

Fire Commissioner's Meeting Draft Minutes

June 8, 2021

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

– meeting live at Freedom Hall – Broadcast via Zoom to Public-

Chairmanship Nomination

- Nomination of Chairman Pisano
 - Motion to accept – all in favor.

New Business:

- Honor the passing of Don Campbell who served for years as Fire Commissioner and Water Commissioner & was a Call Fire Fighter in the District as well. Deepest sympathies to his wife, Kathy, as well as his family.
- Meeting minutes from Executive Session on August 17, 2020
 - Motion to accept – all in favor.
 - Motion to release Executive Session minutes – all in favor.
- Meeting minutes from May 11, 2021, with change from “Downhouser” to “Dannhauseur”
 - Motion to accept (with adjustment in spelling) – all in favor.

Fire Chief Report:

- 72 Total responses
 - 2 were fires.
 - One was a mutual aid structural fire in Marstons Mills.
 - One was a small brush fire in Cotuit (10x10 area)
 - 49 Medical Calls
 - 0 Hazardous conditions
 - 21 Service – Good Intent/False Alarm Calls

Administration:

- Working on transitioning to new scheduling software
 - One product line for all records keeping payroll and scheduling.
 - Cost is approx. the same as current software (which is no longer supported)
 - Chairman Pisano made a request for legal cost line-item cost. Had it been reviewed against monthly service?
 - Monthly fee is ½ hour or less for monthly \$300 fee.
 - Monthly fee excludes longer term issues.
 - All short-term expenses on current bill were related to same issue.

- Chief is waiting for final answer and will try to get ahold of them on June 9, 2021.

PRO EMS REPORT

- Attached

Training:

- Live fire training with Barnstable Fire Academy burn trailer on Cotuit School site on May 19, 2021.
 - Responded to brush fire and 3 or 4 other calls while there.
 - Having mobile trailer is working out.
 - New Packs have a WiFi connection - a mesh network connection that communicates to central computer and can tell:
 - Which people are in the building?
 - How much air they have?
 - Send signals in and out.
 - Send evacuation signal out.
 - Deputy Pouliot has been leading the charge on getting it all set up.
 - Purchased with Port Security grant money.

Month of June 28 & 29 2021, Marine operations drill is going to take place.

Coast Guard officers will give a class.

- General refresher class on boat operations for everyone to attend / quick ½ class.
- Working to get the 2nd half of the operator's program.

Planning a wide search drill at the school

- Search and rescue using the school building.

Personnel:

- Fire fighter injured his back on May 28, 2021.
 - Waiting for MRI on June 9, 2021, and for a surgical consult
 - More than likely several weeks at a minimum

Apparatus:

- Nothing new

Facilities:

- Floor has been installed.
 - Chief has moved downstairs.
 - Digitalizing as much as possible
 - Within the next 2 weeks should be ready to go

OLD BUSINESS:

AFFILIATION AGREEMENT WITH CAPE COD HEALTHCARE

- Still in the works
 - Cape Cod Healthcare attorneys and leadership team is now involved.
 - Did not understand the operations of Cape Cod and Islands EMS
 - They are taking charge of the situation.
 - They are either going to redesign Cape and Islands EMS to a format the fits or dissolve it and take over the functions themselves.
 - They are meeting every Tuesday with sub-committee of Barnstable County Fire Chiefs
 - Plymouth is still the backup plan - they are still willing to take over at any point in time.
 - *Chairman Pisano asked if there was any timeline for the Cape Cod Healthcare attorneys to come to a presentation?*

Chief Rhude answered that perhaps within 2-3 weeks, they will know which direction they want to go. Affiliation Agreement with Cape & Islands EMS ends on July 1, 2021. However, the requirement is a medical director with a hospital.

- **Contract with Cape Cod Healthcare does not mention Cape & Islands EMS**
- **Doctor at Cape Cod Healthcare is required to do QA QI quality control for calls and Cape Cod Healthcare subcontracted Cape & Islands EMS and stated that as of July 1, 2021, they would accept the QA QI through ProEMS**
- **Right now, 100% of calls quality control through private subcontractor ProEMS and have been accepted for a while.**

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Zais - School Building subcommittee

- Meeting was held June 7, 2021 (last on with current sitting board)
 - Nothing that is going to the Prudential Committee other than the request to revisit the historical documentation - ongoing discussion.
 - Commissioner Zais is comfortable in continuing his role as liason.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Commissioner Zais – Elementary School update

- New meeting is Thursday, June 10, 2021 - nothing specific since most of the discussion came to fruition at the last meeting.
- Commissioner Zais is comfortable in continuing his role as liason.

