

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting Called By: Commissioners

Date, Time: 09/01/2020, 5:30 PM

Transcribed By: Beth Joslin

Location: Park Street Station
149 Park Street
Northfield NH

Call to Order

Commissioner Auger called the meeting to order at 5:39 PM.

Commissioner Auger read the following:

Tonight's meeting may be attended by the public either in person or by calling 1-603-370-3071.

Public comments may be made either in person or via email.

If you are present at the meeting, please wait to be recognized by the Chair, then state your name and address prior to making your comment.

If you are joining the meeting via phone call and wish to comment, please email your comment to comments@tnfd.org. Be sure to include your name and address in your email; otherwise your comment will not be read during the meeting.

Attendance

Commissioners Paul Auger, Jon Cilley, Eric Pyra; Chief Michael Sitar, Deputy Chief Michael Robinson, Deputy Chief Tim Joubert and Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine

Firefighters: Captain Jon Powell, Matthew Gilman, Travis Gosine, Luke Wakefield, Zack Mellett, Brian Dumka, Matt Auger, Daniel Leathers

Public: Gretchen Wilder, Kevin Waldron, Bob Watson, Diane Watson, Adam Sattler, Charles Broughton, Paul Blaisdell, Miles Clark, Kent Finemore, Scott Lewandowski, Bruce Roberts

Old Business

Safer Grant

Correspondence Received

From: kcate@hooksettrentatool.com <kcate@hooksettrentatool.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 3:19 PM

To: Jon Cilley <jcilley.tnfd.fire.commissioner@gmail.com>; Kathy Tobine <KTobine@tnfd.org>

Cc: Kevin Waldron <kevin1waldron@gmail.com>

Subject: 9/1/2020 Commissioners Meeting

Commissioners Auger, Pyra and Cilley

Unfortunately I am unable to attend the above referenced Fire Commissioners meeting. However, I have some concerns and questions that I respectfully submit for inclusion.

- 1. Why is the duly elected Clerk not at regularly scheduled meetings performing the duties and responsibilities of her office in accordance with Article III Section 3 of the Tilton-Northfield Fire District by-laws? RSA 41:16 States that the Clerk shall record all votes. This is not being done contrary to the RSA.*

2. *Why is Kathy Tobine, an employee of the District, attending meetings and providing advice regarding warrant articles, meeting structure and applicable RSA's?*
3. *Regarding the FEMA Grant for funding additional full time fire fighters.*
 - a. *Having watched the videos of the Commissioners meetings as well as reviewed the written minutes of said meetings, from 3/3/20 to 7/21/20 the first discussion of a grant was on 3/3/20. At this time, Chief Sitar informed the three commissioners that grant money was available and outlined the parameters of use of said money. To summarize, Commissioner Cilley stated that it should not be applied for if the budget was approved and not to discuss it prior to or at the annual meeting as it would muddy the waters. Commissioner Pyra stated in no uncertain terms that the grant should not be discussed until the results of the district meeting were known. Commissioner Auger stated that if other cut backs were made, such as over time, he would support it. The Chief stated that if the grant was approved and the budget for additional personnel was not, then the grant should be declined. There was no further discussion regarding this grant until 7/21/20 at which time a member of the public asked the Chief if there were going to be new hires and the Chief stated that there would not be as the public did not want additional hires.*
 - b. *Given that the 1 yr cost for a single fire fighter is approximately \$90,000 plus equipment and uniforms and that the grant only covers, 75% of this cost in the first two years and 35% in the third year, the tax payers would need to fund an additional \$111,500 per fire fighter over the course of the three years at a minimum. At the end of the three years, the tax payers would be responsible for the entire cost of each of these fire fighters, or they would be terminated. The likelihood of their termination is close to zero.*
 - c. *Given that the by-laws clearly state that the Commissioners hold fiduciary responsibility as well as responsibility for developing and maintaining a Department/District Employment Policy to the governing body, and that it does not appear as though the Chief was ever given direction by the Commissioners to apply for this grant, the grant award must be refused as the Chief's application for said grant was beyond his purview having not been directed to do so by the commissioners. Additionally, the governing body to which you are responsible has clearly stated that it does not approve of additional funding for additional staff. Even the Chief recognized this fact in his answer to the public question on 7/21/20.*
 - d. *Given that the fire fighters must be hired within 180 days of the awarding of said grant and that the 2021 District Annual meeting may not be held prior to the expiration of said 180 days, thus not providing the governing body it's opportunity to approve or disapprove of this expenditure, the grant must be refused.*
 - e. *Lastly, I have deep concern with regards to what appears to be the lack of transparency, withholding information from and manipulation of the governing body to which you are responsible by not informing the public of the availability of these funds.*

I respectfully submit these questions and concerns.

