week with the manufacturer putting a place holder in for us to get ours in line. Also noted was radio maintenance being completed last week with no significant issues found. Portable radios were set up to work with our new SCBA units as well. The department currently has two vacancies with interviews next week with two candidates. The new air packs have arrived as previously noted and training has begun on them. A factory rep is providing the training and all personnel will go through this training with additional on-shift training to familiarize everyone with the operation of the units. Anticipate being placed in service early June. Annual live fire training scheduled for June 5th with the PNSY and personnel are refreshing their skills on Marine 1 with it being back in the water at the State pier. Lt. Exam was held last month, and Chief will forward the list of top three candidates to the Commission.


Fire Commission Minutes of May 14, 2024 continued:

VII. Old Business: None.

VIII. New Business: None.

IX. Adjournment:

Motion, to adjourn at 1835 hours, was made by Commissioner Matthes. Motion was seconded by Chairman Gamester and passed unanimously.


~~Michael Hughes, Clerk~~
Chua