

**Chester Board of Fire Commissioners  
Minutes, October 17, 2018  
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 19, 2018 in the Training Room at Whelen Engineering, 51 Winthrop Road, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Bettie Perreault, Rick Schreiber, Peter Zanardi, John Divis and Bob Bandzes. Ex-officio members present were Fire Chief John Brainard, Fire Marshals Dick Leighton and Dave Roberge. Also present were Deputy Chief James Grzybowski, Assistant Chief Charles Greeney, EMS Chief Jim Schaffer, and Trustees Vin Germini and Ben Belisle. Chairman Bettie Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2018 and September 19, 2018:

Action on the minutes of August 15 were inadvertently omitted during the September meeting.

**On motion by Schreiber, seconded by Zanardi, the minutes of August 15, 2018 were unanimously approved.**

**On motion by Schreiber, seconded by Zanardi, the minutes of September 19, 2018 were unanimously approved.**

Item 2: Guests

There were none present.

Item 3: Report of Trustees

(a) Cedar Lake water supply project

Vin Germini, Trustee President, reported a meeting with the Board of Selectmen on the proposed project went well. Currently, costs for piping and tank are being researched and the distance the piping will need to extend to reach the depth needed has to be determined. Questions raised included, among others, the following:

- Are there any fish species of special concern that need to be considered?
  - This has been checked and the response is negative.
- Is the CT DOT impacted or involved by the proposed project?
  - The Board of Selectmen will be checking and advising on this.
- Should Cedar Lake overflow, will it affect access to the facility?
  - It should not be a problem.
- The Grant application process that might make funding for the proposed project available begins in November.
  - The application process is already under review/action.

Item 4. Report of Board of Selectmen

In the absence of Selectman Janeczek, Selectman Grzybowski reported repairs to roads and other infrastructure damaged in the recent flooding are being taken care of. As all repairs are considered “emergency repairs”, work did not need to be bid. The bridge on Liberty Street still needs to be repaired; the structure appears to be sound but surface and surrounding area will need to be restored. It is hoped that repairs can be completed before the paving plants

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close down for the winter. Selectmen will report to the Board of Finance to advise of estimates of the various costs associated with this event.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Chief Brainard reported, "Everything went well" this past month. Fire Prevention Week was just observed, with educational programs presented at both the elementary school (where a "live" drill, including active fire were conducted) and the library. Both events were deemed "a big hit" with the students. The Chester department will be covering all calls for approximately 1/3 of the town of Haddam for the foreseeable future as that department currently has equipment out of service; other mutual aid towns will cover the balance of the town as needed.

EMS Chief Schaffer reported that one prospective employee has been hired and is in the process of completing required testing and documentation. The new employee will work primarily on weekends with 12-hour shifts, working with an experienced employee initially. With a combat medic certification, it is anticipated the transition will be easy. Additional interviews for prospective employees will be scheduled. As Town employees, the allowable number of hours worked and rates of pay were reviewed.

Item 5: Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed activity reports for the months of August and September; members reviewed in detail, with particular attention to the number of violations cited. With these detailed reports, Leighton pointed out, "It shows the system works...." Leighton advised that as of October 1, the State of CT allows municipalities to establish fees for inspections and other activities. The Town will need to review and determine if such fees should be imposed and established.

With note of the calls involving social services, working together with other services both locally and throughout the state, resolution of most situations has been achieved now that a system and protocol has been established. Reallocation of driveway accesses for Aaron Manor and some other remedial actions will eliminate issues associated with emergency vehicles. "Floating propane tanks" and other propane tank issues following the recent flooding were investigated and most have been resolved. Two private bridges have been posted to indicate they cannot support the weight of emergency vehicles; other such private bridges may also be identified and posted.

Item 7: Financial Reports

(a) 2018 - 2019 Budget – Fire Department

Copies of the budget were distributed and reviewed. Chief Brainard called on Deputy Chief Grzybowski for the report. Hose and ladder testing are coming due; funding for newly hired personnel will be covered under the budgeted Regular Payroll. With the additional staffing, revenue generated should increase, offsetting expenditures – an overall positive for the Town's finances.

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(b) 2018 – 2019 Budget – Fire Marshal

Copies of the budget were distributed, with note that expenditures for this Office are based on quarterly submissions, which have not yet been disbursed. The various new Codes that became effective October 1 will be needed; officials are reviewing the costs of the various options prior to purchase, with current needs being met through cooperation with other agencies.

Item 8: Old Business

Reports and Status of Events

(a) Sunday Market

Prior to the next season of the weekly Farmers' Market, a planning meeting for 2019 should be held sometime in April/May with all involved to ensure safety and other considerations are met. The Board of Selectmen will be requested to call for such a meeting.

(b) Triathlon – Season has concluded; 2019 planning should be done in February/March.

(c) Other – The Hose Company will again hold an Open House for Halloween.

Item 9: New Business

- The Board of Selectmen is reviewing possible changes to the membership for some boards/commissions in an effort to decrease the length of the Town's voting ballot; members were encouraged to submit any comments/suggestions/recommendations to the Selectmen prior to November 4.
- A form has been generated by the Office of Fire Marshals for use by those requesting services of Hose Company personnel and equipment in connection with special events and functions, requiring advance notice to allow scheduling of requested resources.
- Board members agreed to continue holding regular monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M.

Item 10: Adjournment

**Motion by Zanardi, second by Schreiber to adjourn at 8:50 P.M. Unanimously approved.**

Board members and Hose Company Officers adjourned to participate in a tour of Fire Department vehicles in a move to have Board members become more familiar with the equipment, its functions, capabilities and operations. The vehicles reviewed this evening were Truck #3 and the Deuce and a Half. It was noted that the Deuce and a Half became part of the Department's resources at no cost to the town, with "anonymous" donation of the vehicle itself as well as all the restoration, painting and associated equipment. It has been given the designation of "Big O" in recognition of that gift. These tours will be held as a part of monthly meetings until all vehicles have been seen. No other business was or will be conducted as a part of these after-meeting tours.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bettie Perreault*

Chairman