Deo Gratias
Kevin Cate
Hooksett Rent A Tool LLC
43 Allenstown Rd
Unit 2
Allenstown NH 03275
Office: 603-625-4944
Mobile: 603-674-0668

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Joyce Fulweiler** <jfulweiler@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 1, 2020 at 12:07 PM

Subject: Congratulations on your Grant!

To: CommissionerAuger@tnfd.org <CommissionerAuger@tnfd.org>

I am so pleased that TNFD & Ems applied for and was awarded a grant to hire four fire fighters. Fire and EMS services are in critical need right now so we are lucky to be the only one in the state! I know we are still in the midst of the Covid Pandemic but the economy will come roaring back like never before. Our communities will continue to grow as more and more people seek out our beautiful Lakes Region to live. Also, It is important to remember that our population is living longer and wants to "age in place" which increases the need for professional and timely emergency services. And last but not least, We are not out of the woods yet with the opioid crises and the increase of hospitalizations for mental health related issues. We need emergency personnel now more than ever.

So please, vote to accept this grant that will strengthen and serve the members of our community.

Thank you,
Joyce Fulweiler
20 Elliott Road
Northfield, NH 03276
603-520-2228

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Joyce M. Fulweiler
20 Elliott Road
PO Box 3007
Northfield, NH 03276
603-520-2228

Discussion

Gretchen Wilder recommended that they discuss the emails first before public comment. Commissioner Pyra states that they should talk about the structure of the grant as that is mentioned in 3B of Kevin Cate's email.

Chief Sitar stated that the grant was awarded for \$925,000 to be used over 3 years. Chief Sitar explained the breakdown of how the funding of the grant works. Chief Sitar stated that in the first year if all four new members choose a single person health plan then they will have an excess of \$28,557.72. If all four members chose a family health plan the district would have a balance owed of \$38,871.24. Chief Sitar states that the reason health insurance isn't covered fully is because they are given an allowance based on the average of all employees from the previous year. That is what they know based on current costs.

Public Comment/Members of the District/Employees of the District

Gretchen Wilder, Northfield, asked if the new hires will be coming in at entry level? Will they not be receiving a raise in those 3 years? Chief Sitar responded that the new hires will be coming in at a

starting salary of \$43,000. After six months they will receive a raise, after one year they get a raise and every year after that the commissioners decide if there will be raises. Gretchen asked if the health insurance was a multi-year plan where the rates will not be going up? Chief Sitar responded that the health insurance rates are adjusted annually. Gretchen asked if they will make the hires know that they are being hired with FEMA money and that after 3 years it is up to the voters. Chief Sitar stated that it would they would have full disclosure. Gretchen asked if uniforms and physicals were included in the FEMA grant. Chief Sitar replied that it was not, the district would cover that.

Paul Blaisdell, Northfield, commented that the numbers given are for the first year, best case there is a surplus of \$28,000, worst case there is a deficit of \$38,000. Do you have those same numbers for the second and third year? What would be the cost on the fourth year when the grant has expired? Chief Sitar stated that he does not have those numbers because there were too many variables in regards to the health insurance rates and whether the commissioners approve a raise. Paul asked if we were to assume that there were no raises and the health insurance stayed the same, what might those numbers be?

Commissioner Cilley explained that the SAFER grant requires that someone hired for that position is for fire response meaning that at least 50% of their duties must be fire response not ambulance. He asked Chief Sitar whether physicals would be covered in the grant. Commissioner Cilley also stated that the cost for gear and uniforms was about \$5,000 per person. Chief Sitar commented that that number included physicals as well. Discussion continued regarding the details of the grant.

