

DRAFT



WEARE BOARD OF FIRE WARDS  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 18, 2023

**PRESENT:** STEVE ROBERTS- CHAIRMAN, WAYNE MEATTEY- VICE CHAIR, DAVID HEWEY SR.-MEMBER, KILLIAN DONNEL - NON-MEMBER, LEAH CUSHMAN- NON-MEMBER, CHRISTOPHER OLSEN-INTERIM FIRE CHIEF, MARK ROARICK-ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF.

**ABSENT:** LOUISA ERF- MEMBER, NAOMI BOLTON- TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Chairman Roberts called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Old Business-Apparatus:** Interim Fire Chief Olsen said he called Hillsborough Ford about Ambulance One and it is still being worked on. The brand-new turbo they had put into ambulance one had failed. They called the Ford Engineer and he said they would need a new turbo because the new one is bad. Interim Chief Olsen said that he will be calling Hillsborough Ford again tomorrow with Assistant Chief Roarick to check on the status. Utility One is still waiting for the body to be installed. They did receive specs on the body. It was around \$24,800 to \$25,000 to install it and it does not count the upfit of the body. Killian Donnelly clarified that the \$25,000 was just to put the box on. Chair Steve Roberts said when they voted for that, the radio installation and lights were supposed to be included. Chair Roberts asked if they have enough money for that. Assistant Chief Roarick said he does not have an answer for that right now. They are currently working on another vendor for a quote on that. They also need to still get a price for the striping on it as well. Interim Chief Olsen said he believes what would be the best course of action is to allow him to reach out to different people to find out what is going on and where things were left if the Board was okay with it. Leah Cushman asked what the policy was for trying to get quotes, are they supposed to get three vendors? Interim Chief Olsen said this is an emergency repair, not a procurement so they do not have to do that if they are an approved vendor and qualified. Interim Chief Olsen said he will get a definite answer for Leah once he checks with the town.

**Old Business- Fire Station:** Interim Chief Olsen said that they are still working on the issue with the bunk rooms. He has a couple of people looking at it right now to give cost estimates of the building and to see if it is feasible. They are looking at possibly three rooms instead of two. Interim Chief Olsen said the SCBA replacement is ongoing. Corey did reach out to him with an email and is working with the training office and will be able to get some and there is another town offloading their 2007's. Interim Chief Olsen said he would like to bring this back next month when he has a quote. He did reach out to IPS which is another company that does the same and has some on the shelf and will give a quote.

**Old Business-Activities:**

**Fitness Program:** Interim Chief Olsen said the fitness program is ongoing they would like to have a program for three months. You will have to work out for three consecutive months and each person that works out for the three months for at least twelve hours would receive a fitness day which would be a day off. It is really to keep the firefighters in shape. He would like to start it next month if the Board would approve it. Cushman asked what the name of the program was called. Interim Chief Olsen said it is the

International Association of Fire Fighters and the I Choose program. It is a peer-to-peer fitness program. It also helps with CPAT which is the agility test that the Fire Fighters must take. Cushman asked how it would work. Interim Chief Olsen said they will be allowed to work out on duty or off duty but the lieutenant or officer would have to sign their fitness sheet and on the fitness sheet would they would need to put what time they started their workout and end the workout. They will do at least twelve hours in one month but they must also have three consecutive months of working out twelve hours each month. Donnelly asked if it would need to be approved through the Board of Selectmen. Interim Chief Olsen said it would be a memorandum and then he would only have to bring it up to the Board of Fire Wards. They would have the option to take off one ten- or fourteen-hour day and then can honor it with a fitness day. Vice Chair Wayne Meattey asked if they can be accumulated and rolled over each year. Interim Chief Olsen said no it would be use it within the year or lose it situation. Vice Chair Meattey asked if they wanted could they take four days off at the end of the year. Interim Chief Olsen said no it should not be consecutive. He will write the policy to say it is at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Chair Roberts said that's roughly 48 hours a year for each Fire Fighter. Interim Chief Olsen said that is correct. Cushman asked how are they doing with the issue of paying overtime and if there is a good pool to be able to pull from to cover the time off. Interim Chief Olsen said that there is a good group to pull from. Cushman stated that if they were to have one of the full-time Fire Fighters cover the shift then they would be paying overtime. Interim Chief Olsen said yes and that it should go to the full-time Fire Fighters first then go to the on-call Fire Fighters or per diem if they are qualified.

