



CITY OF FRANKLIN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Fire Department
"The Three Rivers City"

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Michael J Foss, Fire Chief/EMD

David J Hall, Deputy Chief

Fire Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 6, 2022

Held at the Franklin Fire Department

All Present:

- *Mayor Jo Brown*
- *Councilor Paul Trudel*
- *Councilor Dzijuna*
- *Councilor Olivia Zink*
- *Chairmen Ted Starkweather*
- *Chief Michael Foss*
- *City Manager Judie Milner*
- *Administrative Assistant Nicole Havey*

The Meeting:

Chairman Starkweather called the meeting to order at 1733 pm.

Chief Foss thanks everyone for coming and for supporting for the Hydrant ordinance. He and Justin will be meeting to finalize the drafts regarding liability so it can be implemented in the new budget fiscal year.

Agenda Item I

Previous meeting minutes from January 19, 2022 were reviewed by committee members. The committee moves to accept minutes as presented. Councilor Trudel made a motion to accept, Councilor Zink Seconds Motion, and motion is carried.

Agenda Item II

Chief Foss discussed the current Fire department statics.

The current statics that Chief Foss discusses are from Quarter three for the Fiscal Year 2022, they recap all the incidents that occur in the City of Franklin.

Concurrent incidents are still up percentage wise at almost 26%, out of 535 calls, 137 of those incidents are concurrent incidents occurring simultaneously within the City. This means that the City is either calling mutual aid, requesting off duty staff or stacking calls to help cover the incidents. The Fire Department will and has stacked multiple calls when feasible to do so as mutual aid is quickly becoming overwhelmed. During the daytime we can usually handle two calls but after 1900 when we lose the daytime firefighter we can't provide a second ambulance for transport.

Chief Foss also discussed the incidents per ward and the type of incidents that occur in the City. The busiest ward tends to stay consistent with Ward 2 being the highest for call volume. The Fire department covers the 3 Wards in the City of Franklin, but also covers all of Andover EMS calls as well as any mutual aid needed outside of the City. We also receive mutual aid within the City. Rescue/EMS calls are our busiest at 76% (405 calls) and Fire is 12% (66 Calls) and Service and Misc. are at 4% (24) and 7% (40).

The Chief discussed a big focus on the statics for the "off Duty" assistance that is required when concurrent incidents or additional assistance is needed in the City. Out of 535 calls, 125 incidents may need 1, 2, 3 or more than 3 members to come into the station for coverage. For these requests 52 times we requested 1 member, 34 times we requested 2 members, 30 times we requested 3 members and 9 times we requested 3 or more members. The City offers the firefighters a three-hour minimum to come in for these calls and it's still difficult to get the crews to come in. The City is seeing a high percentage of no coverage because of burnout/fatigue, or low pay so employees have second jobs on their days off therefore unable to come into the Fire Department for coverage. For all the additional request the City receives only 18% adequate coverage, 15% partial coverage and 66% no coverage. The Chief and the Deputy Chief do their best to go on calls or make sure that other towns are coming for mutual aid, but it could be a 20-minute wait for assistance on some occasions. Increasing staff and better pay would help to eliminate this.

Councilor Zink asked what number of people that call really don't need the help and is there assistance through other community services?

Chief Foss stated, we will reference people out from time to time, however the City has to ensure that the patient doesn't want to go to the hospital, by law if the patient wants to go to hospital we have to take them. NH911 is working on a triage program that will take a few years to be instated which will allow 911 to triage the call to decide weather or not you need an ambulance. Ultimately if the patient wants an ambulance the City will go. We also use 211 for assistance for patients and DCYF and adult elderly services.

Agenda Item III

Chief Foss discusses the payrate scale for the City compared to other departments within the State of NH. On average the City of Franklin's firefighters are handling more calls per person than other comparable departments in the State and they are being paid on average about -\$4.11 dollars less on average. The City Manager and the Finance Director are working on a pay study within the City to see if it can bridge the pay gap. He also updated the committee that we recently received a notice of resignation from a Firefighter/EMT that has accepted a job with the City of Nashua's fire department. He will be receiving a pay increase of \$6.57 an hour averaging to about a \$4.55 an hour raise with benefits.

Agenda Item IV

Chief Foss thanked all members of the committee and council for approving the replacement of the 2002 Zumro Boat. The new boat has been ordered and is anticipated to be done and delivered the beginning of May. The estimate of the new Inmar Inflatable Rescue Boat with trailer was \$20,958 and the actual cost was \$18,165 saving \$2,793, this means the Turcotte Funds will have a balance of \$76,888 after the purchase.

Agenda Item V

Chief Foss discussed the current cardiac monitors that are used in A1 and A2 that will no longer be supported by the provider come November 2022, because of their age. In order for the Ambulances to continue to run service calls for the City of Franklin and Mutual aid, the City will need to purchase 2 cardiac monitors. Currently there is a grant that exists that the City has applied for to help offset the cost by an estimated \$50,000 the remaining balance owed by the City for the purchase would be about \$20,000. It was proposed to use the Turcotte Fund to help offset the cost of the \$20,000. The City will know some time around May or June if we received an approval for the grant.

Agenda Item VI

Chief Foss discussed apparatus updates that the department is in immediate need of replacement. Utility 3 was just quoted to need over \$12,000 in body work repair, and will not pass inspection if these repairs are not completed. Because of the age of this vehicle and the shape it is in the Fire Department is looking to replace this vehicle. Chief has begun to get quotes from dealers and it will roughly cost \$49,000 to replace this vehicle. The Chief and the Finance Director are working on the best options for the replacement and will be proposing the replacement in the FY23 budget.

Car 3 passed inspection, however needed \$6,650 worth of work to pass in FY21, and is estimated to cost the department an additional \$5,000 to maintain the vehicle with just body work repairs for the year. This vehicle is 15 years old. This vehicle is also need of replacement and the Chief proposes that we also look at replacing this vehicle at the same time as U3. The options for replacement are also being looked at by the Chief and the Finance Director within the FY23 budget.

Committee members asked if there was a program through the dealers to buy multiple vehicles for the City and receive a "discount" and what the buying options are. The Chief and the Finance Director are looking at options to lease, buy and lease with a buyout. The Council would need to ok the budget before the City can move forward with getting accurate quotes from dealers to move forward with a purchase.

Agenda Item VII

Chief Foss discussed the SAFER grant application that was submitted requesting two additional personnel for the Fire Department. At this time, it is still under review and there will be notifications made in late July, early August of 2022 if it was approved. He thanks the committee members for their of support and let them know that we received letters of support from Congress and the Senators and the City Manager.

Agenda Item VIII

Chief Foss asked if there were any additional items that needed to be discussed. At that time no one had any questions

Agenda Item IX

Chairman Starkweather and committee members agree to set the next for July 12, 2022 at 5:30 pending confirmation from absent member Councilor Bunker that this would work for her.

Councilor Zink made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1845, Councilor Trudel seconds and motion was carried.