Miles Clark, Northfield, asked why the grant was not mentioned to the public at the district meeting. Commissioner Cilley responded that the district meeting it needed to be held as if it were held on its original date. Also, there was nothing to tell as they had just been awarded the grant. Miles asked if the commissioners were aware of the grant at the meeting. Commissioner Cilley replied that they were aware they had applied. Miles asked if they felt they were circumventing the public by not mentioning it at district meeting.

Kevin Waldron, Northfield, asked the Commissioners why they want to go ahead with the grant when it is clear they don't have public approval as the two additional members were voted down at the district meeting. Why do they think its ok to increase the size of the workforce, no matter where the money comes from? When the people who pay the bills said no. He asked if any of them would really show the firefighters the door after three years or would they just put the salaries in the budget and beg for forgiveness instead of asking for permission?

Matthew Gilman, Tilton, commented that he had a different impression from the district meeting. He felt it wasn't that they didn't want more people but the concern was how were they going to pay for it. He believes it is an unbelievable opportunity and hopefully this will give them three years to come up with a plan with the community to pay for it.

Scott Lewandowski, Northfield, echoed Matt's impression of the district meeting. He commented that they should keep in mind a lot of departments apply for this grant and the fact that Tilton-Northfield was awarded one says something. There is a third-party factor looking at our community, an outside person is saying they need addition personnel. He stated that he would hate to lose the opportunity.

Bruce Roberts, Tilton, discussed the rising call volume and how a fourth member would make a difference. He commented that understands there is some cost to tax payers but is willing to pay it because when the ambulance rolls, that's income, but when we have to call ambulances from other departments that is lost income.

Gretchen Wilder, Northfield, stated that they all want that telephone call to be answered. We pay for mutual aid. Matt Gilman commented that they pay for dispatch not for mutual aid. Commissioner Pyra commented that what she is speaking of it LRMFA in Laconia where the 911 calls are answered. Gretchen comments that if it is worst case scenario \$38,000 over 3 years would be \$100,000. If you had to take \$100,000 out of your budget that would be painful. She discussed the budget and stated she was concerned the union will push for a collective bargaining agreement.

Chief Sitar stated that a CBA has nothing to do with the number of the members on the department but with salaries and insurances. Discussion ensues regarding the process of collective bargaining.

Matt Gilman, Tilton, commented that he was speaking as Vice President and stated that they have absolutely no interest in collectively bargaining. He added that they have had a really good relationship with the commissioners for the past 5 years. They have discussions and are able to express their concern. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of a collective bargaining agreement.

Travis Gosine, Franklin, asked to speak as a member of the department. He discussed the number of call members noting that he is the only call ALS provider. He stated that he works full time and its exhausting, waking up at 10 pm because anyone in this room could need an ambulance and knowing he will need to get up in the morning and go to work. He thanked the Chief for applying for the grant.

Paul Blaisdell, Northfield, asked the Chief what the process is moving forward. It is a three-year grant for possibly up to 4 people, how can they address it with fewer than 4 people or with 4 people? What are the timelines? Chief Sitar responded that they were awarded the grant on August 21st and they have until September 20th to either accept it or decline it. Once it has been accepted, they have six months to hire four firefighters. Chief Sitar noted that the intent of the grant is to hire four people, he does not know if that can be adjusted to hire less. It will be up to the voters after three years if they want to keep those four additional personnel on the department. If the district votes no then the last four most recent hires will be let go. Paul if the commissioners accepted the grant is it four people for three years, no exceptions? Chief Sitar replied that he is not sure, but that they will have a contact person when the grant is accepted. Paul asked what the minimum qualification for these positions would be. Chief Sitar replied that they would advertise for a state certified firefighter. Discussion ensued regarding qualifications and the how many applicants they expect.

Kevin Waldron, Northfield, asked where will you put these four people? Where will you house them? Chief Sitar responded that they would be housed in the Center St Station along with everyone else. Kevin asked why all building plans have had more living space if you can fit everyone in the space they have now? Chief Sitar replied that he likes to plan for some amount of expansion. Discussion ensued regarding living quarters.

Diane Watson, Tilton, commented that she believes it is a great idea because with COVID and everything going on the department could lose a guy for 14 days. It would be nice to have more people so that if there is more than one emergency you aren't waiting for someone to come from another town.

Chief Sitar explained that the primary reason they need an additional person per shift is because 20-25% of their call volume are calls that happen at the same time. 70% of those are EMS related. With only three people they cannot run two ambulances, having a fourth person allows them to get the second ambulance out. Currently the district uses mutual aid ambulances about 12 times per month. Being able to do those transports ourselves would provide an additional \$5,000 per month in revenue.. He continued to discuss the benefits of the grant for the district.

Deputy Robinson commented that they have an incredible opportunity to try something and they can back out after three years if its not a good fit but they can try it. He commented that he was unable to attend the previous meeting because as a call member he was responding to calls after the duty crew had already been called out. Last night the call members helped cover four additional calls because the duty crew was already on a call. This is a perfect opportunity; they might as well try it.

Commissioner Pyra commented that one thing to consider as Chief Sitar mentioned is that adding extra runs will increase the revenue to the apparatus and equipment fund. At district meeting they could look at taking that additional revenue and using that to cover some of the additional cost hiring these members will create.

Gretchen stated that Chief Sitar had stated that there was 15-20% of billing that the district was not collecting on. She wanted it to be clear that running more calls may not mean that they will collect that money.

Paul Blaisdell stated that it is important to remember that some of that money that is not collected is because services were provided to tax payers. Rather than have them pay taxes and then also get a bill for services they already pay for, some of that money is uncollected from residents. Chief Sitar explained how the billing process works.

Jon Cilley stated that he has been considering a lot of things; cost, sleeping arrangements, requirements of the grant. He asked what the percentage of medical vs fire calls was? Chief Sitar replied that it is 65-70% medical calls. Commissioner Cilley commented that they would be going into this at a deficit because the new hires need to be responding to 50% fire calls. Discussion ensued regarding grant specifications.

Commissioner Auger asked if there were any more questions or comments.

Gretchen asked if they would be making a determination tonight to accept the grant or not. Commissioner Auger replied that he would like to discuss it tonight but does not want to make a decision tonight. Gretchen feels there is an awful lot of information in a grant and you have to take your time to wade through it.

Matt Auger addressed Gretchen stating that we were approved for the grant, and Plymouth's department who's call volume is about 200 behind ours, was denied. Clearly with the information the Chief is providing to FEMA and to the towns people is saying that we need this grant. Discussion ensued regarding the percentage of people who have insurance. Discussion ensued regarding volunteering and community involvement.

Deputy Robinson commented that he thinks we should look into what revenue the district has lost because they were unable to provide the service. Discussion ensued regarding the revenue versus expenses.

Paul asked what the plan and schedule is for moving forward.

Commissioner Auger replied that his plan is to find out what its going to cost. There are a lot of things that will need to be taken into consideration, like needing to cover overtime and medical insurance. There are some big costs that we will need to pay for.

Chief Sitar replied that the grant pays a stipend for insurance whether they take insurance or not. The stipend is the average of all the insurance plans from last year. Commissioner Auger commented that he thought he had read that it would cover the firefighter and one additional person but nothing about a family plan. Discussion continued regarding insurance coverage.

Paul stated that he heard a lot of questions and wants to know if there is going to be another meeting.

Discussion ensued about meeting dates to further discuss Safer Grant. Commissioner Cilley made a motion to meet on September 8, 2020 at a time to be determined. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed. Chief Sitar requested all questions be submitted prior to meeting on September 8th.

Park Street Tower

Chief Sitar stated the proposed tower at the Park Street Fire Station was with the building zone of appeals, he believed they have had four meetings on it and at the most recent meeting it had been continued to Monday, September 28, 2020 at 7 pm. They may at that time determine whether to support or not support, but it's possible they will also continue. He stated that he made a list of benefits in the form of a letter. He went on to describe benefits of the tower. Chief Sitar commented that Wireless edge will be gifting the department the equipment they need and housing that will be mounted on the tower.

Commissioner Auger commented that to him it sounds like a great opportunity but a lot of people are concerned about the looks of it. Chief Sitar addressed the looks and stated that back in August they did a balloon test. He noted that the balloon could be seen from the off ramp and from the ball field but otherwise you only really see it if you are looking right at the fire station. Commissioner Auger stated

that the only drawback he sees is how is it going to effect any changes to the Park St Station. Chief Sitar replied that it was planned to be put in the far corner of the lot so that it doesn't affect any future plans.

Commissioner Pyra asked about conduit/power and if it will run from the building; will it need to be moved if they build. Chief Sitar replied any power will come from the street; it is his belief that it will all be underground. Commissioner Pyra commented he would like to see the photos from the balloon test and expressed concern regarding the look. Commissioner Pyra commented he thinks it will be good to build local communications, noting that police and others could get onto it as well.

Commissioner Cilley stated that he had some questions. Discussion ensued regarding size and building specifications. Commissioner Cilley asked if it will be built with breakaway points so if it were to fall it won't damage the station. Chief Sitar replied that it is engineered that if it were to fail it would be at the 60' point and noted that they have engineered into the design to allow for flexibility to allow for future of expansion of the department. Discussion ensued regarding the potential impact of the fall zone of the tower.

Kevin stated that though he is chair of the board of selectmen in Northfield he wanted to make it very clear that he is not at this meeting in that capacity. He commented that they should have known this would go before the zoning board and should have gotten approval before signing a lease. All the benefits the Chief has for the tower he doesn't believe qualifies for a waiver from the fall zone requirements. Continues his thoughts disagreeing with the tower and the fall risk.

Discussion ensued regarding ZBA and members needed for a vote.

Commissioner Cilley asked if the department's radios do not currently work in town. Chief Sitar responded that it depends on the channel and the frequency or where you are calling from. The new tower is meant to improve the service, it will never be 100% because of the terrain but it can be better. Discussion ensued regarding other towers and the quality of the radio service.

Commissioner Cilley made a motion to consider submitting a letter to the Town of Northfield for the Commissioners opinion of the tower. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. Commissioner Cilley commented he still has concerns and is not in favor of sending a letter. The fire district didn't bring it to the town, it was the lessee who brought it to them. He commented he will go with Boards decision. Commissioner Pyra commented he would sign it. Commissioner Auger commented he will sign it. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Chief's Report

Budget

- The audited Unassigned Fund Balance is \$562,058.
- Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund balance through August: \$723,759.27
- 2019 Ambulance Revenue through August: \$285,060.71. We have collected \$18,286.88 more than this time last year.
- We are 66.84% through the budget year and have expended 65.6% of the voted budget.
- The voted budget for 2020 is approximately 10% less (\$255,313) than the voted budget for 2019.

Fire Prevention Report for August 2020

- Report included in handout
- For the Month of August, there were 56 Fire Prevention inspections.

Run Report for August 2020

- Report included in handout
- For the Month of August, we had 190 incidents.
- 121 of the incidents were EMS in nature and that equates to 64% of our total incident volume for the month.
- The Engine responded to 37 EMS and MVA incidents last month.

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- We are 69 incidents above where we were this same time last year.

Overlapping/Simultaneous Incidents for August

- Report included in handout
- We had 42 overlapping/simultaneous incidents for the month.
- Overlapping/simultaneous incidents account for 22% of all incidents for the Month of August.
- Of the 42 simultaneous incidents TNFD responded to 35.
- We received 9 mutual aid Ambulance responses.
- We responded to 0 mutual aid Ambulance requests.
- We received 8 mutual aid Engine responses.
- We responded to 2 mutual aid Engine requests.

Apparatus

- Polaris: Chief Sitar commented he has identified the budget line where the \$500 for the parts to repair the roll cage will come from. It is 430.06 Park Street Alarm Monitoring. It is no longer needed as we receive that service for no charge due to our agreement with Kingfisher. The Polaris has been repaired.
- Car 3: The repair estimate is \$1,500 and the trade in value is \$2,500. The estimator does not take into account that the vehicle is used as an emergency response vehicle.
- A2: It has developed a CO problem within the patient compartment. They believe it is from an exhaust leak and has been sent out for repairs.

Training Burn

- Scheduled for Sunday, September 20, 2020, starting at 0500 hours.
- Planning to burn in 3 houses on Main Street and Morrison Ave.
- TNFD, Franklin, Sanbornton, Belmont, Laconia, Gilford, Canterbury will be participating.
- WMUR will be on scene to film a segment that will air on NH Chronicle during Fire Prevention Week, usually the first week in October.
- State Fire Marshall's office has been invited to participate.

COVID-19

- No employee unprotected exposures.

Center Street

- Nothing to report.

Park Street

- Once the new SCBA compressor is installed, the bathroom will be renovated to include a shower.

New SCBAs

- The new compressor has arrived at the vendor. Looking to install it the second week of September.

Fire Department Radio System

- Park Street
 - Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing for proposed tower has been continued.
 - Fall Zone Setback Variance
 - Special Exemption for removal bond.
 - Balloon test conducted August 3, 2020.
 - Next meeting is September 28, 2020.

Personnel

- One Call Company application in process.

Fire Station Committee

- No money appropriated for any fire station engineering or design in the 2020 Budget.

Currently Working On

- COVID-19 Grants
 - May 2020 – awarded \$9,121
 - October 2020 has not opened yet
- 2021 Budget
- Call Company recruitment
- Capital Improvement Plan
 - New Ambulance – 2021 Budget
 - New Engine – 2021 Budget
 - New Car 3 – 2021 Budget

New Business

Projected 2020 Budget Deficit

Chief Sitar commented that to date they will run a deficit of about \$51,070. He has gone through the budget line by line to see where there was money they didn't have to absolutely spend. One place was the COVID grant, there were several other line items that if things pan out the way he hopes they will make up about \$35,350 so at the end of the year they will probably still have a deficit of \$16,000-\$20,000. He stated they will likely have to go to DRA to request permission to over expend which would come from the unassigned fund balance and would not affect the tax rate. He also commented that the request should be made soon because if it is denied he will need to make some drastic cuts. He went on to explain the process of going to DRA. He stated that the main over expenditures are vehicle maintenance and call company salaries as they have put in a great effort this year. Discussion continued regarding places money will be cut from the budget.

Cilley commented they knew there would be crunch, knows that the bylines state that the Chief runs the department based on the financial guidance of the commissioners. He stated that there will be questions that will come up with the safer grant is housing. Chief Sitar commented that they already have a plan for housing. Commissioner Cilley replied that the commissioners should be aware of these plans before they are executed.

Commissioner Pyra commented that he believed the union said that they would buy the bunk bed if it was necessary.

John Powell commented that he is only one vote but that that was something they would probably entertain. He does not believe that in the past the district has paid for beds, the previous and current beds were donated by Tilton School and a local hotel.

Commissioner Cilley commented that public will not support spending more, they drew a hard line in the sand at district meeting. Chief Sitar replied that they don't need public permission to go to DRA. Commissioner Cilley stated that he would not approve any request to the DRA without public awareness. Chief Sitar noted that part of the process is the budget committee having a public hearing.

Succession Planning

Chief Sitar commented his latest departure time is May or June of 2024. One of the things that he looks to do is create a succession plan. Who will be the next Chief, Deputy, Captain? They have in place a promotional process for captain that identifies the best people to move on to that rank. Currently have 2 people that are certified to act out of grade to act as captain. When the captains were asked who wants to be the next deputy, no one volunteers. The reason is because the deputy's job description currently is too much for one person. Currently it is all being done by one person, he is in charge of Fire prevention, all training, and operations. The reason it can be done by one person now is because Deputy Joubert is an all-star. When the time comes to fill the deputy's position, they would ideally like it to come from within, but no other deputy has that much work load. Going forward would like to work with the commissioners to have a conversation. First idea is to have a part time person to be in charge of fire prevention or training. Planning ahead to make that job more manageable for a future person in that roll. No decision needs to be made but would like the commissioner's thoughts.

Commissioner Auger commented that with adding a fourth member he doesn't see why the duty crew can't do inspections like other departments do. Commissioner Auger praised Joubert for the work he does but stated they have to find other ways to make this work with what they have now.

Chief Sitar commented that in their case he believes that the work load has only been increasing and they haven't hired more people to cover that work, and they need to. He discussed the different aspects of the job.

