

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at the Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Bob Bandzes, Bettie Perreault, Rick Schreiber and Peter Zanardi. Ex-officio members present were Selectman Charlene Janecek, Fire Chief John Brainard, Fire Marshals Dick Leighton and Dave Roberge. Also present were Deputy Chief James Grzybowski, EMS Chief Jim Schaffer. Chairman Bettie Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2018. (The posted meeting notice provided an incorrect date; no meeting was held during the month of December 2018.)

On motion by Schreiber, seconded by Zanardi, the minutes of November 14, 2018 were unanimously approved as filed.

Item 2: Audience of Citizens

Deputy Chief Grzybowski requested that additions be made to the posted Agenda to allow a vote to be taken in connection with 2019-2020 budgets for the Fire Department and the Fire Marshal budgets. The unanimous consensus was that this was agreeable to all.

(a) Update – Main Street Project Committee

There was no update available at the time.

Item 3: Report of Trustees – Vin Germini, President

(a) Cedar Lake Water supply project

Germini was not present but had advised prior to the meeting that there was nothing to report at this time.

Item 4: Report of Board of Selectmen

Selectman Janecek advised the Town has received notification of the approval of the Grant application in connection with the Main Street Project. The funding, however, will not be available for measures that may be required to address areas below the current sidewalk, which are hollow, or void of support or fill materials.

Item 5: Report of Fire Chief

Chief Brainard asked the other Chiefs to make their reports.

(a) Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief Grzybowski reviewed recent Hurst Tool experiences. The 37-year old unit, for which parts are no longer available, should be replaced. Gas-powered and battery-powered units are also aging but still functional. Charging issues with the battery-powered unit are a problem; with proper training, the battery-powered unit can operate longer. A new unit, at a cost of approximately \$30,000 is being ordered.

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(b) EMS Chief

EMS Chief Schaffer reported the long-standing Chester Ambulance Association was dissolved effective December 31, 2018. At that time, \$37,000 was conveyed to the Chester Hose Company to be added to the fund established in memory of Diana Grzybowski; \$8,000 was allocated to purchase a Lucas CPR Devise, an automatic compression devise for use during CPR events. Responders are now able to handle most calls without requiring mutual aid with the new employees now on staff, resulting in only five missed calls during the month of December 2018 and a significant increase in income. The service now has two stair chairs, one powered, the other battery operated.

Item 6, Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed activity reports for November and December 2018, along with detail of the activities associated with that Office's activities in connection with flood events. He reported that propane tank issues following recent flooding have, with one exception, been remediated. The issues associated with remediation at 5 West Main Street are not yet resolved pending resolution of property-related legal issues. The December activity report showed the issuance of numerous notices of violation, as well as the Town involvement preceding the eventual property transfer of 33 Liberty Street. The new owners will be meeting with local officials to review potential future options for the property.

Item 7: Financial Reports

(a) 2018-2019 Fire Department Budget

Chief Brainard distributed the current Financial Report. Deputy Chief Grzybowski reviewed the details, reviewing the details for accounts that indicated expenditures that have or will exceed the budgeted amounts for those line items.

(b) 2018-2019 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton advised there had been no changes in the Fire Marshal budget as submissions are made on a quarterly basis and had not yet been posted for the second quarter of the current fiscal year.

(c) 2019-2020 Fire Department Budget Preparation

Deputy Chief Grzybowski distributed the proposed Budget for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year as well as the Capital Expenditures Budget items for the same period. The proposed budget was reviewed, line item by line item, with detail provided in explanation of each. Completion of building maintenance and other repairs were done this past year, although problems associated with roof damage caused by turkey vultures may continue to be an issue. It was pointed out that aging vehicles, equipment and gear require greater expenditures to maintain. Within the Capital Expenditures submissions, it was noted that aging equipment may remain as "active reserve", while newer vehicles will receive more frequent active use. Implementation of new data processing systems for EMS and Fire Department records, which are also being implemented by other area Departments and recommended by the State Health Department, will make record-keeping more

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manageable. With the current full, allowable staffing of ambulance response personnel, income will increase, as fewer mutual aid responses will be required. Funding of capital accounts for specified items was detailed, including addressing the spalling of the floor of the main bays in the Fire House, which when approved will be replaced. Replacement will include heating, to alleviate expenditures associated with the current overhead heating systems. Additional parking area is again included in the Capital Expenditure requests.

