

TNFD Commission Meeting

Minutes

April 12th, 2005

Meeting called to order by Commissioner Gallant. Present: Comm. Gallant, Comm. Sleeper, Comm. Harbour, Chief Carrier, and Deputy Chief Robinson.

Comm. Sleeper motioned to nominate Comm. Gallant as chair of the board for the upcoming year. Comm. Harbour seconded. The nomination passed unanimously. Comm. Sleeper motioned to close nominations, seconded by Comm. Harbour. The vote to close was unanimous. A voice vote was taken and Comm. Gallant was elected to the chair, unanimously.

Comm. Gallant made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 8, 2005 meeting. Comm. Sleeper seconded, and the minutes were accepted unanimously.

Comm. Gallant reported that there will be no Treasurer's report tonight, as the Treasurer is absent due to a prior commitment. Comm. Gallant, will, however, ask the Treasurer to prepare a report as it would have been normally submitted tonight and forward it to the Commissioners, Chief, and Deputies. The report will also be made part of the minutes.

Old Business

A discussion of the 2005 District Meeting was entered. Chief Carrier raised concern over the attempted dissolution of the Fire District as was motioned by a citizen. There was discussion about the possible impact on the District and the communities. The Chief will research the issue in detail and meet with both Towns to determine the realities should this article be raised and passed in the future. Once the research is completed, it would be beneficial to have any person who believes this is a viable issue to attend a Commission meeting to offer their viewpoints on the issue. Presently, the Commission and department administration sees no benefit to this proposal.

Deputy Robinson asked if the issue regarding representation from both communities on the Commission had been put to rest. Comm. Gallant stated that the body, that night, had made it clear that there will be fair representation from each community on the board and the Moderator accepted that and will uphold the body's wish in the future.

Chief Carrier stated that he was disappointed that he was unable to deliver his presentation to the body at the meeting. He felt that it is important to take advantage of our time in front of the voters and use it as an opportunity to educate them as much as possible about what it is we do and what we need to accomplish it. The Commissioners agreed. Next year we will be sure to open the Meeting with the presentation.

Chief Carrier reported that the Building Committee has not met since the last Commission meeting. The Chief and Katherine Dawson are planning to meet with the Tilton Police Department's building committee at their next meeting. Comm. Gallant reported that he has spoken with Katherine in reference to the potential use of the Center Street municipal parking lot for a site for a public safety building. He felt that the joint meeting with the TPD is important. The Chief stated that the possibility of having a sub-station in the proposed East Tilton

Village is very appealing. The Commissioners agreed, but that station would be considered a "sub-station" and would not eliminate the need for administrative offices, storage space, etc.

Chief Carrier reported that the department is ready to order a new ambulance from Specialty Vehicles from North Attleboro, MA. The vehicle will be virtually identical to our present 21A2, which is housed in the Center Street Station. Chief Carrier mentioned that Deputy Robinson suggested that the new ambulance be painted to match the color scheme on our fire apparatus - red with a white top. The Commissioners approved this paint scheme and authorized the chief to enter into an agreement to purchase the new ambulance.

Chief Carrier also spoke about the current forestry truck which is out of service. He does not believe it will be put back into service due to on-going problems with brakes and exhaust. Currently the equipment on the forestry will be transferred to the pick up truck which will run in its place. We are in the process of having a "skid unit" designed for the pick up. The unit will include water, a pump, hose trays, and tool storage. The unit will be modular so that it can be put in the truck in the spring and taken out in the fall. The present forestry truck will be sold. The Commissioners gave the chief the authority to advertise for bids for the vehicle.

Chief Carrier spoke to the board about the "older" inflatable boat (21B2) which has recently been repaired. It has come to our attention that the Belmont Fire Department does not have a reliable and/or adequate boat for water rescue purposes. Lt Harris has suggested that we loan the boat to the BFD with the understanding that it be available to us if we were to need it in the future. Comm. Gallant asked if we, in fact, need to retain ownership of the boat - wouldn't we be able to call for it through normal mutual aid agreements? The Chief stated that we would be able to call for it and discussions he has had with Chief Seigel have confirmed the same. The Commissioners authorized the Chief to sell the boat to the Belmont Fire Department for \$1. This will eliminate any future liabilities or costs to run and/or repair this boat. We will still run and operate 21B1 as our primary water rescue boat.

Chief Carrier reported that the sewer project is underway at the Northfield DPW and we were asked if we would like Kenny Partridge to do our work at the same time. The Chief told the Town that we would like to and the work should commence some time at the end of this week.

Chief Carrier asked about the disposition of the proposed sick leave policy that he presented a number of months ago. To date there has been no decision made on this issue. Comm. Gallant suggested that the Chief present his proposal again next month and a decision will be made then.

