

Town of Suffield



Board of Fire Commissioners Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting for the Fire Commission

May 14, 2024

Commissioner Christian called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Attendance: E. O’Hurley; P. Christian; P. Yeskey; V. Mathieu; and N. Prusi.

J. Bucior was absent.

Others in attendance: Chief Scott Cunningham; Selectwoman Kathy Harrington, M. Van Cott, and 2 new firefighters: Karim Pike and Jakob Burnham as well as 1 other firefighter.

Pledge of Allegiance

Silent roll call by M. Van Cott

P. Yeskey made a motion correct the agenda:

1. Date of the minutes from last meeting should read “April 9, 2024” and not “April 8, 2024”
2. Under “Old Business” remove the two lines that read “Election-Following the bi-annual Town Election, at its Regular December Meeting, a Chair and Secretary shall be elected. Terms of office shall be effective immediately.”
3. Move “Introduction of new volunteer members” after “correspondence”.

Chairman Christian seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

Secretary's Report

No report

Minutes & Correspondences:

V. Mathieu made the motion to accept the April 9, 2024, minutes, with the changes listed above. E. O’Hurley seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

Chairman Christian requested that moving forward the minutes indicate “Chief” Scott Cunningham and “Selectwoman” Kathy Harrington. Noted by M. Van Cott.

Financials:

Chief Cunningham reported that there is one and half months to go in the fiscal year and the budget is looking to come under or right at budget. Exact budget is \$42,501.08 as of May 14, 2024.

V. Mathieu motioned to accept the financials as reported. P. Yeskey seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

Correspondences:

Nothing.

Introduction of new volunteer members:

Chief Cunningham brought two new volunteers to the meeting for introductions: Karim Pike and Jakob Burnham. The Fire Commission Board approved the two new volunteers.

Calls and Activities:

25 calls for the month of April. Nothing major to report out. Two incidents where we requested mutual aid from East Granby on 4/3/24 and mutual aid from Southwick on 4/27/24.

N. Prusi suggested Chief Cunningham list all calls not just calls that the entire company is called to. Would like to see a more detailed and complete list of calls in Suffield.

E. O’Hurley asked Chief Cunningham about mutual aid with Agawam and how things are going. The Chief stated that things are just fine, and we are there for Agawam and Agawam is there for us as needed.

Public Comment:

None

Old Business:

Update on Supplemental First Responder -The Chief is missing two pieces before he can send the application into the state. He needs a letter of support from the First Selectman and a letter of support from the police chief. The first selectman requested that the chief accomplish a few goals before the letter gets written. The goals have been accomplished and the chief is meeting with the selectman on May 15, 2024. Hopefully the chief will receive both letters soon and can get the application into the state.

Update on Fire Commission Rules and Regulations- revisions made and discussed. M. Van Cott to finalize the document, email to all commissioners on May 15, 2024, and by the June meeting, all changes will be made, and the document will be voted on and approved.

Update on Insurance Coverage for Firefighters-P. Yeskey asked Selectwoman Kathy Harrington for an update on the declarations page. Selectwoman Harrington stated an email was sent on January 5, 2023, from the First Selectman to Chairman Christian stating that all volunteers were covered by the town’s insurance policy and the town’s limits. In addition, there is a statute that states that the volunteers are covered for more than enough.

New Business:

Update on the training session with the dispatchers-The chief stated that he spent over two hours with the dispatchers from Suffield doing training. Great session but still has concerns and would like to have all calls go through Tolland Dispatch. The chief and a few of the fire board members will go back to the Board of Finance and present again. EMS chief does not want to use Tolland and neither does Police chief. It would just be Fire Department that would use Tolland Dispatch at a cost of \$25k.

Chairman Christian stated that the fire chief needs to be involved in all future hiring of dispatchers in Suffield. It is important that all dispatchers are familiar with police, EMS and fire calls.

Chief's Report:

Fire Apparatus:

- Fleet is complete. Nothing to report.

Fire Stations:

- Nothing to report.

Equipment:

- Nothing to report.

Personnel:

- As of May 20, 2024, Ashley Caron will be the new career firefighter working the 7am to 3pm shift. She will be under the guidance of Captain Vincent. There will be a swearing-in and pin ceremony. More details to come.

Chief Cunningham shared details of a presentation at Suffield Middle School on May 29, 2024 from 7pm to 9pm.

Chief Cunningham brought up the tax abatement for the volunteers and how he would like to make some changes to the policy. This will be discussed further in executive session.

Applications:

- New Recruit States-nothing
- Change in member's status-nothing
- Training-nothing

Incidents-Commander's Report:

Discussed the two incidents which required mutual aid. Details were listed above on the two incidents of April 19th and April 27th.

Chairperson's Report:

No report

Adjournment:

P. Yeskey made a motion to move into executive session at 8:11pm. V. Mathieu seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

N. Prusi made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:27pm. P. Yeskey seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

V. Mathieu made a motion to go back into executive session for personal issues at 8:28. P. Yeskey seconded the motion. All in favor., 5-0.

V. Mathieu made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:30. E. O'Hurley seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Vic Mathieu
Fire Commission Secretary

Margaret G. Van Cott
Recording Secretary