

Fire Commissioner's Meeting

Draft Minutes

September 15, 2020

Present: Chairman Rick Pisano, Commissioner Adam Zais, Commissioner Kevin Conley, Fire Chief Paul Rhude.

Meeting minutes from August 2020

- Change "Town of Cotuit" to "Town of Barnstable"
 - o Motion to accept, all in favor

Public Comment

- Carol Zais: re Cotuit Civic Association's looking into providing the Village with a video system.
 - o She questioned the room set up and what equipment was already available
 - o She suggested her son look at the equipment/set up.
- Chairman Pisano and Chief Rhude discussed current software (OWL) and possibly returning it.
 - o OWL products allow "live" and "on-line" simultaneous meetings that interact with the community on-line and live. It is a \$1,000.00 product.
 - Quick & easy solution.
 - Video worked well – device automatically points to who is speaking and captures the video.
 - Audio in Freedom Hall is poor – bad echo. OWL device has "echo canceling" for an 18ft radius but did not capture clear audio.
- Chief Rhude stated that there are quotes:
 - o \$5,000 to install a system with an expert provider
 - o All cameras that are compatible with ZOOM are \$1000+ and audio still needs to be tied in
 - o Much more complicated project than what they were hoping
 - Will continue to look into it but may be a Prudential type expenditure
 - Chairman Pisano mentioned Mrs. Zais' comment regarding Civic Association looking into video system

Fire Chief Report:

Reviewed the Report:

- Month of August = 78 Total Responses / 43 were Medical / 2 Hazardous Conditions (both were "wires down" / 33 were "Service Good Intent" (false alarm calls)
 - o Labor Day weekend – 9/7/2020 – there were 2 boat rescue calls
 - 266 responded twice to two vessels sinking off of the Osterville Channel and assisted two sinking vessels
 - All passengers were rescued prior to either Fire boats arrival by good Samaritan boats

Administration:

- Good supply of PPE
 - o Chairman Pisano asked if Cotuit FD was still helping Hospitals replenish their inventory as well?
 - Chief Rhude answered yes.
 - Chief is picking up N95 masks 9/16/2020 and transferring to Cape Cod Hospital and then reimbursing for exact costs.
 - o Chairman Pisano questioned the “Citizen Complaint” calls.
 - Chief Rhude explained that the Citizen Complaint calls were burning without a permit.
 - Coded incorrectly but have been changed to “Unauthorized Burning”
- No new COVID positive cases in Cotuit since April 10, 2020
 - o The two positives that were reported since then were false positives or residents out of state

Technology Update:

- Switched over to Open Cape – no longer using Comcast for internet provider
- Looking into voice over IP Phone systems – getting quotes on it
 - o Looking into a new system with more features and lower price
- Looking at changing IT service provider (ongoing project)
 - o Had a company called “Secured Networks” that was providing support
 - As the switch from desktop computers to Microsoft to be more mobile, computers have been secure through billing company which provided IT support with them so no longer need the IT company to support desktop computers (no longer have desktop computers). Billing company denied all service (including Cloud workplace and AutoTask)
 - Will no longer have \$400-\$500/month IT cost
 - Need to transition Cloud away from current product – Billing Company is suggesting going to SharePoint (a Microsoft OneDrive with extra features)

Training:

- FF McPherson and Lt. McNamara independently put on a great training exercise at 56 High Street
 - o Set up props for the building
 - o Set up an artificial smoke generator
 - o All off-duty firefighters came in and simulated rescue operation through 2nd floor window
 - Through the back but simulated 2nd floor emergency rescue
 - o Set up a PowerPoint presentation and training for all staff
 - o Pete Anderson will put Video on Facebook page and on Social Media
 - o Letter of appreciation is on Cloud Drive
 - Without objection, Letter of Appreciation will go into FF McPherson and Lt. McNamara’s files
 - Chairman Pisano - No objection, All in Favor
 - o FF McPherson and Lt. McNamara are also planning a firefighter interior rescue for next month so firefighters can go through on their shifts and do drills

- Will be borrowing props for the month from ComFire that they have developed for:
 - Wall breach
 - Wire entanglement
 - Narrow entry
 - Chief Rhude will alert as to the date and will get video as well
 - *Commissioner Conley asked Chief Rhude whether Com could have access to the building for their training*
 - Chief Rhude answered yes – that he mentioned to Lt. McNamara that once it is set up to mention to Mashpee Fire and ComFire since it will be available for the month
- Engine and 2 staff members are currently in West Barnstable doing a tanker shuttle drill
- *Chairman Pisano asked if it were possible to have a schedule of training posted on the website?*
 - Chief Rhude answered yes.

