

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes, July 17, 2019
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 17, 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 Chief James Grzybowski, Selectman Charlene Janecek, Fire Marshals Dick Leighton and Dave Roberge. Also present were Deputy Chief Charles Greeney, Assistant Chief John Ahearn, EMS Chief Geoff Vincelette, Assistant EMS Chief Sara Blaschik, Captain Dylan Grzybowski and Lt. Ben Belisle. . Chairman Bettie Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M.

Item 1: Call to Order

Item 2: Audience of Citizens

(a) Welcome of new Officers:

The newly elected officers of the Chester Hose Company, listed above, were welcomed, with thanks and appreciation for their willingness to serve.

(b) Update – Main Street Project

Selectmen Janecek and Grzybowski advised the State has requested additional information in connection with the proposed replacement of the water main in Main Street by the Connecticut Water Company. Town Engineer Geoffrey Jacobson is in the process of responding to that request. No further action can be taken and no scheduling for construction can be established until the State has received, reviewed and approved the plans so this part of the Main Street Project is, at this time “in limbo”.

Item 3: Report of Board of Selectmen

Selectmen Janecek advised that the Selectmen have received notification that EMD Joel Severance had submitted a Grant request for dredging of Chester Creek that would require 50/50 funding from the State/Town of \$50,000. The matter will require review by Selectmen and approval for expenditure of the Town portion. Note was made that it has been reported the Inland Wetlands Board will also require review and approval of the project, if undertaken.

Item 4: Report of Fire Chief

Chief Grzybowski reported that there would not be any fire hydrants in the portion of water main being installed on Route 154 from Denlar Drive to the Haddam town line, which would have cost the Town \$5,000. The decision was based, in part, on the 8-inch water main. Recommendation will be made to encourage Eagle Landing (268 Middlesex Avenue) to consider a connection to the new water line to serve its existing tank-fed sprinkler system.

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(a) Report of Deputy Chief and

(b) Report of Assistant Chief

Deputy Chief Greeney and Assistant Chief John Ahearn had nothing to report.

(c) Report of EMS Chief

EMS Chief Geoff Vincelette reported they have improved the responses to ambulance calls, resulting in the majority of calls being handled by Chester responders, with mutual aid responses from Deep River taking the few others that were needed. All paid EMS staff will be required to attend a yet-to-be-scheduled meeting in August to review system requirements, personnel standards and expectations, and other related matters.

Item 5: Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Dick Leighton distributed the activity report for June. He reported that RotoFrank will be installing a Knox Box and Hose Company personnel reviewed its location. Masonicare at Chester Village has experienced a great number of false fire alarms over the past few months and the Fire Marshal's Office is working with them and their contractor to identify the causes. Because of the number of times first responders have been called out, Leighton asked responders to please be patient as the facility is actively trying to address the problem.

The State has scheduled required simultaneous drills for all retirement communities and convalescent facilities. The proposed schedule will be difficult to meet for many communities. Those in Chester, for the most part, already have mutual agreements in place, which should allow them to handle such needs.

Ambulance responses to Chesterfield's Health Care have frequently been blocked by delivery vehicles and other vehicles blocking ambulance access. The facility has had that portion of the pavement marked to restrict unauthorized parking and responders were advised to immediately contact the Chief and/or Fire Marshal if access was impeded when responding to a call.

Item 6: Financial Reports

(a) 2018-2019 Fire Department Budget Year-End Status

Chief Grzybowski reported that the Department was able to stay within budget and return approximately \$1,800 to the Town at the end of the fiscal year. Transfers within the budget, primarily for equipment maintenance, from unexpended payroll funds (as the result of low employment early in the year) will be requested of the Board of Finance. The aggressive recruiting of additional paid EMS personnel and

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the improved response rate during the latter part of the fiscal year resulted in more than \$200,000 in revenue to the Town. The Chief indicated that these revenues could be expected to increase further in the coming year as the service improves its responses to calls and personnel activity.

(b) 2018-2019 Fire Marshal Budget Year-End Status

Fire Marshal Leighton reported that budget, as previously predicted, ended the year with an over-expenditure of approximately \$8,000.

(c) 2019-2020 Fire Department Budget

Chief Grzybowski said with the fiscal year just starting the department is making purchases and getting work done, after which bills will need to be paid.

(d) 2019-2020 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton advised that the office submits requests for payment on a quarterly basis so no expenditures have yet been made for this fiscal year.

Item 7: Old Business

(a): Approval of Minutes of June 19, 2019

On motion by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi the minutes of June 19, 2019 were unanimously approved as filed.

(b) Call Report of Activities – Chief Grzybowski advised he is working with other Officers to assume the record keeping and reporting for the activities and anticipates being able to have monthly reports available in the fall.

(c) Reports and Status of Events

- a. Sunday Market – Fire Marshal Roberge reported it is well organized and running well this year.
- b. Triathlon – Chiefs, Fire Marshal and Emergency Responders continue to be present at the events. Organizers have been supportive when emergency calls occur, having recently delayed the start of the event until responders could return to the location.
- c. Deep River Muster – Ambulance and Fire personnel and equipment will be stationed so as to be readily available should a response be required in Chester during the event.

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Item 8: New Business

(a) Correspondence – there was nothing to report.

(b) Bob Bandzes inquired of the Chief, “What are your three biggest challenges this year?”

Chief Grzybowski’s response included:

- Keeping the department going forward;
- Training new people and officers in what can be viewed as a ‘Succession Plan’, and
- Working with personnel on training.

Bettie Perreault noted that it has been a pleasure watching and participating with the officers and members of the Hose Company during this past year, and complimented all on their hard work, commitment to the Department and the successes they have achieved. Commission members unanimously agreed with this praise.

Item 9: Adjournment

Motion by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Peter Zanardi to adjourn at 8:31 P.M. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Bettie Perreault, Chairman