Auger responded that they sent people to get qualified for inspections and feels that they should assist with inspections and paperwork. Chief replied that the duty crew is very busy, they don't have a lot of additional time to do that. Discussion ensued regarding the duty crew's work load and schedule.

Commissioner Auger commented that if they hire four more guys then that may free up people to do inspections. Jon Powell replied that that would be the case IF they hire four more guys as they are already doing paperwork till late at night. Discussion ensued regarding trying to plan ahead and the deputy's workload.

Commissioner Cilley commented that in the last 3 months there have been only about 10 inspections that have been done by someone other than Deputy Joubert. Deputy Joubert replied that they are taking precautions because of COVID and are trying to minimize exposure.

Commissioner Cilley commented that our captains are in charge of only three people where other departments they are in charge of seven. He commented that he wishes that Chief Sitar wasn't out of town all the time at Chief meetings. He believes the fire prevention could be assigned to other firefighters with good guidance or peer mentoring. He commented that he expects the shift captain to take on a lot more of those roles. Discussion ensued regarding captain duties and paperwork.

Commissioner Cilley commented that he sees the next chief as more of an operational chief than an administrative chief.

Commissioner Pyra commented he believes they are getting in to a nonpublic as they are discussing just one person and there are members of his staff present. Commissioner Cilley stated they could go nonpublic. He stated that he thinks they need to look at how the department operates and how it could operate better.

Travis Gosine commented that it looks like a personal attack. Jon Powell agreed.

Commissioner Pyra asked about the time Deputy Joubert spends doing inspections and noted that the travel time between inspections isn't really being accounted for. He expressed concern about burn out, stating that he often has seen the deputy early in the morning. He stated that he is concerned as they enter budget season that adding someone part time may be asking to much with the possible addition of four firefighters but that maybe its something they add in a year.

Chief Sitar noted that he completely understands the concerns but its something he wanted to bring to their attention. Commissioner Pyra stated he would like to know what the costs will be. He commented that Beth is the part time clerk in the office and maybe they can look at that, not sure how pay scale compares. Commissioner Pyra thanked the Chief for providing them with this information and requested the Chief provide them with a spreadsheet showing all the costs.

Budget Workshop Dates

Several dates were discussed. It was decided to hold budget workshops on September 29th at 6 pm and October 27th at 6 pm.

There was discussion to move the regular November meeting from November 3rd to November 10th because of elections.

Sick Time Policy

Chief Sitar commented that they are looking to make an adjustment to the sick time policy. Currently if someone uses sick time and has overtime in the same pay period the sick time is not counted as hours worked so overtime is not paid at the time and a half rate. In theory it sounds great but it is making an

incentive for someone who is sick to come into work. Unfortunately, they work and sleep in tight quarters, if someone comes in sick it tends to go through the entire shift.

Commissioner Cilley asked how often it happens that someone comes in sick to not lose over time. Chief Sitar replied that he didn't have numbers on that. Jon Powell commented that it is at least once a month. Discussion ensued regarding sleeping arrangements and being more susceptible due to being worn down.

Deputy Joubert commented that they are just trying to be proactive.

Commissioner Cilley stated that he sees the benefit and is not opposed. Commissioner Auger commented that it bothers him but he understands it. Commissioner Cilley asked with the tight budget would it cost more or be a savings. Chief Sitar replied that he believed it would be a savings because by coming in sick and causing others to get sick its incurring additional overtime. Discussion ensued regarding the function of the policy.

Commissioner Cilley made a motion that the adjustments to the personnel policy manual; the petty cash portion to be removed as well as under overtime the strike through of *"For both (1) and (2) above, sick time is not considered actual hours worked when calculating overtime. Vacation time, however, is considered to be actual hours worked for overtime computations"* Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2020

The Board agreed to review the minutes at the meeting of September 8th.

Other Business

August 31, 2020 Manifests

The Board reviewed and signed the manifests.

Commissioner Cilley asked about the thermal imaging cameras that were purchased. Chief Sitar explained that are the personal handhelds.

Commissioner Cilley asked about in the warm zone purchases. Chief Sitar explained it was another set for the larger members.

Adjournment

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to adjourn at 9:25 PM. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: September 8, 2020 at 5:30 PM.
Park Street Fire Station, 149 Park Street, Northfield