

Board of Firewards

Town of New London – Draft Meetings Minutes

February 19, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 4:29 PM with the following members in attendance: John Ryan, Bill Degnan, Pete Lauridsen, Karen Hoglund and Steve Ensign by phone. Representative Janet Kidder, Fire Chief Jason Lyon and Clerk Gena Edmunds. Upon recommendation made, the Draft Minutes of the December 18th meeting were accepted as posted. Motion made by Pete Lauridsen and second by John Ryan.

General Updates regarding NLFD calls and mutual aid:

We have had a very busy month with five fires in one week in January. We assisted at a Grantham fire, where a burned patient was air lifted by DHART to the Boston burn center. In town, the Hannaford fire caused a significant disruption, which was cooking related but contained to the oven. There was a significant amount of smoke in the building and therefore, most of the food was deemed contaminated by the NH Department of Health. It took two weeks for the store to open. During that fire, we were requested to go to Sunapee for a building fire (5th Alarm). The NLFD was there until noon the next day. Our apparatus pumped for 17 hours. Because of the size of the building and the amount of fire, the Sunapee Water Department water was concerned about depleting the 250,000 gallon domestic water supply. The decision was made to draft out of the Georges Mills brook and an estimated 650,000 to 800,000 gallons used in total. As local resources were depleted, an engine task force responded from Nashua, Milford, Goffstown, Amherst, and Bedford to assist. It worked well and is set up through the FMO. The NLFD also responded to fires in Croydon and Wilmot, and this morning we responded in Sutton for a camper fire involving a burn victim.

The budget update:

The public hearing was held and the budget has been finalized. Materials are being put together for Town Meeting on March 13th. Selectboard Chair, Janet Kidder, talked about the process, which was similar to past years and the Selectmen's budget and the Budget Committee's budgets were the same so there wasn't a need for a reconciliation meeting. She felt the Chair of the Budget Committee, Chris Lorio, did very well with all participants. Election for town officials will take place on the Tuesday before town meeting and Janet is running again.

Although the Selectboard and the Planning Board are in favor of the safety of the occupants in short-term rentals, the Town Attorney had a concern about the language that is proposed and the enforcement. The NLFD will work with the Selectboard in the future to make sure the occupants are safe and the property owners are taken care of as well. There was a discussion about ADUs and clarification by Janet that they cannot be used as a short-term rentals. The town will have to stay vigilant about this.

Fire Apparatus update:

The new Engine 2 is in service, although this time of year makes the transition more difficult because of the winter weather. Everything was taken off the old engine (tools, equipment, and hose) and was transferred over to the new engine. Currently the old engine is being housed at the fire department. The auction company took photos and will be posted online this week. The new engine has responded to various incidents and accidents. It was also recently used during an ice rescue training with NH Fish and Game. The funds for the sale of the old engine will go into the general fund

The replacement the Utility was discussed. \$55,000 has been approved through the budget process, but this will cover just the cost of the vehicle. With recent updated quotes of the plow and utility body, the price for a new utility is now \$77,000. This includes transferring over the current lighting. This is very similar to what the NLPD spent for their command vehicle. An amendment from the floor of Town Meeting will be needed, and Pete Lauridsen volunteered to make a motion. This change will not increase the budget, but modify the request coming out of the CIP account for Fire Apparatus. The Chief will come up with the verbiage, will be prepared to talk about the supporting details. The Town Administrator and the Town Moderator, will be provided the draft prior to the meeting.

Fire Prevention:

Lake Sunapee Country Club's variance request is still being reviewed by the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO). Unfortunately, because of the timing of their submittal, the current Permit of Assembly expires at the end of the month. Captain Matthy has been in contact with the LSCC and explained a permit could not be issued until the outstanding variance is addressed and a written plan of action is submitted. The owner has reached out to Chief Fireward to find out his thoughts, who responded back, and hoped that the situation will be resolved when the variance is approved and a plan is in place. The Chief added that the catalyst for the variance was the lodging and rooming occupancy and the utilization of rooms upstairs for workforce housing. Once there is a plan in place and permit issued, Former NH State Fire Marshal Bill Degnan suggested having a contract in place for the work to be completed, and

explained that this is common practice for the FMO. He explained that having a time frame of the work to be completed is essential.

Next Meeting: April 1st at 4:30 PM

Meeting adjourned 5:20 Pm. Motion made by Karen Hoglund and seconded by John Ryan.