

**Board of Fire Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 12, 2016
7:30pm Mortlake Fire Station**

1. Call to Order: Chairman, Peter Considine, called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. (19:31 hours).

Attendance: Peter Considine, Chairman; Patrick Gauthier; Jeffrey Otto; Stephen C. Breen.
Richard Ives and James Soler were absent with notice. Felix Ramos was absent.

Others Present – Jim Warren, East Brooklyn Fire Chief; Lou Brodeur, Mortlake Fire Chief; Heath Kesling; Matt Bomster; and Tyler Zanni.

2. Review of the minutes from previous meeting.

Motion by J. Otto to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 14, 2016, as presented with the exception of a couple of minor spelling errors. Second by S. Breen. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

3. Public Comments – None.

4. Equipment Discussion

Everyone was in agreement that it was covered pretty well at the last meeting.

5. Department Discussion

P. Considine began a discussion on recruitment.

J. Warren did not get any new applications since the last meeting and he mentioned that tax abatements may help.

L. Brodeur stated that he has not looked into career fairs yet.

P. Considine stated that it would probably be at QVCC.

J. Otto stated that QVCC has a career fair in the spring and will probably publicize it in advance.

S. Breen stated that he could check with Killingly High School and Ellis Tech.

6. Financial Reports Discussion

a. Chart of Accounts

- P. Gauthier distributed two sheets for review: one with questions and one showing suggested sub-accounts.
- J. Otto stated that the State uniform chart of accounts for public safety wanted just one number for all public safety spending. Perhaps this satisfies the State's interest, but not the local interest. He has learned that the State, for the next year or two, will not have any objections if municipalities create additional line items for local purposes, but will require that it be summed up to show one public safety number. He asked for suggestions to help with detail on Town reporting (he referred to a sheet he had submitted last month).
- L. Brodeur stated that both departments are working on trying to come up with a list.
- P. Gauthier referred to the sub-account sheet that he had provided and asked, for example, if utilities should be broken down into sub-accounts: heat, electricity, etc. He asked what the annual report should show.
- J. Otto stated that the sheet he submitted last month is the first cut of how the Town would be interested in seeing the expenditures of the two fire departments. He stated that if there is a need to divide some accounts into sub-accounts, it should be suggested and it can be looked at. He explained that there is a tie-in to the total Town usage for fuel, heat, electricity, telephone, alarm and sewer.
- P. Gauthier stated that they are willing to do it however it is decided, but they need to know up front so they can get it right the first time. He asked about waste removal.

There was a consensus that it should be the same for both departments.

- There was discussion regarding hose testing and J. Otto stated that hose testing and ladder testing are operational expenses.
- Sandra Brodeur stated that she noticed that, in their chart of accounts, hose testing was split into either Vehicle Expense or EMS Expenses based on whether it is mounted to a vehicle or a ladder.
- J. Otto stated that it is a matter of individual opinions and that the departments will have to make their suggestions and consolidate them/make them uniform. He stated that he would not break it down into more than one category.
- J. Otto believes that the reason for listing the sub-accounts under utilities is to make it clear that each of those categories of expense is displayed.
- P. Considine asked if the departments had set up committees. P. Gauthier stated that East Brooklyn has the President of the District and himself. L. Brodeur stated that Mortlake has only been Sandra Brodeur and himself so far.
- J. Otto stated that when it gets close to an agreement, it should be run by the Town Finance Director to be sure it fits into the new software.
- Sandra Brodeur stated that Sherri will be getting them a sample chart of accounts to use to ensure consistency.

There was a consensus that the target date to have a draft of the chart of accounts to the Board of Fire Commissioners would be January 15, 2017. This would give time for the Finance Director to review it.

- J. Otto stated that, since ambulance would be included in this chart of accounts, something should be included under the Fire & EMS expenses for labor costs, etc.

7. Other Business

a. Recruitment Discussion

- P. Gauthier asked if the departments should request additional funds for recruitment. J. Otto explained that the Governor is asking that, when the Departments Heads are putting together their budgets for next year, that they look at a 10 percent reduction from this year's budget. So, there will be a squeeze on State expenditures and the revenue to the towns will be reduced by at least the amount of reduction he is looking for in State spending.
- P. Considine asked if anyone else had suggestions regarding recruitment.
- Heath Kesling stated that they get 12 to 15 applications per year which he considers to be pretty good.
- J. Otto distributed the Fire Reports and stated that there isn't anything to discuss. It is just an update for the month of September.
- There was discussion regarding software. J. Otto suggested speaking with Sherri.
- Quarterly reports are due to the Board of Finance on November 15th.

8. Public Comment – None.

9. Next Meeting – November 9, 2016, at East Brooklyn Fire Department, at 7:30 p.m..

10. Adjourn

Motion by P. Gauthier to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. (19:58 hours). Second by S. Breen. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary

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