

Fire Commissioner's Meeting

Draft Minutes

March 9, 2021

Present: Commissioner's Rick Pisano, Adam Zais, Kevin Conley, Fire Chief Paul Rhude & Deputy Chief Pouliot, Firefighter Shane Clark

Meeting minutes from February 9, 2021

- Meeting minutes from February 9, 2021
 - Motion to accept – all in favor

Chairman Pisano

- Motion to accept last month's minutes **Public Comment**
- No Public Comment

Fire Chief Report:

Administration:

- PPE Supply is good
 - *Commissioner Conley asked if the fire department was still taking care of the hospital?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered that the hospital has been on its own since late fall.**
- COVID vaccine
 - All staff have received both vaccines
 - Still continuing with Town Health Dept re: assisting with public vaccinations but they have not been able to obtain the vaccine in order to vaccinate
 - Deputy Pouliot has been working with the state to get rid of the firefighting Class A environmentally friendly foam supply but it is not a requirement to put a fire out and has not been used in many years.
 - State has come to remove it and cleaned out the truck.
 - If Class B Foam is needed for liquid fires, Hyannis Fire Dept uses it for the airport and Otis AFB (Joint Cape Cod Fire) both have large amounts of firefighting foams for liquid fires, if needed.

Responses:

- 58 Total Responses
 - 2 Fires
 - Chimney Fire & Fire contained to stove
 - 43 Medical Calls
 - 2 Hazardous Conditions (Wires down)
 - 10 Service Good Intent / False Alarm calls
 - *Commissioner Zais asked if 265 went out at all?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered that 263 went out because 265 was out of service. 265 went out to Allegiance fire repair in Walpole. It had a fried clutch pulley for the air compression system.**

- *Commissioner Conley asked if there was any luck with the warranty on 265?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered yes and no.**
 - **Anything related to the Power Train and motor typically has a 5-year warranty.**
 - **In December 2020 there was repair work done to the exhaust system which was under warranty.**
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 - **Anything related to the Pierce fire apparatus (the fire equipment build itself) has a 1-year warranty.**
 - **Emissions problems were covered under warranty. (\$2,000.00 bill)**
 - **The “add-ons” – including the air compressor – was not under warranty.**

PRO EMS REPORT

- Attached

Training:

- Ice rescue drill taught by Brian Lee and Christian Gardner on 2.26.2021 at No-Bottom Pond and practiced some rescues in what was left of the ice. FF Lee and FF Gardner went to an ice training class in Maine in 2020 & they brought the techniques and training back to Cotuit Fire Dept.
- March 29th and March 30th is going to be Brush Fire Training.
 - 3.29.21 – going to Joint Base Cape Cod and working with the State Forest Warden for Barnstable County
 - Going to be reviewing brush fire techniques, chainsaw operations
 - 3.30.21 – going to be doing a brush breaker driving operations practice on the base

Personnel:

- No one is out on IOD, COVID or quarantine

Apparatus:

- Working with the owners of the dock where 266 – the fire boat – is kept
 - Finalized some liability insurance issues and rec'd email back on 3.9.21 that the same dock is good to use again.
 - Chief Rhude will be finalizing the language for the liability and agreement and invoice by the end of the week.
 - *Commissioner Zais asked if it was the same cost?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered that there wasn't any indication that there would be an increase from the \$5,500.00.**
- 261 lettering is complete on Chief's car
- 262 went out for repair to SAV in Wareham – the international dealership - on Monday 3.8.21
 - It had another problem with the exhaust system

- Out of service all day and night Monday 3.8.21 and was picked up Tuesday 3.9.21.
- Over \$20,000.00 in repair issues for the ambulance to-date.

