

## Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Monthly Meeting

Meeting called by:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	April 17, 2008 at 18:00 to 19:50
Note taker:	Janine Vary	Place:	Center Street Station

Attendees: Comm. Bob Watson, Comm. Kevin Waldron, Treasurer Roland Seymour, Chief Steve Carrier, Deputy Mike Robinson, and Secretary Janine Vary. Absent: Comm. Tom Gallant. Members of the Public: Gretchen and Bill Wilder

Comm. Watson called meeting to order at 6:04PM. Bob is going to bypass the review of the minutes because there was no chance to read them. Will go onto treasurer's report.

Roland: Bank Account Balances report: the \$51,331.11 in the Apparatus & Equipment Fund is after making the payoffs of the leases voted on at annual meeting. Operating Account balance is \$124,994.91 as of 4/15/08. Payroll balance is \$500, just a clearing account. The Capital Reserve Fund balances are \$239,442.36 as of 2/29/08, he doesn't get the statements, so this is the same balance as it was in last month's report. May have been some interest in March; he is not aware of any transfers or deposits. There is 3.2% average interest on these NH PDIP accounts. Next is Apparatus & Equipment Fund report that shows 3 months of earnings. \$68,817 is 3 months. If we continue at that average, we would easily make the predicted estimated \$235,000 earnings for this year. Also noted on here the amounts that were paid to pay off vehicles.

The Operating Budget he collapsed the report to fit one page. The budget has been entered. We added line 2530 for Revenue Line for "Unreserved Funds". The budget voted on was \$1,388,631. Roland hand wrote in balances at bottom. For Tilton and Northfield, these are best estimates for revenue for the year. Took the miscellaneous items and added the \$150,000 and subtracted that total from the total budget. We have used a formula of Tilton at 61% and 39% for Northfield, but these are best estimates. We have to wait for final word from DRA with the final numbers. DRA doesn't issue a final number until the end of October. Kevin moved to accept Treasurer's report as printed and Bob seconded. Treasurer's report accepted as printed.

Chief's report: We had a review of 2005 and 2006 Fire Act Assistance Grants. Not an audit but they review the paperwork as auditors. They did make some minor adjustments so that if we are truly audited we would have everything in order. Chief attended the Executive Fire Officer Program Graduate Symposium at Emmitsburg, MD which was excellent. We are starting to plan an emergency operations drill with the Police Chiefs of both towns, CCNTR and NH Dept. of Safety. Met with Leigh Cheney from Dept of Safety and Jim Richardson from CCNTR. Met with consultant, Jane Hubbard and Tilton Police Chief Cormier today. Putting together a review of emergency operation plans and a table top exercise. Estimated cost of \$15,000 but there are grants that will pay for this. Chief Cormier will ask selectmen in Tilton to give him permission to apply for the grant. There is also money for the time for personnel would be paid for participating. We could submit a bill to the town for any expenses we incur. Chief also attended Congressional Fire Service Institute activities in Washington DC. Trip paid by NH Assoc. of Fire Chiefs. Saw senators and congressmen and actually sat down with senators for discussion. They talked about fire act grant, legislation and other items that directly affect fire service. The reauthorization of fire act grant was fully funded shortly after that. Our engine was covering in Gilford for Chief Mooney's funeral when fire at Fireside Inn in Gilford occurred. Our crew did a great job with Laconia and Belmont at containing that fire.

Kevin asked what the "internal building committee" was. Chief replied it is a committee they put together due to Tilton's study and due to current status of our buildings here, look at what our future needs might be. There are 6 or 8 members on it and coming up with what we may need in the future should we even enter into a building project. Kevin asked how we provided Gilford coverage. Chief said it wasn't our duty crew. It was 3 call people and Jon Powell. No other questions on Chief's report.

Fire prevention report. Chief presented for Brad who was not here. Brad wanted to point out that the numbers are lower for last month because he was in fire officer academy in Concord for two weeks in March. Most impressive thing is that Walgreen's has started putting steel posts for construction. Cross Mill Road is on hold, South Bay Resort is on hold. Chief doesn't think the Winnisquam River Health Care facility has been finalized yet.