Personnel:

- Only IOD was return to Duty on September 4, 2020
 - Full Staff
- On Cloud File is a “Thank You” letter from Prudential Committee
 - Letter thanking all the individual Fire Fighters that set up Annual District Meeting and the Special District Meeting
- Chairman Pisano – comment section on EMS reports are helpful
 - Give a better sense of the quality of interaction and experience of the service
 - Chief Rhude explained that these do not come out every month but every 3 to 4 months – all positive
 - Once comment regarding a Mashpee Ambulance being out of service and there was a delay in response – not Cotuit
 - Pillow comment as well – pillows are on order and will be back in the ambulance again
- Arbitration case has been dropped by Local 3642
 - Support from legal contractor and Chairman Pisano

Apparatus:

- New Car 261 will be in shortly
- Major Ambulance repairs have been put off for a while
 - Any major repairs take ambulance out of service resulting in no ambulance
 - Using Morrison Automotive in Hyannis
 - They are stocking up parts getting ready for a major repair
 - Took ambulance out of service for 2 days and replaced entire brake system, emergency brake system
 - \$4000 bill for repair and parts
 - Ambulance is in full service now
 - Everything is up to date on it
 - All fluids have been changed

- *Commissioner Zais asked what the demand during the 2 days that the ambulance was not in service?*
 - Chief Rhude answered that it was a very slow period
 - COM came over to a call on Old Post Road
- Fire Engines – hard time getting service provided for them
 - Ended up calling Minute Man fire apparatus
 - They sell fire trucks
 - Have purchased fire trucks through them
 - They have a mobile service
 - Have come out on the last 2 days and have done annual service and pump tests on both engines
- Up To Date on all vehicle services

Facilities:

- Facility improvements have been slow
 - Botello's has been in twice to get prices/specs on new doors
 - Ultimately said that they do not do Commercial and do not have the ability to help
 - Other builders have said that they were coming in but have not made it in yet
 - One builder came in but did not have insurance
 - A few contractors are scheduled to come in over the next week to see about prices on fixing the doors and the hardware for the doors (interior and exterior)
 - Looking at security camera systems
 - Talked before about putting a camera system in the interior apparatus bays, front ramp and parking lot
 - Two prices are on the Cloud
 - Price from Nemec Alarms – alarm service provider which provides alarm monitoring for Cotuit facility already, 56 High Street, and Freedom Hall
 - Unofficial price of \$4200 for security system which includes:
 - Security cameras hard-wired back to a hard drive recorder
 - Price from Valley Communications – they provide Cotuit Water Department security systems (they put a \$300k fiber optic security system that Valley Communications monitors real-time / 30-day records on all facilities). ComFire also uses Valley Communications (\$200k to put in door-control systems and video monitoring in all 3 of their stations
 - Valuable to be able to access the same system as Water Department is significant
 - Valley Communications is on the state bid
 - Their quote was \$9200
 - Same system as ComFire and Cotuit have
- *Chairman Pisano asked if the system would integrate with the door locks?*
 - Chief Rhude answered that Valley Communications will do the door locks but using an online network door lock system like they propose ends up costing \$5000/door. Existing locks can be replaced with a newer electronic version for between \$300-\$500/door
- *Commissioner Conley questioned if it was hard-wired.*

- Chief Rhude answered it was all hard wired cameras that covers the whole parking lot the whole front of the station and one camera inside the lower bay and one in the upper bay so that dispatch would be able to look at the inside of the station and see if anyone is there/what equipment is in the station/any accidents on the app floor or on the aprons which would be recorded for a 30 day time period/any equipment missing would be able to be reviewed for 30 days
- *Commissioner Conley asked if there was one in the lobby?*
 - Chief Rhude answered that there was not one in the lobby. There is one that covers the door to the lobby to see anyone approaching or anyone that walks into the building
 - Chief Rhude is waiting to get specs on the door and then will order door locks at \$300-\$500 a piece
 - 5 Exterior doors
 - There will still be security
 - Still records of when people come and go
 - What codes are used
- *Commissioner Zais asked how this expenditure is being accounted for – where is the money coming from?*
 - Chief Rhude answered that this is the article money – the \$100k that was authorized FY20 for station renovations for which there is still \$85k remaining
- *Commissioner Zais asked if the wording in the Article was “broad enough” to cover this expenditure?*
 - Chief Rhude answered that presentations were given talking about the need for updated security systems and that was the intent of the Article
 - Chairman Pisano answered that the listing was specific regarding all the things that were going to be bundled
 - Chief Rhude added that the listing was very specific including:
 - Kitchen needed renovations
 - Office needed to be moved downstairs
 - Needed increased security
 - Replace the doors
 - Needed new carpet
 - Needed interior paint
 - Needed flooring
- *Commissioner Conley asked about the HVAC purchase order where \$1965 was spent*
 - Chief Rhude answered that yes, the VFR system for the 2nd floor had a circuit board fry out and temperature probes also broke plus annual service was done
 - Between the annual service and the 2-3 visits to repair the VFR that was not cheap this year
 - Chairman Pisano like that the Water Department would be on the same system but asked if Valley Communications needed a “definitive go-answer at this point”
 - Would like to see positive steps forward and not a longer delay
 - Stated that if Chief Rhude makes a good faith effort to find a reasonable quote in the next few weeks that aligns with Valley Communications, and Chief Rhude cannot find another company, then to go forward with Valley Communications

