

**Chester Board of Fire Commissioners**  
**Minutes, January 20, 2020**  
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners held the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 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, Chief James Grzybowski and Fire Marshal Dick Leighton. Also present were Deputy Chief Charles Greeney, Lt. Ben Belisle and EMT Chief Geoff Vincelle.

Item 1: Call to Order

Chairman Bettie Perreault called the meeting to order at 7:34 P.M.

Item 3: Audience of Citizens

There were no guests.

Item 4: Report of Board of Selectmen

Selectman Janecek reported the Town continues to address communications from the CT DOT in connection with the Main Street Project. Until all issues have been resolved, bid documents cannot be issued. This will likely result in start of construction being delayed until sometime in April, rather than March, as had originally been anticipated.

Item 5: Report of Fire Chief

Chief Grzybowski reported the year-end Activity Report has not yet been completed. The donated Cascade System for filling Scott air packs is currently being installed and should be up and running within the next several weeks, with associated electrical work being completed. The Truck Committee continues to review equipment in other area towns. Responses to the recent fund drive letter have already generated over \$8,000 in donations, with a local business owner having pledged to match funding if the drive reached \$8,000. This will result in sufficient funding to allow purchase of one thermal imaging camera. The father of Hose Company Stewart Bruce Sypher passed away earlier this week; service, followed by a gathering at the Fire House will take place on January 25, 2020.

(a) Report of Deputy Chief – no report was given. Deputy Chief Greeney participated in the report from the Chief.

(b) Report of Assistant Chief – there was no report available.

(c) Report of EMS Chief – please refer to Item 13, below for more information.

Item 6: Report of Fire Marshal

Fire Marshal Dick Leighton distributed the activity report for December, noting it had been a slow month. The consensus of Commission members was that the detailed

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monthly report could be summarized with detail available upon request if needed, which should result in a reduction of administrative and clerical work.

Item 7: Financial Reports

(a) 2019-2020 Fire Department Budget

Chief Grzybowski distributed reports on the current Hose Company and Ambulance budgets, noting that maintenance of vehicles in the current fiscal year has been substantially completed. Seasonal increase of ambulance activity is anticipated for the first quarter of 2020 as local health care facilities experience more illnesses and seasonal health issues, resulting in increasing revenues. Data Processing for the current fiscal year is substantially complete, with two overlapping data processing programs planned to phase out by the end of the fiscal year. It was noted that included in the Ambulance Processing expenditure is an annual \$1/capita fee 2019-2020 Fire Marshal Budget

(b) 2019-2020 Fire Marshal Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed the year-to-date financial report, advising that some Codebooks have now been purchased. Expenditures to date remain within anticipated levels for the current fiscal year.

(c) 2020-2021 Fire Department Proposed Budget.

Chief Grzybowski distributed the Department's proposed budget and reviewed individual line items in detail. He pointed out that while few increases were proposed, increasing Ambulance revenues could be anticipated to offset those costs. It was also noted by Officers and Commission members that Equipment Maintenance costs can be expected to remain high because of the advanced age of most vehicles. Capital Expenditures funding for individual vehicles and equipment were reviewed, with projections of both funding and purchases carried for the next decade and beyond. Because meeting schedules had not yet allowed the proposed budget to be reviewed and approved by Hose Company officers, he asked that approval by this Commission be delayed until officers had met. A special meeting will be held once Hose Company officers have met. Preliminary proposed budget information will be relayed to the Board of Selectmen in the interim.

(d) 2020-2021 Fire Marshal Proposed Budget

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed the proposed budget for the Office of Fire Marshal. While substantially the same as the current fiscal year, the proposed hourly rate has been increased to address personnel changes for the position of Building Official. (As the result of retirement of the Building Official, Leighton will be filling that position for a 90-day period, during which time fulfillment of those duties will be tracked to

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determine potential needs and costs.) Action on this proposed budget was also deferred pending the special meeting.

Item 8: Old Business

There was nothing to report.

Item 9: Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2019:

**On motion by Schreiber seconded by Zanardi the minutes of December 18, 2019 were approved as filed.**

Item 10: Reports and Status of Events

Masonicare at Chester Village West will host a chili cook-off on February 29, with proceeds to go to the Chester Hose Company, It was noted that the property is currently 92% occupied, with occupancy expected to be at 100% within the month. The facility works with others in the Masonicare system and local facilities to provide medical resources for residents.

Item 11: New Business – there was none brought forward.

Item 12: Correspondence – none had been received.

Item 13: From Members or Guests:

Chief Grzybowski reported on recent communication from a long-time Middlesex Hospital EMT official praising the actions of local responders to a recent medical call. Because of the nature of the medical response system and the high expectations by that official, the praise was welcomed and much appreciated.

Item 14: Adjournment

**Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Zanardi to adjourn at 8:33 P.M. Unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Bettie Perreault*, Chairman