

Town of New Boston

Board of Fire Wards

December 12, 2022

Fire Wards in attendance at this meeting were Wayne Blassberg, Dick Moody, Brian Dubreuil, Joe Segien, Brandon Merron and Chief Plourde. Derek Danis attended the meeting by phone.

Also In attendance were NBFD Operations Chief Frank Fraitzl and NBFD Interim Assistant Administrator Laurel Flax.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.

There were no Public Comments or Appointments.

Old Business:

Item 1. Discussion and approval of Public and Non-Public minutes from the 11/28/22 meeting. Brandon Merron made a motion to accept the Public and Non-Public minutes from the 11/28/22 meeting. The motion was seconded by Dick Moody. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Item 2. Membership Gift

- Frank Fraitzl showed a picture of the proposed gift.
- Chief Plourde asked all Fire Wards to authorize Frank Fraitzl to get the gifts ordered.
- All Fire Wards agreed to have Frank Fraitzl proceed with ordering the gifts. 60 Units are needed for members and dispatch.
- Joe Segien would like to have a dinner for the Fire Wards on Monday night and Frank Fraitzl will try to get the gifts delivered in time for the dinner so that they can be wrapped for the members that night.

Item 3. Budget, Warrant Articles and Finance Committee Meeting

- Chief Plourde indicated that the Finance Committee had not been very clear in their expectations.
 - The Fire Department presented the proposed decrease of 20% in Per Diem payroll for next year and that seemed to satisfy the committee.
 - There were originally 8-Warrant Articles and as a sign of good faith, the \$50,000 Capital Reserve Fund for Equipment Warrant Article was pulled out. (This Warrant Article will be put in next year).
 - Frank Fraitzl added that the Town Contingency Fund will help if our actual Per Diem payroll is higher than the budget after the 20% decrease.
- Derek Danis reported that our overall budget was OK with most of the Finance Committee. There was one member of the Finance Committee who was against the Town Budget and said that the Fire Department did not do a good enough job with our budget. He used this as a reason not to accept the Town budget, but he would not explain where he felt the Fire Department budget was not acceptable.
 - Joe Segien added that he had tried to address this person's concerns.
- Derek Danis added that the School Budget meeting is this Thursday.
 - The Finance Committee did not get to our other Warrant Articles as the meeting went late.

- Currently it appears we have a 5 to 1 Vote in favor of our budget from the Finance Committee to the Select Board and the Select Board supports us.
- We will need to be prepared for the deliberative session.
- Chief Plourde agreed that we will need all supporting arguments and documents for the deliberative session.
- Brandon Merron suggested that we find Townspeople to speak in favor of the warrants at the deliberative session. Derek Danis had several suggestions for people.
- Chief Plourde indicated that the Finance Director has picked certain warrant article to cover with the contingency fund, such that they will have \$0 tax impact.
- Derek Danis stated that the Fire Department Operating budget for 2023 is \$888,984 which corresponds to a tax impact of \$ 0.96 per thousand. This is an increase of \$0.66 per thousand over the current budget.
- Derek Danis added that the Town has to keep 7% of the overage of their unexpended balance. Approximately \$ 800,000 can be used to take care of some Warrants for the Town.
- Frank Fraitzl spoke with the Finance Director and since we opted not to use \$100,000 out of the Contingency Fund, we could get \$50,000 to possibly as much as \$150,000 from the unexpended balance.
- Brian Dubreuil added that the Total Warrant Articles for the town add up to \$ 8.9 Million.
- Frank Fraitzl presented the cost difference between Per Diem employees to cover shifts and Full Time 24/7 coverage to the Finance Director.
 - Full Time Employees would incur costs for payroll/retirement/overtime/continuing education/gear and physicals.
 - Assuming 4-Firefighter 2/Paramedic and 4-Firefighter 2/AEMT positions the cost would be \$900,000 to \$ 1 Million just for labor.
 - Per Diem coverage cost is estimated at \$350,000.
- Chief Plourde emphasized that the next task to be done is notes and preparation for the deliberative session which is on Monday February 6, 2023.
 - Brian Dubreuil added that we need to cater to the general public at this meeting.
 - Frank Fraitzl suggested that we speak with the Moderator and do a presentation about our budget.

Item 4. Staff Vehicles

- Chief Plourde indicated that we are waiting to hear if something is available.
 - The Hooksett vehicle will not be ready until March.
 - Waiting to hear if we can get a pickup. They are “in transit”
 - Based on the condition of Car 1, Frank Fraitzl will get the newer vehicle and Chief Plourde will get the Hooksett car.

Item 5. Per Diem Program and Second Administrator

- Brian Dubreuil reported that the Per Diem program is going well. There are multiple applications coming in and Frank Fraitzl has more. The ad with the new pay scale was put out last Monday.
- Brandon Merron added that Rebecca Shatney will definitely be taking some Per Diem shifts with us. She is still a member of the association and Brian Dubreuil will add her to the Active Roster after she contacts him.
- Frank Fraitzl interviewed an applicant today who is a Paramedic working in Washington, NH.

