

Town of Suffield



Board of Fire Commissioners Minutes

Minutes of the Fire Commission Meeting

September 8, 2020

Chairman Christian called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in a ZOOM Meeting.

Present: P. Christian, E. O'Hurley, V. Mathieu, J. Caron, T. Plakias, J. Bucior, Mike Thibedeau, Dan Vindigni, Chief Flynn, and Margaret Van Cott

Meeting started at 7:00 pm with the Pledge to Allegiance.

Roll Call by Chairman Christian-Here; O'Hurley-Here; Mathieu-Here; Caron-Here; Mathieu-Here; J. Bucior-on line but can't hear, trouble with Zoom call.

Secretary's Report

There is not secretary report at this time.

Minutes & Correspondences:

Approval of February 11, 2020 minutes-P. Christian and T. Plakias were not at the meeting. J. Caron ran the meeting. E. O'Hurley motioned for the approval of the minutes; J. Caron seconded the motion. All in favor; 3-0. 2 abstained. 1 absent. J. Bucior was not on the call at the time the minutes were approved as he was having difficulties with Zoom.

Approval of July 14, 2020 meeting minutes. Some did not receive via email, chief put them on the screen and shared his screen for viewing. V. Mathieu motioned for the approval of the minutes and E. O'Hurley seconded the motion. All in favor; 5-0; 1 absent. J. Bucior was not on the call at the time the minutes were approved as he was still having difficulties with Zoom

Financials:

Chief stated that the financials were sent out this am for review. Some did not receive the packet. Resent at the time of the meeting. Reported that nothing is outstanding-the normal accounts were over budget. Service maintenance contracts and payroll are right where they should be at this time in the year. V. Mathieu asked if payroll was on target, and Chief said it was. Chief stated we were at 16.8%, does not include this week's payroll. We are running a little high given Covid-19. O'Hurley asked that the town knows about the increase in payroll, Chief stated yes and we should see some help in payroll. J. Bucior joined the meeting again.

O'Hurley motioned to approve the financials; Seconded by J. Caron. All in favor. 5-0. Paul Christian having difficulties with Zoom meeting, he did not vote. The meeting paused because P. Christian was having difficulties, there was a motion by J. Caron to have V. Mathieu run the meeting; seconded by J. Bucior. No discussion and no opposition. Commissioner Mathieu will run the meeting. Chairman Christian came back into the meeting at 7:13pm.

Back to financials, V. Mathieu motioned to accept the financials as they are; motion was seconded by E. O'Hurley, All in favor-6-0 vote.

Correspondences:

Chief Flynn-No correspondence to report

Calls & Activities:

The month of July we had 60 calls and the month of August was 83 calls for service. 463 calls for service-half way point. Many burn permits, the tropical storm had over 40 calls that night regarding fires, outages, poles down, etc. Mike will go into more details in his report.

Public Comment:

No public comment

Old Business:

Election of the secretary to the commission: Chairman Christian asks for nominations for secretary. E. O'Hurley nominates J. Caron for secretary. No second vote. Lost Paul Christian again off the phone. P. Christian and J. Bucior lost both calls, but back now. Nomination of J. Caron for secretary, J. Bucior seconded the nomination.

P. Christian asked for other nominations. P. Christian nominates V. Mathieu for secretary. Seconded by T. Plakias.

Other nominations? None.

P. Christian asked for a motion to close the nomination. J. Caron motioned to close the nomination. V. Mathieu seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

Any discussion on nominations? None

P. Christian asked for a vote for the first nomination of J. Caron to secretary:

E. O'Hurley-Yes

J. Bucior-Yes

J. Caron-Yes

P. Christian-No

V. Mathieu-No

T. Plakias-No

Lost P. Christian again on the phone—waiting. Back on the line.

Motion is tied so it fails.

P. Christian asked for a vote for the second nomination of V. Mathieu to secretary:

P. Christian-Yes

E. O'Hurley-No

J. Caron-Yes

V. Mathieu-Yes

T. Plakias-Yes

J. Bucior-Yes

Vote 5-1 in favor of V. Mathieu to become the new secretary.

Outstanding issue brought up by J. Caron: still looking for the outstanding letter that was supposed to be sent to First Selectman Melissa Mack. J. Caron has requested for 2 meetings, still have not received. P. Christian apologized stating he has been overwhelmed. He promised to get it out by the week's end.

