

## Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

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| Meeting Called By: | Commissioners | Date, Time: | 12/19/2016 at 5:30 PM   |
| Transcribed By:    | Kathy Tobine  | Place:      | Tilton Town Hall, Upstairs Meeting Room,<br>257 Main Street, Tilton |

Commissioner Auger called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

Present: Commissioners Paul Auger, Paul Blaisdell and Dennis Manning; Chief Michael W. Sitar, Jr., Deputy Chief Michael Robinson, Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine and District Clerk Stephanie Giovannucci

Public Present: Sean Valovanie, David Hall, Amy Hall, Zachary Mellett, Megan Mellett, Nick Baker, Charlotte Weisberg, Tim Ames, Tim Joubert, David DeVoy, Steve Ober, Chief Paul Dexter, Steve Cobb, Evelyn Auger, Roger Grey,

### Swearing In Ceremony

District Clerk Stephanie Giovannucci swore in new firefighters Nicholas Baker, Daniel Leathers and Zachary Mellett.

### Sanbornton Regionalization Committee

Committee Members: Chairman David DeVoy, Steven Cobb, Chief Paul Dexter, Roger Grey, Evelyn Auger

David DeVoy explained the Committee has been meeting since August. The Board of Selectmen appointed them to look into regionalization for the Town of Sanbornton. They have met with New Hampton, Franklin and Belmont. They will be meeting with Meredith on the 27<sup>th</sup>. They wanted to find out if there was any interest in Sanbornton possibly joining the Fire District. This is just an informal dialog right now. They are open to all ideas.

Commissioner Blaisdell asked why Sanbornton wanted to do this. David DeVoy explained that this discussion started in March at Town Meeting when the Fire Chief wanted to hire two full time people. Before that happens, some in the community thought they should look at regionalization to see if they could share resources, equipment and personnel. As the Committee met, they decided they don't want to lose their level of service; they would like to keep it the same or make it better but is it financially beneficial for the Town of Sanbornton to do that. They met with Franklin and they are very open to continuing the dialog.

David DeVoy spoke about coordination of resources before new equipment is purchased. Another issue is finding qualified people to be firefighters and EMTs. In most communities the majority of calls are EMT related. Commissioner Manning commented he is interested in regionalization. He talked about the restructurization that the Fire District just went through. He questioned Tilton-Northfield going in Sanbornton being a benefit to anybody. He believes it would be costly for all. His vision is doing something closer to a county level.

Discussion ensued on how to accomplish regionalization. The political leaders have to buy into this. One of the first steps would be to manage resources allocated for equipment. The Regionalization Committee can make recommendations to the Sanbornton Selectmen but the Selectmen are the ones that make the final decision.

Paul Blaisdell asked the Committee if they had an outline to accomplish this. Dave DeVoy Sanbornton's largest problem is they are big. They cover 50+ square miles and abut multiple different communities. They cover during the days by two per diem staff from their call company. The challenge is the limited hours per diems can work. The State says they cannot work more than 29 hours per

week on average or they are considered a full time firefighter. Chief Dexter explained how their coverage works. Commissioner Blaisdell asked if what he is visioning is using our full time staff to be the primary responder and then using your per diem or call staff as back up. Chief Dexter commented it is not his belief they can do that. He believes it would be cheaper to hire two full time employees and cover 12 hours. Currently 80% of their call volume is from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. At 7:00 PM. Their call company covers the nights. They sign up. They are budgeted for two part time employees for eight hours per day. This does not include a benefits package.

Discussion ensued. Deputy Robinson commented on Winnisquam Fire Department. He is all for regionalization. Look into it but you may not like the results. Once you regionalize, you have a boss. There's going to be a cost for it. Sometimes you lose control. Somebody is going to be making that decision for you and handling you a bill.

Chief Sitar commented that all the fire chiefs are talking about it. Everybody has that local control issue. When you talk about equipment, you are talking about consolidation. Personnel costs are probably not going to go down, they will stay the same or go up.

Dennis Manning wanted to know what Sanbornton's primary intent. If we go to regionalization, this commission will dissolve. The equipment would be secondary to personnel needs. Dave DeVoy commented they want the best bargain. If Sanbornton wants to combine with Tilton-Northfield, what would that take. He spoke on how Belknap County works. Commissioner Blaisdell commented that we are split between two counties. Discussion ensued about Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid.

Commissioner Blaisdell summarized that there is anxiety on the cost of converting to a full time department on the part of Sanbornton residents. They want to try to optimize their value and if they cross that threshold to full time department they can't step back.

Chief Sitar explained that if Sanbornton wants to join our Fire District it would take a vote of the Sanbornton Selectmen and the member of the Fire District. The Board of Commissioners would be reorganized so they would be equally represented. Discussion ensued.

Chief Dexter commented that the Sanbornton Board of Selectmen asked them to have a conversation to see if down the road they can talk about consolidation or paid for services. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Blaisdell commented he is fully for combining. It's unfortunate for such a small town with a large area, that Sanbornton is the point of this. You have a hard sell because of the size of the area you cover. It has to be the type of situation where Sanbornton receives a benefit and Tilton-Northfield receives a benefit. You need to determine what the townspeople are willing to pay for. Once that is determined, we can move forward.

Commissioner Manning is for regionalization to alleviate the equipment redundancy. Then you could move your manpower around so we have qualified people going where they need to go. For us, it will cost the District a little more as we already have a full time fire department. The towns it is going to hurt are towns like Sanbornton where you don't have anything in place. It is going to cost a lot for Sanbornton to regionalize. Discussion ensued about the possible cost.

Deputy Robinson commented on what the full time service has accomplished for Tilton-Northfield. Discussion continued about different options. The role Lakes Region Mutual Aid plays was discussed.