FIREFIGHTER PHYSICAL FITNESS COMMITTEE

Commissioner Conley & Chief Rhude

- Some scheduling challenges with it so no new meeting
- Commissioner Conley is comfortable in continuing his role as liason.
 - Monies targeted for the pilot project for the physical fitness program will need to be looked at and a legal response - which has not been communicated yet.
 - **Chief Rhude answered and stated that he spoke with Ray via email - during the annual District Meeting, an old version of the warrant was read and was partially corrected on the floor.**
 - **The issue came in with the \$20,000.00 from salaries and wages to operations to cover this program and the changes were not reflected in the warrant article that was read.**
 - **Ray made the changes on the floor to change the salary and wage to the correct number with the increased \$20,000.00 and the operations to the correct number but the total number that was read for the total budget was \$20,000.00 too low.**

There was not any specific item or category that was defunded by \$20,000.00.

Ray spoke with Attorney Mark Boudreault and the plan going forward is everything will be funded as scheduled and designed (operations/salary wages) and a new line item with -\$20,000.00 that will balance at some future District Meeting where there will be an article to replace that \$20,000.00 and still keep line items the same.

- **The plan is to correct during a special District Meeting.**
- Review of Annual District Articles & Discussions
 - **Commissioner Conley stated that during the meeting, questions were revisited that were raised regarding the Health Benefits Stipend Program: ISO “Insurance Stipend Option”**
 - **Question was raised during the meeting regarding when did the option go into place in the contract?**
 - **Signed as part of the last negotiation.**
 - **Several packages reviewed.**
 - **Retaining Cotuit Firefighters is the goal because the cost to train a new firefighter is between \$40-\$100,000.00.**

It is part of the COMM Contract.

- **Stipend does not go into the pension negotiation calculations.**
- **Bottom line is that it was a good option for the village.**

CHIEF’S CONTRACT

- Chairman Pisano would like to revisit this discussion because he felt he may have been misheard. He reviewed the Executive Session tape & the vote for the package was, in fact, unanimous.
 - The package that was approved was the one that Commissioner Zais presented and advocated for - of the three that were being considered.
 - When the Board looked at the numbers for the Chief’s total package compared to Cape wide averages - wanted to get in closer to the average.
 - Still substantially below the Cape wide average.

Public comment became contentious, and Chairman Pisano apologizes

Commissioner Conley commented that he was concerned as well and did listen to the November 2020 recording. Public recording is not available as it was Executive Session.

Chairman Pisano suggested discussed how the recording could get released?
Typically, Executive Session meetings summaries / statements are released.
Leave on the Agenda for next month under “Old Business” as the potential pros and cons of releasing the recording.
Chairman Pisano apologized to Fran - there were challenges putting the information out.

Chairman Pisano wants to address the “consolidation” that public addressed.
Committee has discussed consolidation options, regularly.
To-date, those that the Cotuit Fire Department have reached out to have:
Districts that are substantially better off than Cotuit FD that the Cotuit FD would be a liability; and
Those that would be a liability to Cotuit FD.
Only other option would be a County/Town wide consolidation.

- Small village in a larger pool would risk serious of reduced service (based on a 20-year-old study that needs to be re-done)
 - Data was accurate for the time, but the make-up of the village is changed.

Renewed study is around \$26,000.00.

- Maybe discuss in Prudential meeting

Commissioner Conley stated that many who “throw” the word consolidation around think that means reduced cost and they are not realizing the magnitude of what that conversation means. Consolidation could mean:

Insurance issues
Paying for equipment being used

Prudential Committee.

- Not Discussed specifically – (look under “Policy Advisory Committee” & “Chief’s Contract”)

****Special Notice regarding July 2021 “hybrid” Commissioner’s Meeting****

- Assuming that the recording works out, according to the State guidelines, the next meeting in July 2021 will have the same format (recording) and live attendance as well in Freedom Hall.
 - *Commissioner Zais asked if - going forward - the Zoom format will continue in order to create the archived file - as opposed to the audio?*
 - **Chairman Pisano answered that, in addition to the Zoom, there is an audio recording (which Zoom creates)**

Public Comment

Public comment at the end:

- Cynthia Gardner
 - Question regarding the annual meeting and the budget?
 - *No line-item budget? Wouldn't the totals voted on have to be the totals maintained in the overall budget?*
 - **Chief answered: Fire department is held to overall dollar value for salary and wages, operations, and maintenance. Also held to overall dollars specified in total altogether. Estimate and no penalties.**
 - **Cannot spend more than the total read off the Warrant until there is special District Meeting.**
- Phil Odens - representing the Cotuit/Santuit Civic Association
 - Thanked the Commissioners for the Zoom meetings and recording the meetings.

Motion to adjourn, second, all in favor.