- Chief Rhude explained that there isn't a need for a definitive go-answer at this point and that they could go to other prices and offered to keep looking although:
 - Valley Communications is under \$10k Best Business Practices and on the state bid = 100% covered under the Procurement Law
 - Commissioner Zais disliked the Nemic quote but questioned whether more bids were needed but agreed that there is value in the "shared experience" associated with Valley Communications
 - Commissioner Conley disliked the Nemic quote as well and like the Valley Communications as it would be more consistent with what is already in place

Old Business:

New Business

- Chairman Pisano has been invited to attend the Water Commissioner's meeting along with a representative of Prudential and the director of properties for the town
 - Chairman Pisano and the Chairman of the Water Commission have continued to have conversations about the elementary school property before the town demolishes the building and to consider other options
 - Water Department is looking at the property for several "critical use" reasons
 - Chairman Pisano stated that he felt it important that he participate in that conversation as a representative of the Fire Commission
 - Chief Rhude stated that if Commissioner Conley or Commissioner Zais intends to go to the Water Commissioner's meeting to please let him know so he can post on Public meeting for the Fire Commissioners

Promotional Process:

- *Chairman Pisano asked Commissioner Conley if he participated in the interviewing of candidates in the promotional process and if it has been completed?*
 - Commissioner Conley answered that the process has been completed and that there is a recommendation.
 - Chief Rhude stated that the intention after the last meeting was to do the interviews as part of the Commissioner's Meeting but it cannot be done in Executive Session, so he made the executive decision to contact Commissioner Conley. The interviews would be done by Chief Rhude, Commissioner Conley, Deputy Pugliat and Union representative and they would provide a report to the Commissioners for consideration
 - Chief Rhude is not interested in doing promotional interviews on a Public Platform
 - Interviews were with Fire Fighter Peter Emerson and Fire Fighter Shane Clark
 - Acting Lieutenant Shane Clark gave a phenomenal interview
 - He provided a professional resume and cover letter– which is on the Cloud
 - He has been a member of the organization for almost 20 years
 - He has been full-time for 10 years
 - He has been EMS officer for 2 years
 - During those 2 years, Shane Clark has "dug us out of the EMS hole"
 - In dire straits for medical ambulance licensing

- He contributes every day and is a valuable member of the team
- Commissioner Conley said that Shane Clark would be an “extremely valuable asset” to the department as lieutenant
- Decision was universal and it was a unanimous opinion of the interview committee - Commissioner Conley, Chief Rhude, Deputy Pugliat – that Shane Clark should be offered the lieutenant’s position
- Chairman Pisano has a concern regarding Shane Clark’s workload
 - *Asked if Shane Clark’s term as Union President ended and if this promotion goes forward, will Shane continue to serve as the EMS officer?*
 - Chief Rhude said that Shane Clark’s term as Union President, where he showed absolute leadership, has ended and that Firefighter Casey Stags has been voted in as Union President. Being Union President does not disqualify anyone from an officer’s position-if anything, it is a high qualification. Shane Clark will continue to serve EMS officer until he chooses to focus elsewhere.
- Chairman Zais will agree with the recommendation without the opportunity to speak with Acting Lieutenant Shane Clark in this capacity and asked if the interviews were recorded?
 - Chief Rhude said they were not recorded.
- Chairman Conley stated that the interview was done the way it was due to Open Meeting Law which only allows executive session for preliminary screening interview sessions. He stated that:
 - Chief Rhude, Deputy Pugliat and Commissioner Conley sat down ahead of time and spent 1-1/2 hours going through questions, reviewing what direction the conversations were going to go with both candidates which was a good prep session
- Chief Rhude stated that the questions that were asked during the interview were more management level questions – to see if interviewees were qualified to do the next job – to be a deputy or a chief
 - “Where do you think we should go as an organization?”
 - “How would you attract and retain staff?”
 - Commissioner Conley recommended that Chief Rhude put the interview questions on the Cloud
 - Chief Rhude is recommending that Commissioner’s promote Shane Clark to the status of Lieutenant for the Cotuit Fire Department
- Motion to Endorse the Chief’s recommendation to offer a permanent lieutenant position to Shane Clark, all in favor.

Chief Contract

- By term, Commissioner’s are supposed to have Chief’s contract resolved
 - Chairman Pisano: Highlighted issues that still need to be addressed:
 - Compensation
 - Section 3.2 regarding compensatory time
 - Board does not want to monitor the Chief’s calendar management

- Notice of resignation which allows the Chief to offer 30-day notice
 - 8.2 Insurance Benefits
 - State Law requires health and accident insurance as well as life insurance are offered
 - Should a stipend for the waiver of insurance be considered as part of a compensation package?
 - Section 9.3 – Progressive Discipline
 - Does it need to be in the contract?
- Commissioner Zais referred to business contracts – put the general contract on the table and then refer to “Exhibit A” for the specific which this structure could be used as it relates to insurance

Miscellaneous:

- Chairman Pisano responded to Treasurer’s question regarding long-term operation plan requested by the auditors

Motion to adjourn, all in favor.