Sanbornton current staffing and full time staffing requirements were discussed.

Chief Dexter explained they are an exploratory committee. They have no ability to negotiate with any other community. They were put together to see if any other communities were interested and to get an idea of the cost. To look at the problems they are confronted with now at their staffing levels. They are at the pinnacle where they need to make it consistent for everybody. That is the challenge.

Further discussion ensued. Deputy Robinson commented that if we were to do a portion of Sanbornton we would have to add staff to do that. That staffing level would be a minimum of two people. Our two people costs are more than what you asked for. If this Board agreed to do it, we have to take it to the people.

Swearing In Ceremony

District Clerk Stephanie Giovannucci swore in newly promoted Lieutenant Jonathan Powell.

Public Comment

Deputy Robinson thanked the Department for their support during his recent loss. It was very much appreciated.

Correspondence

Cheryl Somma: Underground Storage Tank Closure Report. Chief Sitar gave report on the status of UST. The tank has been removed.

Tilton & Northfield Aqueduct: Chief Sitar commented there is a letter in their packet from Tilton-Northfield Water District regarding AutoServ. They are requesting TNFD release them from the liability for adequate water flow. The District will not provide them a letter accepting any liability. Discussion ensued.

Bert Southwick Farm Trust: Kathy explained we have received a \$50,000 disbursement from the Farm Trust. It came with stipulations. We are to put the money in a trust fund named specifically as stated in the bequest. Then we can spend the interest earned on that money every year as desired. Commissioner Manning made a motion to place the \$50,000 in a Trust Fund as stipulated in the bequest. Commissioner Blaisdell asked who our trustees are. Kathy explained that the Town of Northfield Trustees of the Trust Funds are the ones that handle our trust funds. Commissioner Blaisdell seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Chief's Report

Chief Sitar presented the Fire Prevention Report with the Chief's report.

1. Budget

- We are currently at 96.7% of calendar year and total operating expenses are at 89.2%.
- Overtime is at 102.8%.
- Professional Services is at 137.5%. This was due to the FCC Radio License.
- Custodial Supplies is at 121%.
- Line 660 is a concern at this time at 171.4%; but overall, all other expenses are still within or below projections at this time.

2. Account Balances included in the packet are through today.

3. Fire Prevention Report for November 2016

- For the Month of November, there were 51 Fire Prevention inspections in which 33.8 man hours were used.
- Fire Prevention training at the Union Sanborn and Southwick schools.
- Annual school inspections.
- December is CO Awareness Month.

4. Run Report for November 2016

- Report is included in the handout.
- For the Month of November, there were 146 incidents.
- 108 of the incidents were EMS in nature and that equates to 74% of our total incident volume for the month.

5. Overlapping/simultaneous incidents for November 2016

- a. Report is included in the handout.

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- b. We had 29 overlapping/simultaneous incidents for the month of which 5 were third calls.
  - c. Overlapping/simultaneous incidents accounted for 19.9% of all incidents for the month.
  - d. We received 6 mutual aid ambulance responses.
- 6. TNFD Firefighters Association collected donations Black Friday weekend for the Children's Auction and was able to donate \$2,500 towards that cause.
  - 7. Results of Customer Satisfaction Survey are in packet. Discussion ensued.
  - 8. Currently Working On:
    - a. Call Company recruitment.
    - b. 2017 budget.
    - c. Adjusting Fire Station Space Needs Program for the Facilities Committee.

Old Business

Engine 1 Refurb

Chief Sitar obtained an inspection from Lakes Region Fire Equipment. If the value of the truck is \$50,000 and we put \$100,000 work into it, it is still only worth \$50,000 due to its age. The frame and truck as a whole might last two to four years. If you do all the repairs, you might get eight years out of it. Discussion ensued about the repairs.

Commissioner Blaisdell asked about the Capital Improvement Plan. Chief Sitar commented he can email a copy to them for their review before meeting on it. Discussion ensued about the CIP and replacing equipment.

The refurbishment of Engine 1 was discussed. After extensive discussion, the Board agreed to revisit this at their meeting Wednesday.

Facilities Committee

Chief Sitar reported he was charged to work with the architect for a design and site plan. The building is 14,000 square feet and is two stories with sleeping quarters on the second floor. They will need an elevator. Discussion ensued.

Intermunicipality Agreement with Franklin

Chief Sitar reported that the agreement is still being reviewed by Franklin's attorneys.

New Business

Personnel Policy Updates

Chief Sitar requested the Board review this next month. It is basically making changes in the policy to match our working hours.

Encumbered Funds

Chief Sitar requested the Board encumber the funds for the new ambulance and dry hydrants. We won't be receiving these bills until next year as they are not completed. Commissioner Blaisdell made a motion to encumber funds that were appropriated this year for the new ambulance at \$227,136 and dry hydrants at \$12,000. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Minutes

November 9, 2016

Commissioner Blaisdell made a motion to accept the minutes of November 9<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Manning seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

November 16, 2016

Commissioner Blaisdell requested Data Construction be corrected on page 2 to read Data Destruction. Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept the corrected minutes of November 16<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner

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Blaisdell seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Manifest

The manifests of November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed and signed.

Other Business

The notice to employees regarding the change in their health insurance contribution was signed.

The January meeting was discussed. It was decided the next meeting will be January 18<sup>th</sup>.

Warrant articles were discussed.

The public hearing dates were discussed. It was decided either February 13<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> will work best.

Adjournment

Commissioner Auger made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 PM. Commissioner Blaisdell seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Tobine  
Administrative Assistant

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: 11/16/16 at 5:30 PM. Meeting to be held at Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room, 257 Main Street, Tilton.