**Training Fire & EMS schedule:** Interim Chief Olsen said the fire training and EMS are going well. DART is coming in and it will be a good training. They will need fifty people to sign up and they have reached out to Capital Area to see if there would be any Fire Departments interested. They will be landing it at the middle school. They had a cardiac arrest drill for EMS and it has been working out.

**Officer's Meeting:** On July 12<sup>th</sup> they had an officer's meeting. They spoke about Captain Roarick becoming the Assistant Chief. Lieutenant Meattey has been assigned to the maintenance of Apparatus/Vehicles and Fire Equipment, and FF/ EMT N. Shatney has been assigned to Training Coordinator. The Lieutenant process is in place and has been completed. They talked about the restructuring of the full-time and call department and presented the officers with the organizational chart. They spoke about the SCBA issues along with the Fire and EMS Training and the directions they would like to go with. Inspections have been completed at 181 Center Street- Foster Care, 22 Boulder Road- Solid Fuel, 13 Perkins Pond Road- Occupancy/ Residential sprinkler system, 425&600 S. Stark HWY- Annual inspections. They went over the apparatus status. They would like to get a clean-up day at the south station and look at all the stations to see what maintenance needs to be done. Interim Chief Olsen said that the officers they have are extremely dedicated and he is excited about that.

**Venture Post:** Interim Chief Olsen said they needed to connect with the scouting community for interest and there has been some interest. He has connected with two so far and no scout masters yet. He will reach out to Daniel Webster Council to see how they can get the program up and running.

**New Business:** Interim Chief Olsen said that they have restructured the Department by putting a Lieutenant on and moving the Captain to Assistant Chief. Some are not happy about the decisions made. Interim Chief Olsen letters to the Board in regards to the officers' reclassifications and thanking them for their years of service. The following letters were read for Assistant Fire Chief Robert Richards, Captain David Hewey, Captain Scott Dinsmore, Captain Frederick Hippler, and Amanda Charest. Interim Chief Olsen said that he is truly humbled by their services and will be thanking them personally for everything they have done. Cushman asked why it was necessary to strip people of their titles and now will not get a say at officers' meetings. She is concerned that they are pushing out their call force. Interim Chief Olsen said when restructuring a Fire Department, you need to start looking at personnel. You need to see what type of credentials they have and what they have done in the past. There are standards and guidelines they need to do to be able to move the department forward, growing pains must happen. Interim Chief Olsen said he

only retired two were not operationally involved. They still have a right to come into the department and voice their concerns if they are still attending calls. There was some confusion in the ranking and he could not have that, and took care of that by restructuring the rankings. Cushman asked where Interim Chief Olsen sees the call force regarding what is required for certifications. Interim Chief Olsen said the way he looks at it is that everyone is equal. If they do not have the training then he cannot allow them to be in the next position up from what they are currently until they have met the requirements. Cushman asked if Interim Chief Olsen wanted to see all the call force be Fire Fighters. Interim Chief Olsen said yes that would be nice. Cushman said the more certifications they have the more they would have to pay them, she would like to know if it would give the best value to the taxpayers. Interim Chief Olsen said absolutely. There are only two paramedics in a town of almost ten thousand people. There should be at least two on every shift for that amount of people. Donnelly said that Weare is a reactive town at times rather than proactive and this is getting the department to become more proactive. Interim Chief Olsen also read a thank you letter from an individual who suffered a heat stroke during the dirt bike races. The letter was addressed to Kristina Houde, Wayne Meatty, Noah Brent, and Amanda Charest. Interim Chief Olsen said it shows how hard our department works. Interim Chief Olsen thanked all the members who supported the parade and there were no incidences during the fireworks. Two Fire Fighters are going to the Fire Fighter Two program in August. Nathan Shatney, William Lemay, and Brent have been accepted into the advanced EMT program and will begin in August and finish in November. Andy Wheeler has been accepted into the Fire Fighter One program. Caroline Abbot is in Fire Fighter One and Two training. Cushman asked what the difference was between Fire Fighter One and Two. Interim Chief Olsen said that Fire Fighter One gets you into the basics of firefighting and gets you knowledgeable in how to get into the ensemble safely. Fire Fighter Two focuses on rope rescue, Hazmat, and Motor Vehicle extrication and goes more in-depth with fire behavior.

