

The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held its regular meeting on Wednesday, November 16, 2016, at the Chester Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Joel Severance, Rick Schreiber, John Divis and Peter Zanardi. Ex-officio members present included Fire Chief James Schaefer, Fire Marshal Richard Leighton, Fire Investigator David Roberge and Selectwoman Charlene Janecek. Chairman Severance called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2016

**Motion by Schreiber, second by Divis, to approve October 19, 2016 Minutes as written. Unanimously Approved.**

Item 2: Audience of Citizens – none.

Item 3: Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal's Monthly Activity Report for October was distributed. Fire Marshal Leighton briefly reviewed on going activities and inspections at Whelen. Dates for the EPPI Exercise were reviewed. Fire Investigator Roberge asked if the invoice should be sent to the BOFC or Emergency Management directly.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Fire Chief James Schaefer reported on the following -

- Tanker had to get new tire.
- Scot Pack was being put on Engine 2, brackets need modification.
- Engine 1 – putting 4 packs in the jump seats.
- Second ambulance needs service, check engine light on.
- Things have been pretty quiet.
- Cedar Swamp Road – there have been several brush fires.

Item 5: Report of First Selectman

Selectwoman Janecek noted there was nothing to report.

Item 6: Report of Emergency Management Director

Chairman Severance noted he is in the process of reviewing the Emergency Operations Plan. On Page 81 of 273 pages. There is a State Emergency Meeting tomorrow night in Haddam.

Item 7: Financial Report  
(a) 2016-2017 Budget

Chief Schaefer noted Supplies and Equipment Maintenance will probably go over budget. Nothing yet from Dr. Kotrady or Clerical. EpiPens have expired. Buying a couple of defibrillators and some hoses. Starting to get monthly phone and utility bills from the Town. Still a few months to go before end of fiscal year.

(b) 2016-2017 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton noted the FM Budget will probably be at the end by January 1<sup>st</sup>. Last 2 months have been busy. First Selectwoman Gister is aware of this. She is being inundated with complaints. The FM's are doing what they are supposed to do. This is just to make the BOFC aware there will come a time when there are no funds left. Leighton asked if there was something the BOFC wanted the FM's eliminate the rest of the fiscal year. Leighton reiterated he is putting this on the table early the fact there will be a funding problem at some point. The FM's are busier now than ever before.

Fire Marshal Leighton noted he will be out of commission in January for about 6 to 8 weeks due to knee surgery. Dave Roberge and Peter Terenzi will take over the FM duties. There is an inter-department memo on file to cover this type of situation. First Selectwoman Gister is aware of this.

Leighton again asked if the Board wanted to eliminate anything from the FM duties. John Divis noted this is a matter of public safety and there is nothing to eliminate. All Board members agreed. For the record, it was noted the FM's are NOT to cut back on any duties. Pete Zanardi noted there really is no alternative.

Fire Investigator Roberge noted one example is the heaters at the Pattaconk. They have to do a follow up on this matter. It would be irresponsible to not do it. There was a brief discussion regarding things that might be eliminated such as follow up inspections.

Chairman Severance noted the Board of Fire Commissioners is going on record to support the Fire Marshals to continue doing their job as it should be done, including follow up inspections.

Item 8: Old Business – none.

Item 9: New Business

Chief Schaefer noted for the record he is giving the Radiation Detection Set back to Emergency Management (Joel Severance) to return to the State. He also indicated a hand written receipt noting this has been returned to the State will be required. Chairman Severance noted he will return this to DEMHS tomorrow.

Chief Schaefer reviewed an issue with access to a standpipe at Fogot's house during a recent house fire. The standpipe installed there is no longer accessible and they had to use a neighbor's pond. They have lost a water source. Chief Schaefer noted he recently received a DEEP Quarterly Newsletter with an article about a dry hydrant program. The Town can be reimbursed about 50% of the cost of a dry hydrant. There is a larger pond about 600 to 800 feet away. Right now we don't have a water source in that area. Perhaps someone should look into who owns that pond and whether a standpipe could be installed. There currently is no water source past the Water Company on Goose Hill Road. Fire Investigator Roberge noted one advantage of proposing a new water source is that it would benefit the Town's ISO rating for fire insurance rates which would probably see a reduction. FM Leighton noted in the insurance world a standpipe is equivalent to a fire hydrant. He also noted the Town would have to establish an easement to go on private property. Chairman Severance asked what the recommendation would be. Chief Schaefer noted he would go with a standpipe on the larger pond which is on a shared driveway. Fire Investigator Roberge noted they did 2 of these in Lyme at a total cost of \$20,000 paid for by town funds through budgeting. The advantage was adjacent properties saw a drastic reduction in insurance rates. Chief Schaefer noted without this standpipe, the closest water source is at the top of the hill at the Water Company. John Divis noted years ago there used to be a line item for dry hydrants. FI Roberge noted DEEP funding also has a match on it. It was noted the Town Engineer should survey the pond and recommend whether it is big enough to service a standpipe. **Motion by Zanardi, second by Divis, to contact the Selectmen to have the Town Engineer look into doing some preliminary work in obtaining easements and permissions for a standpipe. Unanimously Approved.**

There was a brief discussion regarding the recent smoke condition at the Meeting House. The insurance company agreed it is better to replace the curtain which was damaged. Chimney repair is also needed and the furnaces have to be moved. An ad hoc committee is researching oil or propane and what is needed to be done.

Fire Marshal Leighton noted he received copy of a Special Exception from Planning & Zoning for a Microbrewery in the Village for review and comment. He noted this application will be treated as a restaurant.

Item 10: Adjournment

**Motion by Schreiber, second by Divis, to adjourn at 8:30 PM.**

**Unanimously Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary