

Town of Suffield



Board of Fire Commissioners **Minutes**

Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting
July 12, 2016

Commission chair, Jeremiah Mahoney, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. at the Suffield Police Department Community Room. Present: P. Christian, J. Mahoney, J Caron, E. O'Hurley, A. Parrish, Chief Flynn, Fire Marshal M. Thibedeau, First Selectman Melissa Mack and observers. Absent: R. Gemme.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary's Report

Caron moved, Christian seconded to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2016 Commission meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

The Commission reviewed the current year to date financial information. Chief Flynn reviewed the numbers for the overall department as well as the four separate stations. Christian moved, Caron seconded to approve the financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence

The brochure for the upcoming Suffield Firemen's Association Family Day to be held on July 16th from 4-9 p.m. was presented to the Commission

Calls and Activities

The Commission reviewed the report for May and June. Chief Flynn noted that no large or extraordinary events occurred in either month. The number of calls and personnel were similar month over month.

Public Comment

None

Old Business

Chief Flynn noted that new budget year has begun. Processing of annual service contracts is underway. Financing of 3 apparatus replacements will be brought before Board of Selectmen and if approved will then be referred to the Board of Finance as ACCE had indicated that they would consider financing replacements for the tower, rescue and pumper.

New Business

- Chairman Mahoney reviewed the results of the Consultant Report provided by the Town's legal counsel Metzger Lazarek & Plumb.
- Discussion identified the most material components and recommendations for remediation.
- Chairman Mahoney motioned to have Chief Flynn's participation in professional organizations or any activities outside of Suffield be deferred until further action by the Commission. Christian seconded the motion. O'Hurley objected.
- Discussion followed regarding the past activities of Chief Flynn and Chairman Mahoney explained why he felt this motion was appropriate.
- Caron expressed concern regarding complete stoppage of all activities and involvement in outside organizations. First Selectman Mack agreed.
- O'Hurley questioned Chief Flynn as to current time commitments away from the Suffield Fire Department and a possible leave of absence from his position on the Board of The International Chiefs Association.
- Chief Flynn explained that a leave of absence was not possible as he is an elected official and is obligated to serve. There are no provisions for him to step down temporarily. The regulations require members to be "active and engaged as Chief." His time commitment involves four meetings which are held in February, May, August and November.
- Chairman Mahoney asks for alternative options.
- Caron suggests that Chief Flynn make a list for review by the Commission. Chairman Mahoney states that this has been done in the past. Chief Flynn agreed.
- Chairman Mahoney asks that the group defer action on the motion and ask Chief Flynn to provide a list of all organizations and activities he feels are important for him to participate in. The list will need to outline the time commitment and perceived benefits and the commission will authorize or deny.
- Mahoney withdraws his motion. Christian withdraws his second.
- First Selectmen Mack agrees that this is a wise idea and that a full plan needs to be devised but that this is a good place to start.
- Chairman Mahoney asked Chief Flynn to discuss various certification requirements, levels of training, pay levels and job titles for firefighters in general and then to address how these relate to various firefighters within the Town of Suffield Fire Department.
- Chief Flynn provides detailed information with regard to career firefighters and volunteer firefighters.
- First Selectman Mack asked Chief Flynn questions pertaining to current salary levels and whether they are appropriate for the qualifications that certain firefighters current hold.
- Chief Flynn responded to First Selectman Mack with details surrounding current positions, qualifications and corresponding salaries.
- Chairman Mahoney asked for any additional comment on the report.
- O'Hurley expressed his concern with the freelancing and lack of chain of command issues presented in the Fire Report.
- Chief Flynn responded that this was not found to be an issue based on the final report.
- Caron asked what the next steps would be and whether arbitration would be involved.
- Selectman Mack addressed Caron's concerns.

Chief's Report

- All vehicles and facilities are up to speed. For ACCE this year, the Station 4 roof will be completed.
- Station 3 repairs are complete with the exception of the outside door.
- Work will be done on the Oil Separators at Stations 1, 3 and 4 this year. The systems will be routed on Stations 1 and 3 this week.

Fire Marshal's Report

- Fire Marshal Thibedeau reported that he had 66 contacts for service in the last month.
- Of the 35 incidents last month, 4 were structure fires. 2 fires are under investigation as being intentionally set. Fire Marshall Thibedeau is working with Detective Justin Fuller of the Suffield Police Department. Juvenile boys responsible for 2 fires. Boys will be completing community service which involves writing letters to the Fire Chief and washing fire engines.
- Large Construction projects include: The Hamlet East project and various buildings at Suffield Academy as well as 3 new approved housing developments; Matthew Drive (13 lot subdivision,) Fiddlehead Fields (9 lot subdivision,) and Halladay Ave./Cherry Brook Lane(9 lot subdivision.) Final approvals are pending with regard to hydrants in subdivision on Halladay Ave./Cherry Brook Lane.

Other

None

Personnel

Rich Faraci, Firefighter Recruitment Committee, introduced new firefighter Nate Ryan. Nate comes from South Hadley.

Executive Session

O'Hurley moved, Mahoney seconded to enter Executive Session at 8:07 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/update on personnel issues, retirement and resignation, union negotiations, scheduling and the hiring process.

Caron moved, Parrish seconded to return to regular session at 9:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Caron moved, Parrish seconded to adjourn the meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kris Lambert
for
Paul Christian, Secretary