

**Chester Board of Fire Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting, April 20, 2016**  
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held its regular meeting on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at the Chester Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, CT. In attendance were Joel Severance, Chairman, John Divis, Bettie Perreault, Rick Schreiber and Peter Zanardi. Ex-officio member present was Fire Chief James Schaefer.

Chairman Severance called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

In the absence of the Recording Secretary, Severance requested that a member take the minutes of the meeting.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of March 16, 2016

On **Motion** by Zanardi, seconded by Schreiber, the minutes of the March 16, 2016 meeting were approved as written. **Motion passed** with Severance, Divis, Perreault and Schreiber voting in favor; Zanardi abstaining.

Item 2: Audience of Citizens: there were none

Item 3: Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Richard Leighton had notified Board members that he was out of town and unable to attend the meeting. Fire Inspector David Roberge was also unavailable to attend this meeting. The Monthly Activity Report for the Fire Marshal had been included in that communication and was distributed to members. The Report was reviewed, with note of the significant number of activities related to L & E Restaurant/Good Elephant Bistro, 59 Main Street, indicating that the property owners' progress in meeting remediation expectations and requirements was being diligently followed up on by the Fire Marshal and Fire Inspector.

Chairman Severance noted current exhibit activities at the Chester Historical Society's Mill building and suggested Society officers invite the Fire Marshal officers to do an inspection of the building. As members of this Board are also members of the Historical Society, they would be included along with other pertinent people in such an inspection visit. The Fire Department will be invited to tour the facility when Society President Hubbard is back in town.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Fire Chief Schaefer reminded members of the up-coming Annual Banquet scheduled for Saturday, April 23 at the Fire House. The Chief reported on his meeting with the members of the town's Energy Team in connection with boiler replacement and solar panel installation and the need to coordinate both projects to successfully secure a loan for the work needed. Items that need details included the existing roof's load-bearing capabilities, the options of providing solar panels for only the Fire House or an expanded system which might provide electricity for other Town buildings.

The Chief noted that Fire Department member Vincent Nevins had passed away earlier in the week.

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On **motion** by Perreault, seconded by Zanardi, the Board extended its condolences to the family of Fire Department member Vincent Nevins, who passed away earlier in the week. The **motion passed** on a unanimous vote.

Since the March 16, 2016 Board meeting the two ambulances were inspected and have both passed inspection. Other apparatus is doing all right with attention to maintenance and note of significant repair expenses.

Item 5: Report of First Selectman

In the absence of any member of the Board of Selectmen, there was no report.

Item 6: Report of Emergency Management Director

EMD Severance reported that while reports have been submitted in connection with grant applications, requests for further revision have continued to be generated. A 2014 Grant application has been signed by the Town.

EMD Severance recommended that the Town conduct an Exercise to focus on the opening and operation of the EOC for residents and others with special needs in connection with health issues, mobility, language barriers, etc. It was noted after considerable discussion that there appears to be a serious gap in information available to local responders who do not receive or maintain updated/current information for those who may be in need. Such an exercise could include members of the LEPC, Fire Department, members of this Board and other officials and agencies. EMD Severance will prepare plans for such an event with the expectation that it can be held in the next few months, prior to summer.

Item 7: Financial Report

- (a) 2015-2016 Budget: Chief Schaefer reviewed the status of the budget with note of line items which may require transfer of funds prior to the end of the fiscal year as well as those line items which may potentially end the fiscal year with modest surplus. The Board of Finance has requested this information in its efforts to address budget concerns.
- (b) 2015-2016 Fire Marshal Budget: In the absence of the Fire Marshal no Budget was available for review.
- (c) 2016-2016 Budget: Chief Schaefer reviewed the Department's Apparatus Replacement Schedule in detail. Note was made that some pieces of apparatus could be "replaced" by refurbishing existing equipment or, when retiring a vehicle replacing it with one retrofitted to accommodate its new use. These could include brush truck, ambulances and others. It was pointed out strongly that it is important to anticipate needs for a considerable number of years, to include funding in budgets during the intervening years and to diligently save those funds for specific needs. Members of the current Board of Finance are also exploring capital expenditures and long-range planning. The Chief reported he is working with the Board of Finance on these issues and attending their meetings regularly.

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(d) 2016-2017 Fire Marshal Budget: In the absence of the Fire Marshal no Budget proposal was available.

Item 8: Old Business: There was no Old Business to conduct.

Item 9: New Business: There was no New Business to conduct.

There being no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 on motion by Zanardi, seconded by Perreault. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bettie Perreault*

Acting Secretary