

# Tilton-Northfield Fire Department

## Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting called by:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	January 11, 2005 at 18:06 to 19:45
Note taker:	Janine Vary	Place:	Center Street Station

Attendees: Comm. Tom Gallant, Comm. Andy Sleeper, Comm. Harold Harbour, Chief Steve Carrier, Deputy Ron Huckins, and Clerk Janine Vary. Absent: Treasurer Roland Seymour and Deputy Mike Robinson

6:06 Tom Gallant called meeting to order.

Review of the minutes. Motioned to accept minutes as printed. Andy seconded. Discussion: Tom asked Chief about doing something for Chief Gray. Would like a letter drafted to Chief Gray and get that to him at least. Chief Carrier: they will have a party for him when he returns. Tom would like at least a letter to him at this time. No other discussion, all commissioners accepted minutes as printed. Minutes of executive session of 12/2/4. Tom motioned to accept minutes as printed. Seconded by Andy. Discussion: bear in mind that these minutes of the executive session are under seal and remain under seal until commissioners so choose. This is to correct our process of executive sessions. Mark it under seal and be locked up. Janine indicated that this is the process. Vote taken. All commissioners approved the minutes of executive session.

Review of treasurer's report. These are the final numbers according to Roland. These will be the numbers we will be using for the annual report. Tom motioned to accept the treasurer's report as presented as the final numbers. Harold seconded. The printout the commissioners have been handed out as of 1/11/05 will be numbers used on annual report.

Old business: building committee. Chief: will meet on 1/19/05 at 5:00. Tom asked to be kept notified of meetings to be held. Janine will email him.

Bunk room/shower. Chief: slow progress but moving ahead in remodeling. Tom: asked about time frame. Chief: electrician will be in to finish up soon. Chief feels it should be done within 2 weeks and we have a projected start date of 2/7/05. Tom: where we stand as far as fire prevention captain position. Chief: job announcements for both positions were faxed out through dispatch center and state fire academy. Chief hasn't put in papers yet. Chief handed out copies of the position postings. There was discussion about how many applicants so far for the positions. There has been a good number of applicant inquiries for the FF/EMT position. Chief sees this as an entry level position. Harold: we won't be stealing anyone from other fire depts. because benefits and pay aren't there. Tom: those things are negotiable. If you have someone as you see as an asset to the dept and benefits are a serious concern of theirs, see if something can be worked out. Chief felt that there wasn't a lot of room to stretch the numbers. We haven't received any applications for the fire prevention captain yet but have received a couple of serious inquiries. Posting says position will only begin in April. The Fire Prevention Captain pay at \$36,000 - it was agreed a shift person could earn more than that. The preferred candidate's qualifications are high. Harold: if someone is out of college and looking for a job, this isn't bad. There was more discussion about the qualifications for this position. There is definitely a need for good experience and organizational skills.

List of equipment to be purchased line #704 that Chief supplied to commissioners for their review. He will update with costs next to each item.

Budget. Tom: Would like to compare budget to budget. The 2005 proposed budget is \$1,217,000. For 2004 it was \$1,097,466. This shows an increase of \$120,170.00. Chief: in salary and wages. \$15,000 increase from 1 additional person. Benefits cat: \$13,000 inc. due to 16.9% increase in cost. Tom wants to compare budget to budget vs actual to budget. They look at diff bet budget and actual, and then they will want to compare budget to budget when you ask to raise and appropriate. This way we need to show them why we are increasing what we are increasing. Under account categories there are 7 categories and this is where the difference of \$120,170 lies. There was more discussion as to the numbers. Retirement went up \$8,000 due to increase in cost. Professional services went up \$5,000 now we have moved the ambulance billing line into that account. Property services moved some lines into that. \$1200 for oil, etc. we will have to move the numbers in 2004 so that the numbers are comparable. "Vehicles" is down \$25,000 because A2 was paid off. Janine will check into paperwork to see what buyout amount is. Increasing truck fund by \$12,000. Capital outlay is up by \$60,000. Half of increase is attributable to capital items. The other \$60,000 would be primarily around going 24 x 7, additional person, benefits and increases in costs for insurance and benefits for current employees. This way 10% increase comes more palatable. \$100,000 will go into a trust fund for capital improvement fund to be held by the trustee. Tom would like to see the budget numbers together, put the actual before the budget so that the budget can be compared to budget.

Tom did some research last week. Contacted Don Borra re: what controls us as a village district. We have to have an annual public meeting between Jan 1 and May 1, that is the only thing that controls the date. If anything other than that is agreed to, then we have the right to change that. March 8, 2005 is voting day. Tom suggests to meet that night for our annual meeting. Towns will meet the next Saturday and the following Saturday the school district will have their meeting. Andy asked why? Tom: so we can be ahead of everybody else. OK with Andy. OK with Harold.

Tom would also like to start earlier. Meeting to start at 7:00pm. Andy asked about the clerk of the records. They wouldn't be able to make that meeting. Tom asked about the 9<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday. Janine will check with the Supervisors of the Check List to see their preference.

On February 1 post notice of public hearing. Advertise in papers, 3 papers.

Tuesday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> have the public hearing, same night as our monthly meeting. We could convene our meeting at 6:00. advertise the public hearing at 7:00PM at Center Street.

End of Jan send reports to both towns. Copies to Don Borra by 1/28/05.

Post Feb. 18 post warrant articles and budget in 3 prominent places.

Mutually decided that we would not be approaching the towns to have our voting for commissioners on their voting.

Tom asked commissioners about sending out a newsletter. Do we want to do one? Announcing everything the dept is doing, why we are doing it. Why we're not approaching for a building, what the progress of the building committee has been. We're following their lead from last year and asking to put money in a capital fund. Another article that relates to our going 24 x 7 why and we have no choice but to do that. When all pieces are together, get a newsletter out there so that the public knows. Feels we need to meet with the select people of both towns. Harold says to do it before we go 24 x 7, this way we can get their "blessing". It is a courtesy to them as operators of the two towns to know we are moving to the 24 x 7. Tom just wants to be sure that we are going with everything firmly in place. He's not sure we can do that now. Janine could see if they are meeting that first week of February and see if the select persons would put us on their agenda. Andy said OK. Janine asked Tom about sending minutes to towns. Tom agreed as long as they have been approved by the Commissioners. Should attach a note from Chief stating that we will be sending them after approved.

Tom: Review of proposed Warrant Articles. Article 11. This is the same article that appeared before the town of Belmont that establishes an apparatus and equipment replacement fund. What goes into that account is the net revenues from ambulance billing. So that would be \$180,000 minus the \$12,000 fees to collect. What he is proposing is that this will appear in future years budgets and not this year's budget. This gets the article on the floor for discussion. If the people approve the article, then it would take effect for 2006. Andy: way it is worded, we have a truck fund that we have appropriated money to buy a vehicle. Andy: Are we asking them to take \$135,000 out to buy an ambulance? Tom: We will take the money collected from ambulance service and put in a fund with the money from the truck fund. This fund will be funded by ambulance billings and we will never be going to them to ask for money to be put into a truck fund. Tom: yes, if we put article 11 in place, then under revenues, the \$180,000 would not appear in our budget again. The last line that says capital outlay (pgs 3 and 4, acct 740) that line would not be in the budget either. Monies for leases would not be in there because coming out of this new fund. Amt \$50,000 out of truck fund would not appear either. Rescue equipment would also come out of that fund. Trucks, or equipment that is on the trucks when you first buy it or anything of a capital nature that lasts 5 years or more. Expense side would be down by \$110,000. So \$58,000 in taxes would be raised. It will cost the taxpayer more money when you first start. Andy: but this \$180,000 is revenue that the dept. has brought in and put back into the general fund. Every penny that comes in, but it can go back out just like the monies out to the trust funds. Tom: it will raise the amount to be raised and appropriated by \$58,000. Andy: what happens if we exceed the \$180,000? Then that goes into the surplus fund.

\$190,000 in truck fund. If you added another \$180,000 to it, now you have \$370,000 to buy another vehicle. What this allows you to do is set a cap on what we can spend on buying another ambulance. But if you had an apparatus fund, you wouldn't have to worry about overspending. We would have to go to the taxpayers to get permission to spend money out of that account. Rather than the taxpayer paying for the trucks, they will come from insurance companies and other people. All commissioners agreed it was a good idea. Ron and Chief agreed. Tom and Chief will put together a PowerPoint presentation that would show how the passage of this article would impact them down the road. If presented properly and spread out over a couple of years, they can see their savings. This way the equipment/vehicles that are needed here can be purchased. We would be asking them to see if this is an appropriate item to purchase with that money. Tom has checked this wording with Don Borra and has been tested with Belmont and has passed the test. Tom asked commissioners if they agreed with the budget numbers once corrected. Both commissioners agreed.

Shower on Park Street. We have preliminarily decided to put on a cut down addition to that building. If we want to do it, we will have money.

Chief: asked about LGC's workers comp bill, they are looking for payment of \$18,673.30 in one lump sum. Tom said he would not want to pay off at one payment. He would prefer Chief call and set up a payment plan.

**New business**

Andy wanted to discuss the article on Echo. He felt there were a lot of errors made. Some of the older ladies were not really happy. Misstatements were made, there are many inaccuracies made. Andy said he had heard from many of the original auxiliary that stated they were very upset by the article. All commissioners agreed. Janine asked if there was any way to correct the situation, she also felt the tone and content were not correctly stated. Discussion was held and maybe something could be mentioned that just as the department is changing so is the auxiliary closing a big loss and change due to changing times.

Andy asked for bills to be paid. Bills paid.

Harold motioned to adjourn. Andy seconded. Meeting adjourned at 19:51.

**Next Meeting Date, Time,  
Place:**

**February 8, 2005 at 18:00 at Center Street Station**