New Business

Chief Carrier reported that Brad Ober had been hired as the new Fire Prevention Captain. He will start on May 2nd. Comm. Gallant suggested that Brad be present at the next Commission meeting in order to meet the board. The Chief will take care of the invitation.

Chief Carrier also reported that EMT Kim Watson has resigned due to personal reasons and that George Prescott has retired due to personal reasons. Both will be missed. Comm. Gallant asked that each receive a letter of thanks for their service to the department. Chief Carrier will handle.

Chief Carrier reported that the department was unsuccessful in its bid for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant in 2004, when it requested a tanker. The request has been refined and the monetary amount dropped to \$210,000 in hopes of receiving a grant in 2005. Some discussion followed.

Chief Carrier indicated that he is actively looking into the possibility of the Fire District enacting Fire Prevention Ordinances. He believes that the District should adopt ordinances that stipulate which codes and standards are to be followed, which permits are required, and establish a rate structure for permits and services. These ordinances would be based on State law and other municipalities' ordinances would serve as a template. Chief Carrier has already received an opinion from the State and that opinion states that they believe the District is capable of enacting the ordinances by simply posting them for 30 days as authorized in RSA 154 and RSA 52. The chief will contact lawyers through the Local Government Center to assure that this process is legal.

Chief Carrier reported that the hardware has been installed and a dedicated phone line is in place to allow Lakes Region Communication Center to receive our box alarms. The system is not complete at this time, but they are receiving their alarms. This will reduce response times by assuring that the dispatch center receives alarms even when the station is empty. It will allow us to remove our existing dialer alarm and drop our annual monitoring fees. Businesses that currently are protected with a master box will also be able to eliminate the redundancy in their monitoring and use only the master box system. The Chief discussed the possibility of implementing a fee for system maintenance and monitoring. Comm. Sleeper asked if this was something that other departments do and the Chief indicated it was. Laconia has a fee schedule. Comm. Harbour indicated that Franklin did as well. The Chief will continue to monitor the completion of the project along with Lt. Ames, and report back as necessary.

Chief Carrier reported that Wayne Robichaud is upgrading the electrical service on the Center Street Station and work is progressing well.

Chief Carrier reported that he is to be elected President of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs on Thursday night. He is looking forward to the opportunity but realizes that there will be more demands on his time. He asked for the Commissioner's support. All of the Commissioners congratulated the chief and gave him their full support. The term is for 1 year.

Other Business

Comm. Gallant asked Chief Carrier to speak to the data that he supplied to the Commissioner in reference to incident and response time data for the year-to-date. The Chief indicated that the call volume is up and we are projecting a 10% increase in total call volume for 2005. Comm. Gallant also pointed out that response times have done exactly what was predicted and are significantly lower since full-time, 24-hour coverage has been implemented. He suggested that these statistics be displayed for the membership to digest. He asked about the number of back-to-back, or simultaneous incidents. Although the Chief could not provide him with hard numbers, he said those numbers are being tracked electronically and will be available. He will speak with Lt Hall and have those numbers for the next meeting. Comm. Gallant also asked for a break down of how many calls are actually being handled by 2 people, with no other response. The Chief will provide a hard copy with these figures each month. Deputy Chief

Robinson indicated that the calls he responds to on nights and weekends seem to be going very well - the interaction between the call and full-time staff is positive and call members are responding.

Chief Carrier also reported that he was surprised that Lt Harris and/or Lt Ames weren't at the meeting, because it was his understanding that the Betterment Fund was going to transfer ownership of the new Polaris 6-wheeler to the District tonight. The Chief reported that the recent fundraiser was extremely successful resulting in the Fund purchasing the ATV. He also reported that plans are underway to train all operators of the vehicle and full safety precautions will be taken when the vehicle is in operation.

Non-Public Session

Comm. Gallant made a motion to go into non-public session as authorized by RSA 91-A:3 II. a + c. The motion was seconded by Comm. Harbour. A roll call vote was taken: Gallant - Yea, Sleeper - Yea, Harbour - Yea. The Commission, the Chief, and Deputy Chief entered the session at 1925 hrs.

Comm. Gallant made a motion to come out of non-public session. It was seconded by Comm. Harbour. A roll call vote was taken: Gallant - Yea, Sleeper - Yea, Harbour - Yea. The Commission, Chief, and Deputy Chief came out of non-public session at 1938 hrs. No decisions were made.

Comm. Sleeper made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Comm. Harbour. The vote to adjourn was unanimous at 1940 hrs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chief Stephen M. Carrier

For Clerk Janine Vary