Budget

Facilities:

- Renovations are on-going
 - Two new rooms on the first floor have been framed out. They have been insulated and wired and just waiting on sheetrock (which should happen shortly).
 - Anticipate closing this out by the end of the fiscal year.
- Presenting Draft budget to Prudential on April 15, 2021 as a proposal for 2022
 - SEE FY2022 below

OLD BUSINESS:

FACILITIES NEEDS ANALYSIS

Commissioner Conley - Needs Assessment

- Chief Rhude spoke with Fran Parks – Chairwoman of the Prudential – and she is comfortable with Catalyst. Chief said that he has a draft amendment to the District Facilities analysis study that was done
 - Amendment would be to look at all District facilities cost and feasibility of making them meet current needs / cost and feasibility of renovating the school to meet those needs / cost and feasibility of new structure
 - Chief forwarded the draft amendment to the Prudential Committee and to Chairman Pisano and hopes that they will consider that for inclusion as an article on the district meeting
 - Chief also sent them a draft OPM rfq document
 - The other thing that can be done is to go out for bid for owner’s project manager who will help oversee the study and give a level of impartiality and expertise to the process
 - Catalyst is the company who did the feasibility study with the district offices on the 56 High Street property
 - The option was there to amend that contract to expanding their scope of services without having to go back out to bid and doing a new designer feasibility process
 - The other option was to go back out and do a new designer selection process and possibly bringing in different architectural companies
 - *Commissioner Conley asked what the cost of the Amendment was?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered that he did not have a cost amount but did say that originally, a conversation took place with the architects and the cost was \$40k-\$50k.**
 - **The School sub-Committee – the committee that was set up by Prudential – asked for an expanded scope. They want to look at current facilities and the ability to renovate / rebuild and/or a new build all together. No estimate as to what that would cost yet.**

SCHOOL PROPERTY - POLICY ADVISORY

Commissioner Zais - School Building subcommittee

- There is a new sub-committee (Jim, Jackie and Mark Lynch)
- Group of folks that have been meeting in executive session in counsel
 - They have been communicating with the town and have come up with a letter that was from Jim to the Committee
 - The destruction of the building is a line item on the letter but it does not appear to be taken up in FY 2022 and the price is still \$9k+
 - Still in negotiating phase but a holding-pattern in terms of decision but things are moving forward
 - There has been some conversation by the Water Dept. providing a nice view of the well head area and the overlay of the plot
 - There is still great concern regarding the use of the area as a Fire Station
 - David Sherbuck has been brought onto the Committee – he wrote a letter and one of the main points of the letter was to use the plot for a fire station
 - (Commissioner Zais will call/email Jim if it is ok to send to Fire Commissioners)
 - *Commissioner Conley asked if the Town has agreed to turn the building/property over to the village? Have the lawyers that were consulted during executive session been the town or the villages lawyers?*
 - **Commissioner Zais answered that there have been comments made by David Anthony to that effect but it does not necessarily mean a decision or consensus on the part of the town**
 - **Commissioner Zais answered that Mark Boudreault, Esq. was used**
 - *Chief Rhude further explained that Mark Boudreault, Esq., the district's attorney, did meet with full committee in Executive Session to discuss strategy with negotiations with the town.*
 - *Chief had a meeting with the Assistant Town Manager late February 2021 who said the Asset Advisory Committee has voted to enter negotiations with the district and they have every intention to transfer the property to the Fire District. They are not talking with anyone else and have no intentions of talking to any other parties and absolutely ultimately expect the propter to be transferred.*
 - *With respect to the concerns regarding the fire station being on the property, the school is just about the identical distance from the well head as is the current fire station so the School Property is NOT in the Zone 1 well protection area. It is in the Zone 2 which encompasses a great deal of the fire district, including vehicle repair facilities and other commercial entities*
 - *Civic Association has sent out emails with a 1-2-page summary regarding where things stand. They also sent out an*

announcement that there will be a meeting on April 25, 2021 (info session).

Commissioner Zais – Capital Expenditures – Prudential Committee

- Meeting was held beginning of March.
 - Talked about:
 - 1. Proposal on Capital Projects Draft – in SharePoint
 - SIP Policy changes
 - Put before the Committee and Ray had comments which were reflected in the modified language that is seen on SharePoint
 - Good to look at what Silvio previously did but the 2-page re-write that Ray submitted is the one that has the modified language
 - 2. Proposal on creating a historical log of those policies approved by Prudential committee.
 - **Commissioner Zais answered that it is up to each commissioner to handle all their planning activities. Part of each commission and part Prudential Committee.**
- Chairman Pisano informed Commissioner's Zais and Conley that there has been an invitation extended for the 3/29/21 meeting by the Prudential Committee. This is a special meeting that will include the Art Committee and the Water Committee to address in more detail.
- Next meeting on April 5, 2021
- *Chairman Pisano asked about the management proposal – is there a specific implementor of that management?*

Call Fire Fighter EMT compensation

- Commissioner Zais commented that although he did not have a problem paying an appropriate wage for people but did not understand why they're doing it but it is the Chief or the Deputy Chief's expertise that he turns to. If they view it as a necessity then he agrees with the compensation – despite that fact that the enthusiasm is still present, even at the previous pay but that the pay level should be matched to those at other stations
 - Deputy Chief Pouliot commented that the individual was there all the time and that they are a trained EMT.
- Chairman Pisano – motion to accept the Compensation Adjustment as described in the Deputy Chief's proposal to offer \$20/hr for when fire fighter is on call. All in favor.
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BY-LAW COMMITTEE MEETING

Chairman Pisano

FY 21 Year Report

- *Commissioner Zais asked regarding where, for FY21, would the sick coverage expenditure end up?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered \$20k for FY21**

FY 22 Budget Planning

- Chairman Pisano and Chief will be presenting 2022 draft budget to Prudential on April 15, 2021

- When it is under 4% total and that includes maintaining – flat funding everything on the budget page, this is a reasonable estimate to come out by the end of the next FY barring any catastrophe
 - Couple of elements in play because of the problems with vehicles
 - Typically, we present to Prudential and we can come out with a 3.79% (which includes new growth, property valuations) overall increase and Chairman Pisano feels comfortable defending the cost and the estimates being made but there are a couple of considerations:
 - 2022 is the year that the Deputy's vehicle would be considered for replacement
 - Replacement vehicle for Deputy Chief is about \$48k to get it fully equipped
 - Chairman Pisano is ambivalent regarding presenting this need for Deputy Chief's vehicle because an opportunity has presented itself to purchase a used ambulance as back-up and as a transitional vehicle in order to amortize out the current ambulance over a few more years and get some return on the investment
 - Deputy vehicle is the same as the Chief's vehicle – maybe donate it to W. Barnstable as a service vehicle
 - Cotuit ambulance has been out of commission for 14 days this past year
 - Proven to be unreliable – International engine (fuel pressure system and motors) are not reliable
 - \$3k repair for exhaust system recently
 - Possible solution: Ambulance supplier said that they were getting a trade-in out of Brewster
 - F550 FWD
 - Great condition
 - 100k miles
 - Can be purchased for \$35k
 - Will be available in December
 - Sandwich FD wants a back-up ambulance as well
 - SFD said that if Cotuit FD buys the ambulance, (owned by CFD / title by CFD) then both departments would enter into an intermunicipal agreement that SFD would equip it with BLS supplies (around \$25k) / they will put a stretcher in it / portable stair chair/ backboard / suction / they will provide free parts and labor maintenance for it (Town of Sandwich has a Town mechanic) so there would be zero maintenance cost – barring a major problem like an engine or transmission problem which would be a shared expense
 - If used and needed, we would move over our Advanced Life Support equipment (cardiac and drug monitor). No ability to run 2 medical calls at the same time.

