



WEARE BOARD OF FIRE WARDS
MEETING MINUTES
November 21, 2023

PRESENT: STEVE ROBERTS- CHAIRMAN, WAYNE MEATTEY- VICE CHAIR, DAVID HEWEY SR.-MEMBER, LOUISA ERF- MEMBER, KILLIAN DONNELLY - NON-MEMBER, MARK ROARICK-ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF, LEAH CUSHMAN- NON-MEMBER.

Town Administrator: Naomi Bolton

Chair Steve Roberts called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Old Business: Chief Roarick went through the Fire Department happenings that happened through the last month, regarding training, personnel, apparatus, and the fire station.

New Business Personnel: Chief Roarick said members have finished up their training at the Fire Academy. Lt. Wayne Meattey finished Firefighter Two. Caroline Abbot finished recruit school, attaining her Firefighter one and two along with her hazardous materials operations, and taking ground survival class. She also passed the CPAT test. Abbott has taken the vacancy that was open due to a member being on deployment. She will be starting with LT. Meattey on the 26th of this month. She will be going through the driver-operator program. Three members will be finishing the EMT A class in mid-December. Lt. Charest is finishing up cardiology in her paramedic class and will be starting her clinical time soon. (348 hours). Call member Andy Wheeler will be finishing FF1 soon and plans on taking the CPAT in the spring. Chief Roarick said he is working on getting new members for the call department.

New Business Apparatus: The last of the on-spot tire chains are being installed. Chief Roarick thanked LT. Meattey and DPW Director Fiske for getting that done. The bill for A-1 was processed in the amount of \$6735.55 and was projected to be \$6800. Chief Roarick said he expects to hear from Donovan Equipment soon on the body it will be fitted with radios, a light package, and lettering. The ambulance chassis was on track for February 2024 but now is likely to be later due to the strike at Ford. Chief Roarick said he is still working on quotes for the new engine. Four vendors are working on the design and price. E-1 is being stripped at the South Station. The engine will be winterized and placed up at DPW until spring action to trade in on a new engine. The boat and trailer will be relocated to Sugar Hill Station three for winter.

New Business Fire Stations: Chief Roarick said the BOS gave him the okay to move forward with Armstrong for the duct cleaning of the safety complex. This work is slated for January 24 and 25. They will be out to update their survey before that. This was grant-funded. The 10 new SCBA bottles arrived and will be put in service ASAP. The total check for the items sent to the White Farm auction was \$634.50 and was sent to the Town. EOP is off to mapping and planning solutions for an update. Chief Roarick said that they used to belong to Souhegan Mutal Aid Company and the City of Nashua would come to Weare if there was a hazardous materials incident that happened in town and cost \$1,500. Now that the Town of

Weare is part of the Capital Area they have a hazardous response team and no longer need the contract with the Souhegan Mutual Aid. Chief Roarick said there is a part of Souhegan Mutual Aid that they should keep is the training and mutual aid for \$55 a year, the foam bank for \$25 a year, and swift water response for \$75.

Budget: Chief Roarick went through the Fire Department budget. The bottom three lines of the budget should not be used until the third week of December. There is 12.98% remaining of the budget.

Summary of Vehicles: The ambulance bill did not get into the report. The cost of vehicles will probably be in the \$20,000 range. Chair Roberts asked about the current mileage of the fire trucks. Chief Roarick went over the mileage of the ambulances. Chair Roberts asked when the next projected purchase of an ambulance would be. Chief Roarick said the next projected purchase through the CIP is to be approved in 2027 and the process of putting one on hold.

Proposed Budget 2024: Chief Roarick went through the proposed budget for 2024. Chief Roarick said that a lot of the lines have gone up due to the rising cost of things and there are multiple areas where he is trying to put huge purchases in such as portable radios rather than waiting and putting them into the CIP. The overall budget is up \$55,940 which is 4.6% over the default budget. Cushman asked if the line for professional development was for the trainings that have been taken recently. Chief Roarick said that is for the Fire Chief classes that he would need to take as the Chief. Cushman asked about the cistern repair and the increase. Chief Roarick said there are 30 cisterns in town and there is yearly maintenance they need to do on them. The line was cut last year. Cushman asked if Chief Roarick thought that he would need \$52,000 in the call force and if there would be some relief in the overtime budget. Chief Roarick said that he is unsure of how much he will use in the call force line because he is trying to have more on-call fire fighters. He does not anticipate having too much overtime because everyone is getting up to date with training this year. Cushman asked about the software line. Chief Roarick went through the software that the Fire Department uses and how it works.

