

**Chester Board of Fire Commissioners**  
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at the Chester Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Bettie Perreault, Rick Schreiber, Peter Zanardi, and John Divis. Ex-officio members present were Fire Chief John Brainard, Selectman Charlene Janacek, and Fire Marshal David Roberge. Also present were Chester Hose Company President Vin Germini, Past Chiefs James Grzybowski and Jim Schaefer, and Assistant Chief Kim Brainard. Chairman Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:32 P.M. In the absence of Judy Brown, Bettie Perreault provides minutes.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of May 16, 2018

**Motion by Zanardi, second by Divis, to approve the May 16, 2018 Minutes. Unanimously approved. Perreault abstained.**

Item 2: Audience of Citizens

Vin Germini, President, Chester Hose Company brought to the Commission the recognized need for a major water supply access point at Cedar Lake. Germini, Commission members and other officials reviewed the existing water supply locations, both in the Cedar Lake area and throughout the town, with note of a variety of deficiencies, including but not limited to the following:

- Present installations of standpipes are in many instances in locations which are not readily accessible for fire apparatus and equipment, with limited safe maneuvering room or staging location;
- Present installations utilize fixtures/equipment which do not meet the requirements for present-day equipment (hose size); easy access for multiple drafting hoses; fluctuating water levels which may drop, seasonally, below useful level; weeds and/or silt accumulation impeding or clogging intake pipes;
- Current-day tankers of the Chester Hose Company and of other Departments which may respond in mutual aid, with a capacity of up to 2,000 GPM, exceed the capacity and/or ability of most existing standpipe installations;
- Access can be limited or impossible, seasonally, because of snow, ice and other weather-related conditions.

Installation of an underground tank with appropriate equipment and infrastructure and the ability to draft from Cedar Lake in an emergency would provide the needed water in that area to current-day vehicles and equipment. Fire Marshal Roberge advised that installations similar to that recommended by the Hose Company are in use in the town of Lyme. He reviewed, briefly, their construction, location and use and offered to provide Chester personnel a visit their installations. It was noted that with improved access to water supply, the Town might gain improvement in its fire insurance ratings. At this time,

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there may also be Federal grant funding available for such an undertaking. It was recognized that such an undertaking would require approvals from numerous boards, commission and authorities, at not only the local level, but also State and perhaps others. The Commission supported the concept and requested Germini to pursue the proposal and report to the Commission with further details and information.

**Item 3: Report of Board of Selectmen**

Selectman Janacek noted installation of temporary green striping on Main Street, intended to indicate potential placement of parking lines and urged Commission members to look at what is there. While the current configuration is to be modified, it has been pointed out on numerous occasions by a variety of officials that proposals presented are, in many instances, not practical or functional, restricting/impeding or blocking traffic flow as well as not addressing safety concerns in connection with emergency response vehicles, maintenance vehicles or even safe passage of personal vehicles. On behalf of the Commission, the group working on this plan and design is urged to meet with or provide information to, among others, the Chester Hose Company, the office of Fire Marshal and other public safety officials before proceeding beyond preliminary design criteria in connection with proposals relating to traffic and safety to avoid the possibility of creating a location which may result in unsafe and/or dangerous conditions.

**Item 4: Report of Fire Chief**

- Incident Report for the month of May was distributed. The Department responded to 45 calls, assisted by responses from the towns of Haddam and Deep River. New personnel will be added to the Department once required paperwork and testing has been taken care of.
- Work on both the boiler installation and restrooms within the Fire House is ongoing.
- Unit 1 will be in for repair of a broken piston on a side door.
- Department members have provided support for the bi-weekly Triathlon events held from Cedar Lake; the next event will be held on June 28, 2018.

**Item 5: Report of Fire Marshal**

Activity report for the month of May 2018 was distributed and discussed, with note of inspections, response to a boat fire, and other enforcement activities, including:

- Status of remediation of access to the rear of Aaron Manor to provide better access to responding emergency vehicles; review by additional town agencies is pending.

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- The status of pending Planning & Zoning Commission activities in connection with proposed regulations for short term rentals were noted, with the observation that similar activities and regulations are issues in communities throughout Connecticut and beyond.
- Following a May 28 boat fire, the Fire Marshal met with Hose Company officers.

**Item 6: Report of Emergency Management Director**

In the absence of Joel Severance, Emergency Management Director, others who participated in the State-initiated training exercise held this day were able to report. Selectmen Janecek and Grzybowski and John Divis advised that while the exercise was similar to those conducted in the past, a lot was learned, with additional and expanded events addressed, including hypothetical extended power outage, cyber-attack and dam collapse.

**Item 7: Financial Reports**

(a) 2017 - 2018 Budget – Fire Department

Copies of the budget as of January 2018 were distributed and reviewed. Pending expenditures prior to the end of the current fiscal year are expected to be within available remaining funding.

(b) 2017 – 2018 Budget – Fire Marshal

Copies of the budget were distributed and reviewed. It was again noted that over-expenditures have been predicted and all appropriate officials so advised.

(c) 2018 – 2019 Fire Department Budget

There was nothing to report at this time.

(d) 2018 – 2019 Fire Marshal Budget

With new Codes pending activation at some time after the start of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, an order will be placed when they become available.

**Item 8: Old Business**

**Reports and Status of Events**

- (a) Sunday Market: Fire Marshal will be on site for the event on Sunday, June 24

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- (b) Rotary Club July 4<sup>th</sup> Race: With all new personnel in the Police Department, the Chief was asked to review with them the action plan for the event. Cost containment is a concern that is being addressed.
- (c) Triathlon: Recordkeeping in connection with emergency personnel assigned to be available at the event as well as volunteers working with them was discussed in detail; Hose Company personnel will review past practices and address any changes in procedures that might be needed.

Item 9: New Business

- (a) Recognition of service: Joel Severance  
October 28, 1992 through May 18, 2018

**On Motion by Zanardi, seconded by Schreiber, the Commission unanimously voted to recommend the Town of Chester officially recognize with appreciation the service of former Chairman Joel Severance for his service on the Board of Fire Commissioners from October 28, 1992 through May 18, 2018.**

Item 10: Adjournment

**Motion by Zanardi, second by Schreiber to adjourn at 8:39 P.M. Unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Bettie Perreault*

Chairman