

The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 20, 2016, at the Chester Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Joel Severance, Rick Schreiber, John Divis, Charlene Janecek and Peter Zanardi. Ex-Officio Members present included Fire Chief James Schaefer, Fire Marshal Richard Leighton and Fire Investigator David Roberge. Chairman Severance called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

Chairman Severance noted Rick Schreiber would not be seated at this meeting due to the fact he had not been reappointed yet. The Board of Selectmen will reappoint him at their upcoming meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2015  
**Motion by Zanardi, second by Divis, to approve November 12, 2015 Minutes as written. Unanimously Approved.**

Item 2: Audience of Citizens – none.

Item 3: Report of Fire Marshal  
Monthly Activity Reports for October, November and December 2015 were distributed and briefly reviewed.

Fire Marshal Leighton noted there was a boat fire on December 14<sup>th</sup> on Dock Road. One vessel was fully involved and it spread to two other vessels. This property has been the site of multiple fires in the past. FM Leighton and FI Roberge very briefly reviewed the investigation noting they are working with the insurance company, State Fire Marshal's Office and State Police.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Main Street Bridge Replacement. Fire Investigator Roberge asked what function events are being planned for the next 6 months. Charlene Janecek noted the Merchants are doing Sunday Markets. Every month has a theme. Roberge asked if anything else comes along, the Fire Marshals be advised so they can have a seat at the table.

There was a brief discussion regarding the broken water main in the center of town.

Chairman Severance noted OSHA has overstepped its bounds citing the Town with a bunch of violations. Three buildings were cited for fire code violations, but they were all exceptions in the fire code. Fire Marshal Leighton reviewed the exceptions.

Chairman Severance noted he would notify Chief Schaefer of the date for training for traffic control and certification.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Fire Chief Schaefer reported on the following -

Main Street Bridge Replacement work has begun. There was a water main break last week. It was out for 6 to 8 hours, restored around 3-4 AM. Water was lost on West Main and North Main. 4 Water Street was also without water, but got fixed quickly.

Chief's car is up and running. It has new tires, brakes and couple of other things. Lights and radios are coming from Whelen Engineering.

Waiting for next Town Meeting to approve transfer of money left over from the roof into the house repairs account to start work on new boiler system.

Reviewed recent incident at Chester Village West where food was left on the stove.

Item 5: Report of First Selectman

Charlene Janecek noted Chief Schaefer covered everything. The only outstanding item was the drone that has been in the budget for the last 2 years. Is this purchase going to be pursued? Chairman Severance noted he will talk about this under the Emergency Management Director's report.

Item 6: Report of Emergency Management Director

Chairman Severance noted they are going around and around with new regulations for the Emergency Planning Grant. Now they want cancelled checks and 2 proofs of payment. The banks don't give out cancelled checks any more.

Chairman Severance noted the next year's budget is due February 1<sup>st</sup>. There are

some problems with radio equipment. Communication has been lost with Middletown. Getting new cable mounted outside.

Chairman Severance noted its been 2 years in a row we haven't purchased the drone. First Selectwoman Gister has suggested the Hose Company pay for it.

Chairman Severance noted an 18' pole is needed for the underwater camera.

Chairman Severance noted he spoke to the EMD about the Calamari fire in Essex. The fire went on for 26 hours. CERT volunteers responded. CERT people are trained for registering who comes in and goes out and traffic control. Chief Schaefer noted they had a command board, had accountability and knew what was going on. The command center was at the front gate along with personnel staging. Severance noted he was pleased with the response from the CERT team. The State has taken over the program in May.

Item 7: Financial Report  
(a) 2015-2016 Budget

Fire Chief Schaefer noted not much has changed, but there are a couple of things coming down the line that we will have to pay for. Trying to avoid going over the budget if at all possible.

Chief Schaefer noted he has been working on next year's budget. There will be increases for equipment and building maintenance, supplies, outside clerical. Everything else should remain flat. Not giving employees a raise. Schaefer noted the Board of Finance is looking for a budget for the next 5 years. He will be reviewing this with First Selectwoman Gister and Chairman Severance. There will be a few changes to Capital. Equipment Maintenance and Apparatus Replacement will be increased. Money needs to be put aside for these things, otherwise down the road it will become more costly. There will be a new Capital item to replace the Chief's car in 5 years. Money will also be put in for the parking lot. The new budget has to be presented to the Board of Finance on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Chief Schaefer will email it to Chairman Severance to distribute to the BOFC members for the next meeting.

(b) 2015-2016 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton noted they only spend money on a quarterly basis. The budget is the same as last month. If nothing comes up in the next 6 months, the budget should be on track.

FM Leighton noted he only received the request for next year's budget at this meeting, therefore, has nothing to report.

Item 8: Old Business – none.

Item 9: New Business

(a) Vacancy on the Board/Nominations

Chairman Severance noted Rick Schreiber had not been reappointed, but was on the Board of Selectmen's Agenda for reappointment on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Charlene Janecek noted technically her staying on this Board was not a conflict of interest, but there is a perception in town there is a conflict, therefore, she will resign and become the BOS Liaison to this Board. It was noted Bettie Perreault has expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Board of Fire Commissioners. She has filled out the paperwork and submitted it to the First Selectwoman. Severance asked if the Board would like to recommend and endorse Bettie Perreault to fill the vacancy. Pete Zanardi noted the Board should definitely recommend someone if there is a suggestion. **Motion by Zanardi, second by Severance, that the Board of Fire Commissioners endorse Bettie Perreault to fill vacancy position on the Board. Approved with Janecek abstaining.**

(b) Fire Marshal Leighton noted the Board of Fire Commissioners should be aware that he is sponsoring Pete Terenzi to the Fire Academy. He lives in Deep River and is retired from the State Police. He does not want to be a Fire Marshal in Chester or anywhere else. There is a concern about the quality of fire marshals coming out of the Academy. As a side note, Mr. Terenzi would be a good asset and available to be used if the need arose. Between Leighton, Roberge and Terenzi, there is about 90 years of experience. It also does not cost the town anything.

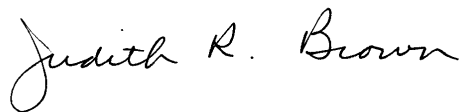
Item 10: Adjournment

**Motion by Zanardi, second by Divis, to adjourn at 8:40 PM. Unanimously**

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**Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

**Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary**