



Town of Weare Board of Firewards

Weare Safety Complex
144 North Stark Highway
Weare, NH 03281
(603) 529-2352
Website: www.weare.nh.gov

Board of Firewards

Jon Osborne, Chairman
Frederick Hippler, Vice Chair
Dave Hewey, Sr., Member
Scott Dinsmore, Member
Tim Maskiell, Non-Member
Steve Roberts, Non-Member
Robert Vezina, Fire Chief

WEARE BOARD OF FIRE WARDS FINAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 7, 2014

PRESENT: Jon Osborne, Chairman, Frederick Hippler, Vice Chair, Tim Maskiell, Non-Member, Dave Hewey, Sr., Member, Robert Vezina, Fire Chief, Steve Roberts, Non-Member and Wendy Stevens, Recording Secretary

I: CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Osborne opened the meeting at the Safety Complex at 6:36 pm.

II: PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

III: OTHER BUSINESS:

The December, January and February minutes were reviewed. Mr. Maskiell made a motion to approve December minutes. Mr. Hewey seconded. The minutes were approved 4-0-2. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Maskiell abstained. The January minutes were reviewed. Chairman Osborne made a motion to approve the January minutes. Mr. Hewey seconded to motion. The vote was unanimous. Chairman Osborne made a motion to approve the February minutes, the minutes were approved 4-0-2. Mr. Roberts and Vice Chairman Hippler abstained.

IV. PAY SCALE DISCUSSION

Chairman Osborne opened a discussion regarding the pay for Chief Vezina. Chief Vezina stated that Sue used the wrong code to calculate the time. He furthered that there are times when he has had to fill in, which is not very often. He does charge it at his rate, and not what we would pay that skilled person for that job. Mr. Hewey stated that is how it should be. Chairman Osborne understood that someone had complained to the town, and as a result, Chief Vezina, Naomi Bolton and Tina Connor had already discussed the matter and it was remedied. They did reach an agreement in terms of what the rate should be. Chairman Osborne stated he had talked with Selectman Lawton and clarified that the Chief has to answer for anything that happens on that watch. Vice Chairman Hippler said he thought it was illegal to revert pay to a lesser amount like that, and Chairman Osborne agreed. Chief Vezina clarified that it is only illegal when in a per diem situation. Chief Vezina added that the only time he works is when they can't find anyone else. This usually occurs when all of the staff is away at their other full time jobs. Mr. Roberts added that he is still doing the Chief's duty while he is covering another staff member's position. Mr. Hewey added when somebody is having a heart attack, you need two EMTs in the back, and a driver, and the Chief would certainly be expected to go on a call if needed. The board agreed.

Chairman Osborne stated under the way the state worked it up, is that the Board of Firewards sets pay rates, and they are the final decision makers in the process. Chairman Osborne reviewed the Chief's hours as well as the time that is spent doing inspections. RSA 154:1 was reviewed. Mr. Roberts referred to the Town Report which described how the Board of Firewards should operate. He believes it is the Board of Fireward's responsibility to manage their budget once it is approved.

Chief Vezina said his original 25 hours per week salary rate agreement is recorded in the March 24, 2011 minutes and it states that anything over and above his 25 hours per week salary, he would receive additional hourly pay. It states in those minutes, that anything over and above would be paid additionally. Chief Vezina clarified that he has not charged for town meetings or board of selectman meetings, that he sees that as going with his salaried position. Mr. Maskiell asked about extra duty pay, and stated the minutes state: "If he goes

on a call during Chief's hours, he will not be paid additionally." Chief Vezina stated he never goes over 32 hours per week, and he does pay a lot of attention to that. Chief Vezina said he does not want anybody to misconstrue that fact.

Mr. Roberts asked how does our pay for our administrative head/department head compared to the other department heads? The police chief, road agent, code enforcement officer's salaries were reviewed. Chief Vezina clarified that the fire department receives no benefits, health insurance, retirement benefits, etc. He ended that the rate he is paid is substantially less than what other heads are receiving. Chairman Osborne added that the town is really getting a bargain for a town of 10,000 people. Chairman Osborne asked how many per diem and other staff they have, and Chief Vezina answered close to 40 with about half of that being active. Mr. Roberts says we are getting a deal by having a good department head who crams in a lot of work in 32 hours in a week. Chairman Osborne stated we have never had any serious problems with the Chief, and he feels the Chief has brought the department up. Mr. Roberts added he has pointed the department in the right direction. He has seen the Chief out on the floor, doing training, etc., and he has done a good job working with volunteers and handling calls. Chief Vezina said they were very busy in January and February, and when you look at the number of calls for March, they are more than they were last March. Chief Vezina stated that this argument is about callback being compensable. He doesn't see covering an ambulance for a shift is anything different than that. Chairman Osborne said it has to be covered. Chairman Osborne said after town meeting, the Board of Selectmen indicated we are supposed to develop an employment contract and written agreement. Mr. Hewey stated we had a contract when we hired him. Mr. Roberts said we did a Job Description. He added we have to look at it and make sure we are paying him a fair wage compared to the other department heads. The Board of Firewards will be going to the Selectman's meeting next week to discuss.

V. ENGINE DISCUSSION

Chief Vezina wanted to begin a discussion about the trucks that are not being used. Engine 1, Engine 4, and the ladder truck are not used often. Chairman Osborne recalled one of them only having added 52 miles in a year. Mr. Maskiell said there is nobody over there to run it. Mr. Hewey said you have to have that sized truck in the different areas of town in case they are needed. Chief Vezina clarified that calls to those areas have not utilized those trucks. He added that it is not breaking the bank to have it sit there, and Engine 4 is probably the most valuable out of the bunch. He discussed trading them. Mr. Hippler recalled only receiving \$5,500 for engine five a few years ago. Chief Vezina added we don't have enough drivers. Mr. Roberts discussed keeping one truck in east Weare, and also you'll have a spare in case one needs service. Chief Vezina said Engine 1 is easier to drive. Chairman Osborne said he would rather see Engine 1 going to a brush fire, with all wheel drive, as opposed to Engine 5. Mr. Hewey said he could see getting rid of Engine 4. Mr. Maskiell said they fought hard for that engine. Mr. Roberts stated that Goffstown received a truck on grant, and one of their grant stipulations was that the trucks would be made available to other towns, and that really helped out when they were short staffed. Chief Vezina said the time has come to look at their vehicle schedule, what to do with Engine 2, as the whole outlook on rescue has changed. He doesn't see us purchasing or needing to replace anything, with the exception of an engine ten years from now. Mr. Roberts suggested looking at response times from the different stations, looking at a fleet schedule, as well as station placement. Mr. Hippler discussed the engine in east Weare being useful for forest fires as it contains a lot of forestry equipment. Mr. Hippler discussed bundling them and trading them in. Mr. Roberts added that we need to look at current performance, response times, station locations and see what the future needs will be.

Chief Vezina added the budget this year is tight, the fuel line is getting used up. The price of propane has gone way up. Several emergency calls were discussed including snowmobile fires, a truck fire, a cardiac arrest call, and several other calls in terms of expenses relating to the budget.

Mr. Roberts made a motion to cast the ballot with the present slate: Jon Osborne, Chairman, Frederick Hippler, Vice Chair, Dave Hewey, Sr., Member, Scott Dinsmore, Member, Tim Maskiell, Non-Member, Steve Roberts, Non-Member, Robert Vezina, Fire Chief. Mr. Maskiell seconded. All were in favor.

VI: ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Roberts moved to adjourn at 7:35 pm; Mr. Hewey seconded, all voted in favor.

A true record.

Wendy Stevens,
Recording Secretary