Following review and discussion of the proposed Budget for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year for the operations of the Chester Hose Company,

Motion made by Peter Zanardi, seconded by Rick Schreiber to approve the submission to the Board of Selectmen of a budget for the operations of the Chester Hose Company for the fiscal year 2019-2020, showing total anticipated expenditures in the amount of \$362,350. The motion passed unanimously.

(d) 2019-2020 Fire Marshal Budget Preparation

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed the proposed budget for the Office of Fire Marshal for 2019-2020. He pointed out the Office of Fire Marshal is staffed through contractual arrangements with the Town, that there are no payroll costs associated with their duties. Payments made are based on time expended. Professional development costs are for time only; personnel pay required fees. Codes are the primary expenditure associated with the Supplies line item, with the remainder of the Codes anticipated to be purchased in the following year. The recent responses to the various emergency events has resulted in higher-than-average expenditures, with the Fire Marshals handling more responses than administrative tasks.

Following review and discussion of the proposed Budget for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year for the operations of the Office of Fire Marshal for the Town of Chester,

Motion made by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi to approve the submission to the Board of Selectmen of a budget for the operations of the Office of the Fire Marshal for the Town of Chester for the fiscal year 2019-2020, showing total anticipated expenditures in the amount of \$33,573. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 8: Old Business

(a) Personnel Policy for EMS Employees

EMS Chief Schaffer distributed a Part-Time Paid Staff Responsibilities document, which had been distributed to members for review prior to the meeting. There is currently nothing in the Town's Personnel Policy specific to part-time employees serving as EMS and ambulance personnel. This document is intended to become an addendum to the existing Town policy to remedy this omission. It was noted that the proposal includes provision for physical examinations; clothing allocations and standards, blood borne pathogen training and

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compliance, and that personnel receive the Town's Personnel Policy Manual as part of their employment orientation,

Following review and discussion of the proposed addition of an addendum to the Town of Chester Personnel Policy Manual providing information and instructions for employees who are part-time paid staff for the ambulance services provided under the supervision of the Chester Hose Company,

Motion made by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi to submit the proposed addition of the submitted addendum document to the Board of Selectmen for review and action to have it become a part of the Town of Chester Personnel Policy Manual.

(b) Reports and Status of Events

Chief Brainard advised that Masonicare at Chester Village would be holding a fund-raiser event on February 23, with funding to benefit the Chester Hose Company. The event will be a chili cook-off with local fire departments and restaurants competing and judging by Channel 3 and Channel 8 personalities. The event will be held in the recently added addition to the Masonicare facility at 317 West Main Street from 1 – 3 P.M.

(c) Vehicle Tour

Because of the length of this meeting, the scheduled vehicle tour was postponed until the February meeting.

Item 9: New Business

(a) From Members or Guests

Fire Marshal Leighton reported that Knox Boxes have now been installed on all Town buildings. He provided detail of where each box is located.

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed explanation correspondence and spreadsheet detailing time and mileage required in connection with the various emergency responses, most of which were weather-related. As outside contractors to the Town, these expenses become 100% reimbursable when submitted to the appropriate agencies. Volunteer services and labor person-hours are also potentially eligible for reimbursement with proper documentation. The reimbursement process is lengthy, with the Town potentially receiving allowable reimbursement a year or more in the future.

Item 10: Adjournment

Motion by Zanardi, seconded by Schreiber to adjourn at 9:35 P.M. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Bettie Perreault, Chairman