

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Regular Meeting, March 15, 2017
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 15, 2017, at the Chester Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Joel Severance, Rick Schreiber and Peter Zanardi. Ex-Officio Members present were Fire Chief James Schaefer, Deputy Fire Chief James Grzybowski, Fire Marshal Richard Leighton and Selectwoman Charlene Janecek. Chairman Severance called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of February 15, 2017

Motion by Zanardi, second by Severance, to approve February 15, 2017 Minutes amended as follows -

Item 3, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence should be read, “There was a crew there this morning.” Also add – “Tree trimming crews have been working in the area where transformer has blown several times; utility pole is on site pending replacement. At this time it has not yet been replaced.”

Unanimously Approved.

As an aside, it should also be noted in the days following, Eversource has replaced the pole and transformer.

Item 2: Audience of Citizens – none.

Item 3: Report of Fire Marshal

The Monthly Activity report for February 2017 was distributed and reviewed. Fire Marshal Leighton noted activity has been light for January, February and March. Leighton noted he attended a Board of Finance meeting and presented the Fire Marshal Budget. He also noted there should have been an after-the-fact meeting for the Winter Carnivale.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Fire Chief Schaefer noted not much going on this month. The deuce will have to have the tank fixed at some point.

Item 5: Report of First Selectman

Selectwoman Janecek reported on the following -

- They are working diligently on the upcoming budget. The BOS have asked boards and commissions to look at their budgets again to see where cuts can be made. Brief discussion regarding budgets ensued.

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- Constable Steve Redente is leaving. Resident Trooper Matt Ewing is now second on the list for promotion by the State Police. Trooper Ewing will be reinstated tomorrow after recovery from his accident a few weeks ago.
- Brief discussion ensued regarding regionalization of police.

Item 6: Report of Emergency Management Director

Chairman Severance noted the Harbor Masters are now being designated as responders. Waiting for Homeland Security and Emergency Management to recognize this designation. No one knows the water better than the Harbor Master.

Chairman Severance noted the CT Emergency Management Association now has a lobbyist in Hartford. He briefly reviewed a couple items before the Legislature.

Chairman Severance noted they are still working on the Emergency Management Plan which was just approved for 2016-17 going back to October 1st. They have taken out the drone and put in the EOC, wi-fi, etc. Short a couple thousand but still working on that.

Item 7: Financial Report

(a) 2016-2017 Budget

Chief Schaefer noted everything looking pretty good. A couple items are over. Overall doing okay.

(b) 2016-2017 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton noted there has been no change since last month.

(c) 2017-2018 Budget

Chief Schaefer noted the parking lot has been removed from the 2017-18 Budget. First Selectwoman Gister has asked the Chief to review a couple of line items and get back to her.

(d) 2017-2018 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton noted he hasn't heard anything on the status of the Fire Marshal Budget since his original presentation to the Board of Finance.

Item 8: Old Business

Chief Schaefer noted they pulled the SAFER Grant for the paid Assistant Chief

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position. Deputy Chief Grzybowski noted he was not aware at the last Board of Finance meeting he was supposed to do a presentation and was caught unaware. He wished to note for the record there was a concern and rumors he was working on this Grant solely for himself for the position. He noted at no time was he considering it. The only possible benefit was he might run for Fire Chief again. It was further noted it was better to pull the Grant which can be resubmitted next year when they can do proper vetting.

Selectwoman Janecek asked if looking down the road, does anyone foresee a paid department. Deputy Chief Grzybowski replied he sees maybe a combination but not a paid. The Board of Fire Commissioners is the Chester Fire Department and they contract with the Chester Hose Company.

Selectwoman Janecek noted she has been listening to a lot of calls. Deputy Chief Grzybowski noted they are filling up a lot of holes and the Chief is picking up a lot of mutual aid calls too.

Brief discussion ensued regarding Ambulance billing.

Item 9: New Business

With regard to the Winter Carnivale, Fire Marshal Leighton noted there is a building and sanitation code that specifies how many porta-potties are required. They were totally void. He also noted getting around town was fairly easy considering the barricades. There was no problem getting emergency vehicles through if necessary. People who lived on the street were allowed to go through. Pete Zanardi noted next year there should be a fire police assigned to each police officer. It seemed to him wherever there was a fire police there were no problems.

Item 10: Adjournment

Motion by Zanardi, second by Schreiber, to adjourn at 8:30 PM.
Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary