

**Board of Fire Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 12, 2021
7:00 pm**

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- 1. Call to Order** - Rick Ives, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. (19:01 hours).

Attendance: Rick Ives; Lou Brodeur; Michael Podzalone; Jeff Otto, James Solar (arrived at 7:06 p.m.), Patrick Gauthier was in and out due to technical difficulties.
Felix Ramos was absent with notice.

Others Present – S. Breen, Mortlake Fire Chief; Jim Warren, East Brooklyn Fire Chief was in and out due to technical difficulties.

- 2. Approve Minutes**
 - a. Regular Meeting of April 14, 2021**

Motion was made by J. Otto to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 14, 2021. Second by L. Brodeur. No discussion.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote (5-0-0).

- 3. Public Comment** – None.

- 4. Equipment Discussion**

S. Breen explained that the Truck Committee met with Mr. Ives and Mr. Otto to discuss the various options and cost savings for the truck. He said that approximately \$90,000 in various options and build/design work had previously been cut. At this point, they are at \$721,000 with Spartan without cutting pieces that would be detrimental to moving forward with the truck. They are continuing to work with the manufacturer to try to realize some more cost savings, but he said that this is the neighborhood that they will need to be in.

Mr. Breen said that they are looking at a Spartan truck: Spartan cabin chassis (Metrostar); body built by Spartan; 1,500 gallon per minute pump; 1,200 gallon tank; one pre-connected pre-charged fuel in the back; extended front bumper; capability of front suction (to be able to use this truck as a nurse truck during tanker shuttle operations and to use to draft from ponds); a light tower for light

capabilities; the hose bed will be capable of carrying 1,500 feet of 5-inch hose; will have sections of hard suction enabling the truck to set up a draft if they need to; six-man cab; custom chassis; no major addition to equipment; equipment that needs to be updated will be updated. Mr. Ives expressed appreciation for the work that had gone into this.

J. Otto stated that, when they are close to finishing negotiations, the Board of Fire Commissioners would like to have a more detailed/accurate list of options proposed to be on the truck before any purchase goes forward.

Mr. Ives asked about the consortium. Mr. Breen explained that Spartan has a program, Source Well, that is similar to, but not the HGAC. Gets you qualified so you don't have to bid. L. Brodeur will give information on the website to Mr. Ives.

Mr. Otto asked if the FC94 cabin chassis had been considered. He explained that it is new and is supposed to be quite cost competitive with commercial cabin chassis, yet provide all of the custom cabin chassis features that you are used to seeing. Mr. Brodeur will look into this.

Mr. Otto stated that the HGAC discount on Pierce apparatus would be about one percent on the price of the vehicle (it may be different for Spartan). Net savings would be approximately \$5,000 on a \$700,000 vehicle.

Mr. Otto stated that the target price, as far as the Capital Committee is concerned, is \$700,000, not \$721,000. Although \$750,000 was put in the budget, the intention all along was to try to buy this truck for \$700,000. Mr. Ives commented that the Capital Committee's goal was to try to get to \$700,000, at the same time maintaining that the Department make sure that they got the truck that they wanted, and got squeeze as much as we could. Mr. Breen stated that they are doing, and will continue to do, everything that they can to keep the price down. Mr. Ives agrees and said that we've come a long way.

5. Department Discussion

S. Breen summarized how things have been going at Mortlake:

- Both ambulances are now in service now. The one that had fallen off of the garage lift is functioning well.
- They plan to be back to in-person meetings in June.
- Activities will be starting up again at the Fairgrounds, so they will be providing EMS and fire coverage as needed.
- Things are picking up.
- There is opportunity for Fundraisers return to normalcy: Chicken Barbeque in July; Golf Tournament; there will be a Fair this year.

See below, under Item 7, Other Business, for J. Warren's summarization for East Brooklyn.

a. Recruitment – No discussion.

b. Retention - No discussion.

c. Paid Staff - No discussion.

6. Financial Reports Discussion

Mr. Otto stated that there is another month-and-a-half until the second quarter reports are due. He will bring it up at next month's meeting.

a. Budget Discussion

Mr. Ives stated that the truck is in there right now for up to \$750,000 and he thinks that will stay in the Capital. It can be changed when we get to the bonding. Public Hearing – June 2nd. Meeting – June 16th. Working to keep the mill rate as low as they can.

Mr. Otto commented that we are moving forward at an unsustainable pace with new capital requests and there may come a time when the Town will not be able to purchase everything that everyone wants. He suggested that a more disciplined approach toward capital projects would be to update and enlarge the capital plans for certain types of equipment (Fire Apparatus Plan). He suggested that, once the details of the purchase of this vehicle for Mortlake are finalized, the Board of Fire Commissioners take on renewing/updating the 15-or-20 Year Capital Plan that has been in place for many years. Mr. Ives explained that they will try to make the public more aware.

7. Other Business

Mr. Otto spoke about an incident, regarding an OSHA inspection of the Fire Department in Colchester that happened about a year ago. Colchester has two separate organizations for volunteers and paid staff (the two organizations have the same officers). It was found that they had been operating with turn-out gear that was more than 10-years old (which is forbidden under OSHA regulations) and there were some SCVA bottles (composite) that were more than 15-years old (max lifetime is 15 years). There was a \$10,000 fine levied against the Town of Colchester by the OSHA Administration and the Fire Chief was terminated within two days.

Mr. Otto asked that the Fire Departments provide a complete inventory of their SCVA bottles including any hydrostatic testing that has been done from their own records from past hydrostatic testing.

Mr. Breen said that he can provide the records and explained that they have been absolutely diligent about making sure that they are outfitted for firefighting with gear that is less than 10 years old, SCVA's are in check, they are flow tested, bottles are hydro-tested annually and as needed. He stated that the Officers and Board of Directors that are currently in place are very driven by the safety of the firefighters. He feels confident that, when it comes to personal protective equipment/gear, they are in pretty good shape, even as far as their training records database. He said they could provide reports.

Mr. Otto explained that he was speaking from a Town responsibility point of view. He stated that they would also need attendance records and he explained that OSHA looks at records for the equipment and then looks at the records for response to see if the numbers match up.

J. Warren summarized for East Brooklyn (he had been having technical difficulties):

- Air packs are good. They are on a lease program (fifth year).
- Bottles are flow tested and are all set.
- Air Quality is good and gets tested monthly.
- Will provide a list for the Town's records.
- Two new Members.
- Will be able to do fundraising this year.

There was discussion regarding the water line being extended past the jail (three houses down). There is now a hydrant about 150-200 yards further down on Route 6 in the area of Brooklyn Market (across the street).

Mr. Ives stated that he is proceeding with getting the numbers for a plan for an East Brooklyn hook-up with a hydrant. The Town Engineer is working on it.

There was discussion regarding when meetings will be in person. Mr. Ives stated that the June meeting may possibly be in person, but if not, absolutely in July.

8. Public Comment – None.

9. Next Meeting – June 9, 2021 (East Brooklyn).

10. Adjourn

Motion was made by J. Otto to adjourn at 7:36 p.m. (19:36 hours). Second by M. Podzalne. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote (5-0-0).

P. Gauthier was not present at this time due to technical difficulties.

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary

***PLEASE NOTE: Meetings to continue to be held via WebEx until they are able to be held in person at the Fire Stations.**