Commissioners reviewed the report from LRFMA for year to date calls for their region. Chief said this report has been sporadic in the past but it seems like they are back on track doing monthly. Chief said in Jan. and Feb. we were real busy.

Kevin asked about Home Depot. Chief reported they did a pseudo flow test to see what kind of flow they would have and found that it is insufficient. They will have to replace the tank.

### Old business

Items: Goal Setting and the Web site.: Bob recommended we wait until we have our third commissioner. Chief's evaluation, commissioners though that had been taken care of. Chief said there is supposed to be something in writing to him for his

record.

Credit card application, Chief hasn't picked it up yet.

Chief said Greg Michaud just finished his fire officer's training. In Feb. or March we had discussed Greg Michaud getting a dollar more an hour raise after budget approved at District meeting. He wanted to confirm that he can be promoted to Captain and get that dollar an hour raise at this time. Chief felt it was already voted on to follow what the memo said. Janine was looking for the minutes from the nonpublic session of February 28, but could not locate at that time. Commissioners decided to continue on with the meeting.

#### **New business**

Chief presented the Commissioners with a Memo from Brad. He is requesting that the 48 hours of vacation time that he would lose on his anniversary date of May 2 be carried over through May 31, 2008. He plans on using 48 hours on May 13 and May 15, 2008. Bob didn't have a problem. Kevin moved to approve Brad's request to use his remaining vacation hours as per his request and Bob seconded. Both commissioners voted in favor.

Chief also presented Commissioners with a letter he received from the employees that they are forming a union. At this time Chief doesn't see how it will impact the dept. operations because they are not forming a bargaining unit. Brad wanted to be here to discuss with the commissioners and was going to wait until next month but Chief offered to present the letter to the commissioners for him. Chief was given a letter of courtesy but he is not a member. The only time it will affect the district is if they form a bargaining unit. They would have to petition to become a bargaining unit to the Labor Board. Mike asked if this is a typical step to become a bargaining unit. Chief said it is an initial step but is not necessary. There was more discussion regarding members forming a union.

Chief has a purchasing request. Has a request to buy 2 double, inch and half female adapters at \$23.50 each from Fire Tech and Safety. This is a new purchase and would come out of the fire equipment line. Kevin doesn't understand why this request is here. Chief said it says in the Purchasing Policy that any new equipment being purchased has to be approved by the commissioners. Bob and Kevin approved this purchase.

Chief also has a request to buy some water rescue boots. A company called NRS gave best estimate. Max of \$315 for 4 pair and he has three prices from different distributors. Chief explained that not everyone has boots. The boots provide protection for the rescue suit as well as protection for their feet. Kevin asked how many rescue suits we had. Chief thinks 6. Swift water suits are different from ice rescue suits. The boots that we have been using are Lt. Harris's boots. Bob and Kevin approved this purchase also.

Chief stated that we were approved to replace the engine on the boat at district meeting. The cheapest quote is from Life Raft and Survival Equipment out of Portsmouth, RI for a price of \$4995.95, this includes a gas tank. Another bid had \$5130 with no gas tank. This is to replace the motor and lower unit. We have done a lot of work with Thurston's and Winnisquam Marine. It is a jet engine on the bottom, no prop. Mike explained it will suck stuff up in shallow water but longevity it holds up very well. Although out of state vendors, these are large outboard motor dealers. Mike felt you could go to a local Johnson dealer to see what their prices would be. Chief agreed, but you have to pay more because they would have to ship it from out of state to get it here. We could sell the existing motor. Kevin asked about the one we have. Chief explained that the carburetor keeps stalling, can't keep it running. Mike said the guy who wants to buy the old one will probably use the lower unit over and junk the engine. Kevin said we don't have anything local. Chief said Sean tried but went with the prices of the larger dealers. Mike feels you are paying an \$800 to \$1000 premium for the jet drive. Kevin asked how much higher the local people are, Chief said he would have to call FF Valovanie. Mike said he would be curious with what locals are pricing at. They've given us extra boats when doing a water rescue; they've always been very supportive. Kevin said he agreed, he would like to stay local. Chief said then do we get 3 low quotes and then 3 local quotes for items? He trusts FF Valovanie did this but he needs to understand what the Commissioners want. Kevin said his personal business preference is to buy local but not at all costs. Chief stated the lowest quote is \$4995.95. Kevin asked where engine is serviced. Chief said it can be serviced anywhere locally that services Yamaha. Mike said Evinrude also makes a motor like that. We had information that the Yamaha was more dependable and cheaper. Thinks is it s 2 stroke engine. Chief will ask FF Valovanie to clarify the local purchase price.

Chief has a request from FF Merriam for us to use Bergeron as sole source for bunker gear. He had a memo from FF Merriam explaining request. Kevin asked if they are the only NH based globe distributor. Chief said yes, and they now make Cairns, too. Bergeron handles them both. Cairns is usually more expensive. Kevin moved to make Bergeron as a sole source provider for bunker gear for 2008 and Bob seconded. Both commissioners voted affirmative to approve sole source provider.

Chief also had a request from FF Merriam for a total of three sets of bunker gear. Two sets of bunker gear are for replacement and one for Joubert as a spare set,. The total for the 3 sets of gear come in at \$4471.12, all itemized for costs. This would be a

Bergeron purchase. Kevin asked if they make more than one level of protection. Chief said yes. FF Merriam was available to explain the gear construction. Gear is broken into 3 layers and there are multiple options for all 3 layers. We go with standard mixture of the 3. It's not the best and not the lowest. He has the figures if commissioners were interested. It's a mixture of thermal heat loss and heat protection, breathability and protection from heat. These will be "G Extreme", we used to get RSL, but found the G Extreme is more cut to fit for performance and we decided to go with this model. He just attended a seminar put on by Globe and he learned quite a bit. FF Merriam also stated that purchasing through Bergeron's, Rich will be here that day or next if we call him with a repair and really feels that by keeping it local we are getting the best service. Both commissioners approved the purchase of gear.

Chief reported that it is time to test ground ladders and the aerial device. Only two outfits that do this and the lower quote of \$1252 came from American testing. They have done this testing in the past. It is for all ground ladders and the aerial. We do have a list of repairs for the aerial ladder but it would have to be driven up to Canada to get done, which was discussed in past meetings. It was service tested last year and it wasn't repaired. Hopefully they won't find anything worse because that would take it out of service. This testing is required through NFPA standards. Both Bob and Kevin approved the ladder testing through American Testing.

Chief reported the generator with a built in PTO on the rescue is out of service. This is the second time the bearings have gone in the generator. Quote of \$4000 to rebuild and restore it. The generator is at North American Fire in Hooksett. They are waiting our approval to do the work. Bob asked what it is worth new, Chief didn't know. Mike said this is PTO driven and not vehicle driven; maybe \$25,000. Chief explained that the PTO shaft goes into the bearing coupler and there's no boot or protection for it and is exposed to weather. Is there a potential to put a deflector or boot around it to protect it. Truck was built and delivered in 2000 and this is the second time in 4 years. Kevin said this isn't a problem from running the generator it is a problem of it being exposed. Chief said maybe. We run the generator and you start to hear noises and then it starts to rap. Also this is a sole source by default. Kevin said our choices are very limited. Chief said if we could have an onboard diesel generator in a compartment it would be better. Kevin and Bob approved to fix the generator. This is not a budgeted item; it will be under vehicle repairs.

Chief brings up for discussion that Greg Michaud has indicated that he is taking the paramedic program. He asked if there would be any support from the dept. for him to become certified as a paramedic. Chief feels it is a benefit to us and it would be spread over a 3 budget year period. \$1400 first year, \$4900 second and \$1400 in third. That would be \$7700 over three years. He feels we could find the money in the training budget. This has been an item that was discussed with previous commissioners and they expressed great concern about paying for paramedic training. Kevin asked why. Chief said the person got the financial assistance left the service shortly after and the district did not get any benefit from the investment. Chief said it is a very labor intensive program and Greg is not looking to be paid his time involved with this certification. Chief said we do have a training policy where we ask for a two year commitment to TNFD for such an investment. Kevin's only concern is the loss of the personnel. Discussion on training policy. Currently we pay after certification is achieved, Chief said it was different here. Feels it would be more realistic to pay as we go. Kevin said we could either pay for it, then if he passes, fine. If he doesn't, Mike suggested to review the policy with Chief and look at in view of the paramedic course. It is a serious investment and will make him more attractive to other places for employment and we don't want him to leave after he is certified. Kevin asked how we pay if he is on shift when his class is in session. Chief said we would have to pay for the OT coverage for him while he is in class and he would get regular pay. Kevin is open but he would like to go over the policy and integrate in specific criteria regarding paramedic training.

Kevin had other business: the check that Janine gave commissioners with her letter of March 21, 2008. He wants it noted in the minutes that the \$1,550.00 check wasn't accepted by the commissioners or the fire district. Janine confirmed this. Also, Kevin will not be here on May 15 for the next monthly meeting. He would like to change next month's meeting to Thursday, May 22, 08 if it is agreeable with everyone else. No conflicts known. Next regular monthly meeting will be on Thursday, May 22, 2008 at 6:00PM. Janine will notify the Tilton Board of Selectmen seeing they wanted to meet with the Commissioners regarding the MRI evaluation result. The Commissioners will have a special meeting on Thursday, May 1, 08 at 5:30 to review all the outstanding minutes. Discussed yesterday's hearing at court regarding Town of Tilton's petition for a re-vote. Judge said he would take all the information under advisement.

Letters from Moderator Kent Finemore to Charlie Hall, Tilton and Kevin Sturgeon, Northfield appointing them to the TNFD budget committee for 3 year terms. Charlie Hall is known by Bob and the budget committee. He was on the budget committee the first year but left after that year due to his wife's death and also Tilton Budget Committee conflicts. Kevin Sturgeon owns a business in Northfield and his name had been given to Gretchen before.

Pay bills – there were two bills on April's manifest that Kevin had a question on. One was a purchase from Bergeron's for gear. Chief explained that these items were ordered before the purchasing policy was instituted. The Fire Tech and Safety is a

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multiple of invoices and this was a number of people who ordered a number of things. Replacement items of gases, inventory replacement of fire hoods, wheel chocks for damaged wheel chocks, filters were replacements, holders for wheel chocks were replacements, Chief wasn't sure if the light box was a replacement item or not. Kevin asked if they always charge shipping costs. Chief stated we use Tod Rix as our rep and he tries to hand carry items to save us the shipping charges. Kevin ok'd the payment of those two bills.

Public comment: Gretchen Wilder asked Chief what NHFA was. Chief said it is the NH Fire Academy in Concord. Chief went to graduation. She asked how many graduations they do. Chief said it is for each major class, like firefighter 1, firefighter 2, company officers, etc. They have a high enrollment. Gretchen asked if NHFA is looking to be a source for recruitment. Chief stated they have a lot of access to many organizations. Gretchen asked when someone at TNFD goes through the necessary education courses to be eligible for another level, is it automatic that they get the promotion. Chief said we reorganized the department last fall; we made full time officers as captains. Carried the current vacancy as a captain, the lieutenants are now the call firefighter officers. We had both levels in the both full time and call, now we have made it this way. The duties for Greg are now at a captain's level. There is no higher rank. We have a captain on at every shift. She commented on the tuition policy, because she has seen changes in policies in private sectors. She stated more companies are defining and refining that if they pay for courses, the employee is like an "indentured servant" for a period of time, they have people sign contracts of employment. They are not always paying the full cost of tuition. She recommends to really look at this because there have been a lot of changes in training policies. Mike said we do have a current policy that covers it, but with paramedic level of training, not necessarily. Gretchen felt it is to our benefit to have a better trained and educated employee.

Kevin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:50. Bob seconded. Vote taken and commissioners adjourned meeting at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Vary, Secretary

**Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:**

**May 22, 2008 at 18:00 at Center Street Station**