- Frank Fraitzl also reported that Erik Dubowik told him that some Bedford people were also interested in Per Diem shifts.
- Frank Fraitzl added that we need to look at what shifts we need to fill.
- Chief Plourde reported that Erik Dubowik will pick up an extra day and be paid out of the 2nd Administrator funding in the budget. He will perform some administrative duties and provide an extra day of coverage.
- Chief Plourde stated that we are trying to fill all funded positions, and that the Town should be more aware of the current difficulties of hiring personnel.

Item 6. Nan's House Apartment

- Brian Dubreuil reported that Nan's House Apartment is up and running. An interviewee was impressed with the apartment.
 - Chief Plourde added that the apartment is better than a lot of the housing provided for Firefighters in other towns.
- Frank Fraitzl stated that he is working on cable and internet for the apartment.

Item 7. Tech Team and TwinBridge

- Chief Plourde reported that the Town has decided to consolidate all IT with Twin Bridge.
 - Our Tech Team may phase out over time. This is currently somewhat fluid.
 - Frank Fraitzl added that all IT will be coming out of the Town budget, not ours.
 - IT requests to Twin Bridge may take a little time, but so far, they have done all that has been asked.

Item 8. Defib Grant

- Brian Dubreuil is working on fulfilling the grant.
 - Captain Catalano is done with recommendations and pricing.
 - Brian Dubreuil reported that FEMA GO would not take the password that was set up and he needs to get in to get the grant money.
 - SAM.gov has to be up to date and it expired in November.
 - The Finance Director reactivated it. Need to check if it is active.
 - Frank Fraitzl added that we need to check whether Captain Catalano ordered the devices and if so, they need to be put on hold until FEMA GO can be accessed.

Item 9. Fire Station

- Brandon Merron reported that the cost numbers for the New Fire Station are expected on December 30, 2022.

Round Table

Joe Segien reported that we will be getting a request to flood the Ice Skating Rink soon.

- Last year they used approximately 18,000 gallons over the winter.
- This is expensive if we fill from our cisterns and refill with purchased water.
- Suggest to use a Tanker Shuttle and draft from the river.
- Brian Dubreuil added that he had said we would fill it and it would look bad for us not to do it.
- Brandon Merron suggested detouring traffic and drafting directly from the river. This would require a paid police detail, but the Recreation Department would have to pay for it.
- Frank Fraitzl will work on this Wednesday.
- Brandon Merron stated that he would help with a Tanker Shuttle.

Brandon Merron discussed the VFA Grant.

- Grant was for \$6100 and we have to have paid invoices before we get reimbursed for our portion which is \$2499.
- The pumps will be purchased as part of the Forestry 1 rehab project and we can use CRF funds to make up any difference.
- Helmets and lights can be offset with the Forestry budget.
- Chief Plourde added that we will need to get invoices for everything this year and encumber all funds in the CRF.
- Joe Segien added that we also still need the Foam Eductor.

Brian Dubreuil emphasized that all funds in CRF must be encumbered by the end of the year.

- Brandon Merron stated that he will be able to submit the bill from Brazecom for Forestry 1 before the end of the year.
- Brian Dubreuil stated that we can encumber the balance and we don't have to state what it is for.
- Frank Fraitzl added that we need to use caution in how we word the encumbrance.

Joe Segien asked about the portable radios for Forestry 1.

- 2 Portable Radios and a 6-Bank Charger were in the Forestry 1 Refurb Warrant
- Frank Fraitzl will ask Jeremy at Beltronics if they were ordered.
- Derek Danis reported that \$4545 was spent in the Forestry Refurb line for Mobile Radios. This was for dual head and dash mount radios. Nothing has been spent for portables.
- Cost for a portable radio is approximately \$2560 without charger.
- 6-Bank Charger is cheaper than individual chargers.
- Frank Fraitzl will order 2-Portable Radios and either a 6-Bank Charger or 2-Individual Chargers by the end of the year.

Brian Dubreuil reported that he has 2-quotes from Beltronics for the apartment. One for an alerting system and the second for lights that turn on when the pager goes off.

Brandon Merron suggested that we should pay for at least half of Connor Fitzgerald's AEMT class. Brandon Merron will find out the cost of the class.

Brian Dubreuil added that Tlmary Malley would also like to take AEMT and be reimbursed. This is not automatic since she is no longer a recruit.

Brandon Merron added that we need to get all the bills for training in before the end of the year. We have not received invoices from the State of NH for several courses that were taken.

Derek Danis discussed the RTV Trailer.

- RTV Trailer originally belonged to the Tracking Station.
- Now it is registered to the Fire Department
- We would like to purchase an enclosed trailer for the RTV.
- Brandon Merron has an enclosed trailer that he will sell for less than we can purchase a new one.
- Working with budget to see what is possible.

Brandon Merron made a motion for Non-Public per RSA 91-A: 3.II (a),(b),(c) Personnel and Legal. The motion was seconded by Derek Danis. All Fire Wards were in favor by Roll Call Vote. The motion passed.

The Board entered Non-Public Session at 8:02 pm.

The Board reconvened the Public Session at 8:50 pm.

Brandon Merron made a motion to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session indefinitely per RSA 93. The motion was seconded by Wayne Blassberg. All Fire Wards were in favor by Roll Call Vote. The motion passed.

Brandon Merron made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 pm. The motion was seconded by Wayne Blassberg. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Minutes recorded by Laurel Flax