

Board of Firewards – Town of New London
Meeting Minutes – May 2, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 4:31pm with the following board members in attendance: Pete Lauridsen, Doug Lyon, John Ryan, Karen Hogle, and Steve Ensign. Also in attendance were Fire Chief Jason Lyon and Selectboard member Nancy Rollins, Clerk Kyla Pillsbury. Upon recommendation by Steve Ensign, and no objection from the Board, the minutes of the March 7th meeting were approved as posted.

Agenda items:

- General Reviews and Updates-
 - Year to date NLFD is at 243 calls. That is 10 calls behind last year at this point in the year-quite consistent given there weren't a lot of weather events in Q1.
 - There was a garage fire recently in Andover. NLFD was initially requested for station coverage, but we were relocated to the scene after another apparatus had a mechanical issue on scene.
 - There was building fire in Rowell Hill in Sutton recently that started after an electrical issue. The source of the fire, was determined to be rodent damage to the wiring which was believed to be temporarily repaired by Eversource, but when the power came back on the fire was ignited in an exterior outlet. All companies involved, made a great stop on this and considering what could have been, there was moderate damage.
 - Current Forest Fire Conditions-The Kearsarge Fire tower has been manned already this year given the conditions-anytime it is a class 3 or higher fire danger day it is staffed by the Division of Forest and Lands. The early departure of snow and lack of rain has caused for some very significant conditions. Last months department training was on forestry training and it was astounding how rapidly the fire spread, but good training!
 - NH grant for PPE and Radios-there were some funds available through the governor's office. The Selectboard approved the NLFD moving forward with an application for this for the fire and police department. NLFD's portion of this grant will be about \$35,000 to purchase some personal protective equipment and communications equipment. These items are related to COVID needs so that we ensure that our safety remains a top priority. The police department is looking to allocate their portion of the grant towards a sign board with radar built in.
 - Hospital Days are happening this year and will be back to normal activities.
 - Barn Playhouse parking issues-Chief Lyon will be looking into parking areas with other department heads this week to determine what the best measures will be to take to ensure safer parking locations for barn attendees. There are discussions about having the ability to park at Spring Ledge and/or perhaps on the school grounds. There is a Public Hearing at the next Selectboard meeting and there is a request to have a member of the Playhouse present to discuss their parking plans at that.
 - General Department wellness-overall the department is doing well. There are some new applicants. There has been a scattering of individuals who have contracted COVID

throughout this epidemic. At this point there has been no interruption to continuity of operations.

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- Current/Future Budget Issue(s):
 - Lease/Purchasing of new Engine 2 (E-one Fire Apparatus)-625 days out! E-One is the manufacturer that was chosen, but there was an inability to trade our current engine as the market is flooded with used apparatus. There is an auction company that the DPW uses and they have had great success with getting equitable returns on equipment. This is a lease to own option and it is a 5 year plan. The truck will likely be a 2024 piece of apparatus.
- North Conway Hotel Fire Situation:
 - There were no sprinklers in the section where the fire was initially burning. There was also an issue with the fire alarm system. Our 'local' vulnerabilities were discussed. Buildings like Bittersweet is one of the buildings that was a concern to Chief Lyon, however this building has been sprinklered. The common areas have a fire alarm system, but there are other individual smoke detectors within the apartments. Scytheville Shop-has a fire alarm system, but no sprinklers. The New London Inn is sprinklered. Room and Lodging accommodations as well as anywhere that people are sleeping are the biggest concerns. Majority of our buildings within New London are sprinklered. Inspector Matthy is going through and looking through all of these types of systems and buildings within the town to ensure that we are doing what we can to ensure that we are acknowledging any issues that exist in town and advising resolution to them.
- General Discussion Items:
 - Car 1 discussion ensued-It was determined that there is mileage that is reimbursable for anyone that is not using a department vehicle through the town for trainings, but having the alternate department vehicle allows for more prompt response for some calls. At this time it seems to make sense for it to be retained for department use. The ask was that over the next 90 days Chief Lyon track what it is used for, how useful it is, and what we would have paid for reimbursement to membership if we did not have it.
 - Fireward's Duties and Responsibilities-this document discusses that there are 5 Firewards. Some of the town boards have alternate members. Steve is in favor of introducing up to (2) alternate members as a way to integrate them and perhaps align them to become a permanent Board Member as current members cease their membership. This could be a good method to acclimating them to Board. The concern would be to develop a history of the Board and to understand the operations. These alternates would be encouraged to attend all meetings, but would not be voting members. It could be a good method as it has worked well with other Town Departments. Selectboard Member Rollins asked about membership having experience or involvement in the fire service as a prerequisite. It was noted that there seems to be a balance at this point, but lay people/people without experience are certainly welcome as well.
 - General Code of Conduct Standards-there should be a code of conduct for meetings and how they are run. The initial question was should this be a separate document to

review running an effective meeting, code of conduct, etc. or should this be within the duties and responsibilities document. The preference of the Board was to include it all within one document.

- Fireworks Ordinance-In the past there has been an issue with a cannon that was shot off and that was something that then evolved into a fireworks discussion. There is a lot of discussion about enforcement. How does one get a permit? Who provides the permits? When are permits needed? How structured is the ordinance? Class C fireworks can be purchased by essentially anyone and they can be set off at anytime for any reason in much of NH. There was further discussion on if there was a state statute to enable enforcement of whatever regulation is created. There will be a Public Hearing on this.
- Selectmen Considerations:
 - These are items that were sent from Kim Hallquist so that the Board could review and provide feedback for their May 12th meeting.
 - **The Selectboard should only have a member on the Budget committee and Planning Board.**
 - The Board enjoys having a Selectboard member in attendance and feels that this has had a positive impact of the Board. This is especially important when the time comes for change-over of the Board members and if those people do not have as significant of town knowledge as current members, the Selectboard member carries even greater value.
 - **Budget Committee Members are not to be on any other committees.**
 - The Board does not have a strong feeling on this, but feels that it might be beneficial in some situations.
 - **Dissolve Building Committee and Solid Waste Committee as currently constituted and consider smaller service advisor panels.**
 - There is minimal impact to the Board of Firewards with this proposal.
 - **Create Separate CIP Committee**
 - There is minimal impact to the Board of Firewards with this proposal.

Other Business:

- An executive or non-public session (RSA 91-A:3) was not held tonight.

Next meeting:

- The next meeting of the Board will be Monday, June 6 at 4:30pm.
- The meeting was adjourned at 5:52pm

Minutes Recorded By Kyla Pillsbury, Clerk.