Chair Roberts motioned to approve the 2024 proposed Fire Department Budget. Seconded by Donnelly. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Other Business: Chief Roarick talked to the board about the standing operating procedure and guidelines. The purpose of this is to establish an education incentive for education directly related to the employee's nature and scope of duties as permitted by the Fire Chief. This is in line with the PD, and this would be a way to attract more fire fighters. Chair Roberts asked if this was a Town-wide policy. Chief Roarick said he was not sure; he could get more information and bring it back to the board.

Chair Roberts motioned to table the discussion until the next meeting. Seconded by Cushman. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Chief Roarick said that they had an individual who went off on military leave and there were issues with the approved policy. Chief Roarick explained how the policy worked and fixed how the policy was written. The board suggested changes to the policy. Chief Roarick will make the changes and bring it back to the Board.

Wage Scale: Chief Roarick went through the proposed wage scale. The current rate for an EMT is \$20.39 and for an EMT basic it is \$18.48. There are now seven steps. He said currently for an EMT basic is \$24 an hour. The new wage scale is presented in the middle of the hiring range. Donnel said it was a good idea and it is being proactive and asked how it would impact the budget. Chief Roarick said that he is not sure if it would go into his current budget or if it would need to go before the voters and be approved. Chief Roarick said the default budget for personnel is \$938,048 and if the wage study proposal passed it would bring the default budget to \$1,015,715 which would be a \$77,667 difference. The tax impact would be

\$0.04 per thousand. This information was provided by the Finance Director. BOS Chair Hippler said that they did do a warrant article a couple of years ago to bring the DPW Wages up a dollar an hour. Hippler said he agrees with Chief Roarick, and the wages need to come up and thinks it would be a better route to bring it before the voters.

Donnelly motioned to accept the new pay scale as presented. Seconded by Hewey.

Cushman said she has not had a chance to review the wages and make sure they are appropriate increases and that is why she will not be voting yes to move forward.

Motion passed 5-1-1. Opposed by Cushman. Abstention from Meattley.

Hippler suggested that the BOFW should speak with the BOS to make the transition in March smoother and understand what policies are in place currently created by the BOFW.

Chief Roarick read a CPR Save and Code Save letter from 7/7/23 and the letter into the files of the officers who saved the individual.

Minutes: Donnelly motioned to approve the September 19th, 2023 minutes as written. Seconded by Hewey. Motion passed 6-0-1. Abstention from Roberts.

Donnelly motioned to approve the October 17th minutes as written. Seconded by Hewey. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Manifest: Erf motioned to accept the Fire Department accounts payable for a check dated November 22, 2023, in the amount of \$13,530.01. Seconded by Donnel. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Chair Roberts motioned to end the public meeting and enter into a nonpublic meeting at 7:56 p.m. to RSA 91: A-3 II (a & c). Vice Chair Meattley seconded. Roll call vote: Roberts-yes; Hewey-yes; Cushman-yes; Meattley-yes; Donnelly-yes; Erf-yes; Roarick-yes. Passed in favor. 7-0-0

Donnelly motioned to come out of nonpublic at 8:30 PM. Seconded by Cushman. Roll call vote: Roberts-yes; Hewey-yes; Cushman-yes; Meattley-yes; Donnelly-yes; Erf-yes; Roarick-yes. Passed in favor. 7-0-0

The BOFW met with BOS Chair Hippler to discuss the hourly wage of acting Chief Roarick as well as establishing or purchasing a timekeeping system which has been touched upon at a regular meeting.

Donnelly motioned to set acting Chief Roarick's wage at \$48 per hour until December 31, 2023. Chair Roberts seconded. Roll Call vote Hewey- Yes, Roberts- Yes, Donnelly- Yes, Cushman- No, Meattley- No, Erf – No, Roarick- Abstained. Vote 3-3-1 motion fails.

Erf moved to ratify the vote taken via email dated September 20th, 2023. Seconded by Donnelly. Motion passed 5-0-2 (Cushman, Roarick).

Motion to adjourn made by Donnelly at 8:57 p.m. Seconded by Hewey. Motion passes 7-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Kearsten O'Brien

Kearsten O'Brien, Minute Taker