New Business:

Request for new technology. Bereavement account, left \$100,000. Down to over \$56,000 in the account. Uniforms have been purchased, along with other jackets. iPad were purchased a while back. Need 2 new iPad roughly \$5,000. A piece of equipment for the truck.

Requesting up to \$10,000 for a grip voice for the truck and iPad. \$5,000 for grip voice.

\$2,300 for both iPad. Need a mount for one of the trucks. Total \$10,000. (One hoist is \$4,800). Training has been done to use the hoist.

P. Christian gave some history regarding the request of the dollar amount. Some years ago there was a request for \$24,000 for uniforms. Needed new and up to date uniforms with a baseball caps and a casual jacket. Need the ipads for easier communication. Number appears to be large, but this in fact is not the largest purchase.

E. O'Hurley-new truck has computers on the truck, Chief stated not something we can use, only for upkeep and maintenance. P. Christian-any other questions-none.

Motion to spend up to \$10,000 by V. Mathieu; seconded by J. Bucior. All in favor. 6-0.

Fire Marshal's Report:

Mike Thibedeau-busy month-83 calls for the month. 40 storm related. Whole department was involved with wires down, 6 houses with trees on them, 1 structure fire, road closures. 6 motor vehicle accidents. 1 missing person, 1 other structure fire. 13 burn permits.

Any questions? E. O'Hurley-did you receive any word of appreciation or get a thank you? Chief stated she sent an email stating they did a good job. J. Bucior-no one got hurt? Chief-no one got hurt. E. O'Hurley stated that they did a great job. J. Bucior and P. Christian said they did a great job.

Chief's Report:

Engine 3-ladder had an issue with depth sensors. Other manufacturing issues, all taken care off. Rear suspension had been fixed last month. All stations are up to date and running efficiently. Driveway at station 1 being renovated next week to allow more parking spaces. All equipment is good. All PPE has been ordered. Currently all personnel are healthy and remaining social distant. One applicant from West Suffield working on background check, passed the physical, would be a great asset to the organization. Attending some drills and is excited. We did get the Zack Grant, two turbo water drafts. Can take water at an agricultural pond. Increasing the firefighting capacity drastically in town. Discussed new committees that Chief is involved with. P. Christian-any questions for the chief? Yes-E. O'Hurley-one question-band that we purchased how long is battery length? Chief-40 mins but there is an electric backup on it. Next year purchase spare battery. Want to see how one works for now. Second question-T. Plakias-anything new or emerging in the town? Any new trends? Chief-Diversity and inclusion-always has a concern in that. Everything is on a hold status because of covid-affecting the financial ends. Chief stated that all committees that he is on, meetings and events all cancelled. No other questions.

P. Christian, congratulate chief with getting back on the boards and great work with the Zack Grant and how it was spent. Chief would like to thank Brian Gauthier in writing all the grants for the stations.

Deputy Chief's Report:

Dan Vindigni-no formal report-highlights of the summer. 1 and 4 and then 2 and 3 did all their drills and working on essentials skills. Working on a schedule for every other week. Training will continue for the balance of 2020. Hands on training-water supply with turbo drafts. Some drills that were done were mutual aid with East Granby, live burn drill in August at Brandley airport. More drills coming up stabilization drill on Sept 12 and 13. Training in Suffield on para tech, Oct 17th-11 members signed up already. Chief stated that they have been awarded the pilot program to work together and East Granby. We help each other out. We bring in our cadets to help them and our brush truck. Saving the town \$45,000.

East Granby is refurbishing one of their engines-they asked if they can borrow our spare engine while theirs is being worked on. Any opposition? None. Stated it was nice to have a spare.

V. Mathieu-how accessible can we get to use the spare if it is in East Granby, Chief stated no issue at all.

Vote to let East Granby use our spare engine #5: Motion made by P. Christian and seconded by E. O'Hurley. All in favor. 6-0.

Chairperson's Report:

Nothing

Executive Session needs to be removed from the agenda.

J. Caron asked why the committee is not receiving the agendas anymore. Chief stated that he sends everything out. Would like them ahead of time.

M. Van Cott stated she is happy to send out the agendas to anyone who wants a copy. She needs everyone's email addresses. When she posts to the town she will send out to everyone else.

Motion to adjourn by V. Mathieu; Seconded by J. Bucior. All in favor-6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Paul D. Christian
Fire Commission Chairman

Margaret G. Van Cott
Recording Secretary