Interim Chief Olsen gave an update on the Ford Chassis has come in, they had ordered a Dodge and they said they did not have that. He said that they could have waited for the Dodge to come in but it had taken too long so they went with the Ford. Interim Chief Olsen said they are back in service from the marine unit to the rescue service. Interim Chief Olsen compressor at the South Station has been serviced and the air quality is in the mail. Firetech and IPS are working on securing the self-contained breathing apparatus. Interim Chief Olsen said they had forty medical aids in June, seven motor vehicle crashes with injuries and one without injuries. One outside fire call. Three hazardous condition calls including the gasoline pump at the Irving spraying everywhere. One automatic fire alarm. One mutual aid structure fire call in Dunbarton. Three public assist calls and five emergency standbys. Four investigations and four other fires were potential fires. Cushman asked what would fall under investigations. Interim Chief Olsen said if there is smoke in an area, bomb scares, fireworks, etc. Interim Chief Olsen said that it seems like there are some discrepancies with the gas station inspections so he is going to be looking into them. Interim Chief Olsen said the fuel usage for the Fire Department was \$1,321.94 for June. Chair Roberts asked if this was only the Highway Department pumps. Interim Chief Olsen said yes, they have only used the State pumps a couple of times.

**Budget:** Interim Chief Olsen said from January to June they have about \$126,477.39 and could have more for collections there are some write-offs. The current write-offs are in the tune of \$3,160 so that is something to think about. The summary Fire Department budget is at 50.22%. Interim Chief Olsen will be looking into it to make sure they do not go over budget. Interim Chief Olsen and Assistant Chief Roarick have been looking at the telephones because it is expensive. Interim Chief Olsen said either they relieve some of the telephone lines or they switch to carriers. Donnelly asked how many lines there were. Assistant Chief Roarick said maybe 7 or 8, he would need to speak with Town Administrator Bolton to see if it is feasible to switch carriers. Interim Chief Olsen asked what the ISO rating was. Donnelly said they talked about it a while ago and it should be in the Town. Chair Roberts said next month they need their CIP proposal for September. Interim Chief Olsen asked for an extra meeting a month to discuss the CIP and the budget if they need to. Chair Robert said if they need to and the Board agrees. The work for the Fire Station could be over \$15,000 which would need to go through the CIP process. Vice Chair Meatty motioned to

approve the Fire Department accounts payable manifest for checks dated July 20, 2023, for \$11,627.75. Donnelly seconded. Motion passes 5-0-0.

**Emergency Operations Plan:** Interim Chief Olsen asked if the Board would like him to update the Emergency Operations Plan. **Chair Roberts made a motion to allow Interim Chief Olsen to update the Emergency Operations Plan. Seconded by Donnelly. The vote passes 5-0-0.**

**Other Business:** Cushman asked if they are still using the expensive sanitizing machines. Interim Chief Olsen said yes. Meattley said he still uses it in the ambulance and the station. Cushman asked if other Town departments get to use it. Assistant Chief Roarick said yes it has been brought to the Town offices to be used. Donnelly asked Interim Chief Olsen if he believes they need a full-time Chief. Interim Chief Olsen said when you have a full-time staff you need a full-time Chief. In his strategic Plan, he will outline that. Donnelly is only asking because they would need to ask for a full-time Chief at Town meeting in March. Does anyone have a game plan for that? Assistant Chief Roarick said it would be a process for him to become a full-time Chief due to NH Retirement System. He would rather stay a working Chief rather than go full-time chief. Donnelly asked Chief Olsen and Chief Roarick to come up with different options for the town. Interim Chief Olsen said yes that would not be a problem.

**Motion to adjourn made by Hewey. Seconded by Donnelly. Motion passes 5-0-0.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A True Record.

*Kearsten O'Brien*

Kearsten O'Brien, Minute Taker