- The other option would be to add the ALS equipment for \$30k to the spare ambulance
 - ****May**** be a chance that these ALS supplies would be covered under the CARES Act.
 - ALS LIFE EXPECTANCY
 - Life pack is 5 years – there are maintenance contracts – no cost maintenance work 1x/mo – cost for a new one is \$31k / trade-in \$20-\$25k
 - Medication is \$7500
 - There are 25-30 mutual aid ambulance calls coming in every year
 - Net cost to equip it and have it ready to go as a 2nd ambulance would be \$7k/year
 - *Commissioner Zais asked if we have ever considered leasing vs. buying?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered yes (in reference to 261) – it evens out the Capital flow but interest rate is charged**
 - Possible solution: buying a new one (replacing a year early)
 - Chassis manufacturers Ford and Dodge have shut down – supply issues and not making them right now
 - IF we wait to get a new ambulance until the regular time in 2022, we could be waiting 6 extra months and end up having to use the current ambulance
- In last round of contract negotiations, there were adjustments made so that this is pretty much structured by contract
 - Salary and Wages
 - Proposed FY2022 – already approved contract
 - Sick Coverage and Full-Time Injury need to be addressed since they are not structured by contract
 - Expenditures -hesitant to make an adjustment considering current circumstance
 - Spreadsheet is done with every one of the staff members
 - It is a “split pay” so pay changes halfway through the year
 - Their pay average is added in
 - Leave balances are added (changes from year to year)
 - Education (changes from year to year)
 - Average their pay and apply the average pay rate & overtime pay rate to all the personal and vacation hours
 - *Commissioner Zais commented that 14.62% would open some eyes.*
 - Longevity Pay
 - Structured by contract
 - Proposing a decrease because of staff turnover and have newer staff with less longevity so their rate of reimbursement has gone down
 - Operations
 - 4% reduction

- Estimates re electricity / heating / diesel (a volatile area right now) but there is a margin that is there
- Repair Maintenance on Vehicles
 - With significant overage this year this raises a few questions that don't immediately impact but definitely impact future requests for the coming FY in terms of articles
 - *Commissioner Zais asked if it was fair to say that pumpers cost more or less than ambulances over time in terms of operational maintenance costs? Are they equivalent or vastly different?*
 - **Chief Rhude answered that the life span of an ambulance has been running at around 8 years**
 - **Ambulance has a cost of between \$300k-\$350k**
 - **Pumper has a life expectancy of 20 years and costs \$600k**
 - **Operational maintenance costs for both should be similar but this year's ambulance budget was very high**
- Motion to take current budget to Prudential – all in favor.

New Business:

Legal:

- CFD has been contacted by a law firm with a proposal
 - One of the attorney's was a town manager for years / worked for labor relations board in Boston
 - Partner worked for unions for many years
 - Specialize in supporting municipalities – negotiations for contracts / employee law
 - Currently service community police and/or fire contracts on Cape
 - Insurer recommends them
 - Proposing a \$350/mo. fee
 - Free contact less than .5 hr. (no net cost)
 - Hourly rate is \$215/hr
 - No previous relationships with other law firms have been terminated
- Motion to accept proposal put forward by Clifford and Kenney, LLC. To retain services for the first year. All in favor.

Fire Fighter physical fitness:

- 1. Proposal by staff member for improving structure and encouragement and physical fitness among Fire Fighters
 - FF Brian Lee put forth a proposal
 - What would the incentives add up to?
 - Great idea but what are the numbers?
- 2. Brochure from Jessica Scott – Doctor of PT and Certified Athletic Trainer
 - Recently started a company focusing on FF physical conditioning
 - Physical fitness plans
 - Meal plans
 - Support
 - Workouts
 - *Chairman Pisano asked about cost?*

- **Chief Rhude stated that her website states different packages:**
 - **1-hour assessment of different individuals**
 - **Detailed Physical fitness plan**
 - **Detailed nutrition plan**
 - **1x/wk workout**
 - **Monthly lecture**
 - **About \$10k/6 months**

- Current union contract provides for and specifies that a committee shall be established made up of one member of the Union, one Fire Commissioner, the fire Chief and a member of the call department
- Proposing a financial incentive to be physically fit to prevent IOD injuries
 - Need a Fire Commissioner to start the discussion with the Union and bring something actionable back to the Commissioner's at some point.
 - Commissioner Conley volunteered

SOGs - n/a

Public Comment -

Motion to adjourn, second, all in favor.