

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes, March 20, 2019
Page 1 of 4

The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at the Fire House, 6 High Street, Chester, Connecticut. In attendance were Bob Bandzes, John Divis, 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, Assistant Chief Charlie Greeney and Battalion Chief Kim Brainard. Michael Joplin, Chairman of the Main Street Project Committee participated early in the meeting. Chairman Bettie Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of January 16, 2018. (No meeting was held in February 2019.)

On motion by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi, the minutes of January 16, 2019 were unanimously approved as filed.

Item 2: Audience of Citizens

Update – Main Street Project Committee: Michael Joplin reported that reconstruction of Main Street for the area between (approximately) Laurel Hill Cemetery entrance and the eastern end of the area of the reconstructed bridge over Pattaconk Brook at the intersection of Main, Water, North Main and West Main Streets would be involved. Funding commitment is now in place, with State funding of \$1.2 to \$2 million allocated. The project plans are currently approximately 60% completed and a public meeting will be scheduled in the next six to eight weeks. It is hoped that complete plans will be available sometime in the early fall, with construction starting in the spring of 2020. The Town is working with the Connecticut Water Company in the hope the utility will replace the 75+ year old water main in the project area as the first step in the construction process. Cost of such water main replacement could be in the \$2 million range. Location of existing fire hydrants would be part of a replacement project and are being reviewed by Hose Company personnel. The Commission will submit a letter to the Water Company supporting the Town's position and urging the Company to undertake the replacement ahead of initiation of construction on the Main Street project.

Item 3: Report of Trustees

(a) Cedar Lake Water supply project

President Vin 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 had nothing to report at this time.

Item 5: Report of Fire Chief

Chief Brainard reported the deuce-and-a-half is currently at First Line Emergency Services truck repair for replacement of new seals. The work is being done at no cost to the Town.

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes, March 20, 2019
Page 2 of 4

(a) Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief Grzybowski advised that a single response had been received to the request for bids in connection with refurbishment of an ambulance. The bid received was deemed “extremely high” and the committee elected, after further review and consultation with other departments that have undertaken similar projects, to re-bid the project, with bids going out in early April. If this bidding process provides a bid or bids that meet expectations and cost restraints, the unit may be able to be sent out to be rebuilt sometime before the summer.

Three full sets of personal gear have been purchased with the cost coming from the Capital Account at a cost of less than \$15,000. Additional equipment needed to replace outdated or worn out items will be purchased from the same account at an additional cost of approximately \$30,000. Purchase of extrication equipment and replacement hose will be made this fiscal year; Scott Packs will be purchased out of the 2020-2021 budget.

The recent acquisition of a Lucas Device, used to mechanically perform CPR, came from an \$8,000 donation from the now-discontinued Chester Ambulance Association and an additional \$7,000 from an anonymous donation from a Chester resident. On behalf of the Hose Company, the Board of Fire Commissioners extends its grateful appreciation for the generosity of the Association and the anonymous donor.

(b) Battalion Chief

Battalion Chief Brainard advised the Hose Company has scheduled its annual Craft Fair for October 20, 2019 from 10:00 – 3:00 at the Fire House. Along with invited vendors and crafters, food trucks will also be part of the event.

Item 6, Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed activity reports for January and February. Note was made of the number of items shown involving drainage issues. It is hoped that the recently enacted Town Ordinance involving storm drainage may help to alleviate these situations in the future. Leighton pointed out that some activities listed are associated with Building Department and similar types of activities.

Item 7: Financial Reports

(a) 2019-2020 Fire Department Budget Preparation

Deputy Chief Grzybowski distributed budget information, carefully explaining that the presentation showed projected expenditures for all categories except payroll for the remainder of the current fiscal year. Utilizing current and historical experience estimates, it is anticipated that all expenditures can be met within the current budget, although some transfers between line items may be required. Individual items, particularly those that showed potential over-expenditures were noted and explained. Grzybowski also reported that based on current experience, it appears that Ambulance income will meet expectations for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes, March 20, 2019
Page 3 of 4

(b) 2019-2020 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed that budget through the current month, reporting that after consultation with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Director, the practice of submitting quarterly billings for Office of Fire Marshal activities will be changed to monthly submissions. He advised that in his opinion current Fire Marshal activities appear to have stabilized at a “good level” and could be used as an indication of funding level requirements in the future.

Additional matters Leighton distributed and discussed included the following:

- Listing of Proposed Adoption of the 2020 State Building & Fire Safety Codes covering codes for 2017 through 2018, with note that portions of applicable Federal Codes may be amended, replaced or deleted within the Connecticut Codes, requiring the State to promulgate and issue Codes specific to this state.
- Correspondence in relation to an application associated with property located at 9 Water Street was distributed. Chairman Perreault advised that no review, discussion or comment should be made at this time because of pending Public Hearings before the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency and another before the Planning & Zoning Commission. The Office of Fire Marshal and others can and should make their presentations to those agencies at that time.
- In response to events connected with untimely deaths, an Untimely Death Protocols document was distributed. It was pointed out that at this time no protocol is in place for the facility involved, causing numerous issues for responders, police officials, families and others when this happens. The Protocols document is intended for adoption and implementation by the facility and will alleviate current problems. Should the operations of the facility be expanded to address these situations, modification of the Protocols may be required. In the interests of Emergency Responders and the Hose Company, the Board of Fire Commissioners goes on record as being in support of and recommending the presentation to and adoption of the Untimely Death Protocols by the facility, Masonicare at Chester Village.
- A proposed schedule of fees associated with commercial buildings for activities of the Office of Fire Marshal, based on a similar schedule of fees currently used by the Town of Old Saybrook was distributed and discussed. Currently there are no fees associated with activities in Chester other than for Open Burning Permits. Fees received, like those of the Building Department, would be considered an offset from the costs of operation of the departments. The Commissioners supported submission to the Board of Selectmen for its consideration.

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes, March 20, 2019
Page 4 of 4

Item 8: Old Business

- (a) Personnel Policy for EMS Employees: The previously approved Personnel Policy has now been added to the Town's Personnel Policy Manual as a stand-alone section applying specifically to EMS employees associated with the Chester Hose Company.
- (b) Reports and Status of Events: Chief Brainard reported that the recent Chili Cook-off event sponsored by and held at Masonicare at Chester Village was a success, raising \$1,100 for the Hose Company.
- (c) Vehicle Tour
Because of the length of this meeting, the scheduled vehicle tour was postponed to a later date.
- (d) Call Activity Report for the month of January showing a total of 52 incidents responded to was distributed and reviewed. When the new records systems, currently in the process of implementation, is in place the report will be able to additionally show mutual aid responses, requested and provided. It is anticipated that the new systems will be operational by the end of the fiscal year, providing monthly reports to the Commission and others.

Item 9: New Business

- (a) From Members or Guests – Notice was made of the upcoming Chester Hose Company Annual Banquet, scheduled for Saturday, May 4 at the Fire House. Invitations to guests will be mailed in the near future.

Item 10: Adjournment

**Motion by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi to adjourn at 8:48 P.M.
Unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Bettie Perreault, Chairman