

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting Called By: Commissioners
Transcribed By: Courtney Palmer

Date, Time: 12/05/23, 5:30 PM
Location: Tilton Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street
Tilton, NH

Call to Order

Commissioner Auger called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM.

Attendance

Commissioners Paul Auger, Eric Pyra, and Tim Sattler; Chief Michael Sitar, Deputy Chief Michael Robinson, Deputy Chief Sean Valovane, and Administrative Manager Kathy Tobine

Appoint District Clerk

Jean Samms was sworn in as District Clerk.

Correspondence

11.17.23 Loureiro regarding TNFD Feasibility Study of 12 Center Street.

Chief's Report

Budget

- The 2022 audit has occurred. We are waiting for the final documentation.
- The 2023 budget has been expended 89.4%. We are 92% through the fiscal year.
- Total Apparatus and Equipment Fund Balance through October: \$951,723.52.
- 2023 Ambulance Revenue through October: \$522,836.07.

Pressurized Hydrant Use

- We used no hydrants in November 2023.

Fire Prevention Report for November 2023

- Report included in handout.
- For the Month of November, there were 70 Fire Prevention inspections.

Run Report for November 2023

- Run report included in the handout.
- For the Month of November, we had 190 incidents.
- 142 of the incidents were EMS in nature and that equates to 75% of our total incident volume for the month.
- The engine responded with the ambulance to 43 EMS & MVA incidents last month.

Overlapping/Simultaneous Incidents for October 2023

- Report included in handout.
- We had 86 overlapping/simultaneous incidents for the month.
- Overlapping/simultaneous incidents accounted for 45% of all incidents for the Month of October.
- We received one mutual aid ambulance response, one transported.
- We responded to one mutual aid ambulance request, zero transported.
- We received three mutual aid engine responses.
- We responded to eight mutual aid engine requests.

Commissioner Sattler asked for the breakdown of the mutual aid received and given. Chief Sitar commented that that mutual aid given was one ambulance call for a car accident in Canterbury. The rest were to go into fires in Sanbornton, Franklin, Concord, and Laconia. They received one mutual aid from an ambulance from Franklin.

Apparatus

- A2 was stuck by a plow while at Irwin's for service. It will be repaired by Irwin's on December 5th & 6th.
- T1 air leak and coolant leak have been repaired.

Commissioner Pyra asked how bad the damage was to A2. Deputy Valovane explained an employee from Irwin hit it when moving a vehicle with a plow. The damage isn't that bad.

Website

- Adjustments to the new website are almost finalized. It is expected to go live within the next few days.

Central Maine Cost Recovery

- Collection efforts are currently at a standstill until CMCR can resolve certain RSA requirements.

Commissioner Sattler asked if there was anything the Board could do to help resolve this. Chief Sitar explained that this has to do with the way the law is written and interpreted by different police departments. The PDs do not consider TNFD collection agencies as agents of TNFD. The state law leaves this open to interpretation. He added that they could probably find a way to get the data from PDs, but they must know which ones they need the data for. He commented that if TNFD were able to collect everything it would be around \$40,000 to \$50,000. Discussion ensued.

Grants

- SAFER Grant is up to date on reimbursements.
- Homeland Security Grant has been awarded in the amount of \$53,853.00 for radio infrastructure upgrades. Equipment has been ordered.
- Applied for an FY 2022 SAFER Grant to extend current SAFER Employees another three years. The grants were awarded and TNFD was not selected.

Center Street

- New security and access control system is running.

Park Street Fire Department Radio System

- The cell tower is operational.
- Receiving monthly checks of \$1,537.50 for rent on the tower lease.
 - The rent will be adjusted upward as tenants come online.

Commissioner Sattler asked if any additional tenants are going on the cell tower. Chief Sitar commented that there are not at this time, but once their anniversary date of when they started working it comes around, TNFD will get a 2.5% raise on rent.

SAFER Effect

- Average response time to second or greater calls: 07:18 from 22:30.
- The cost of a SAFER Firefighter in 2022 would have been \$0.045/\$1,000 on the tax rate in Northfield and \$0.0675/\$1,000 in Tilton.

Personnel

- Call FF/AEMT Michael Lewis resigned.
- Call AEMT Emily Decormier resigned.
- New Career Firefighter Peter Sargent started on Monday, November 27th. He has been assigned to C Shift with Captain Gilman.

Commissioner Sattler commented on the new firefighter. Commissioner Auger wanted to know his qualifications. Chief Sitar responded that Peter Sargent is fully certified and is working on getting his EMT A certification, but already has his EMT Basic certification. Deputy Chief Valovanie stated that he believes that Peter just needs a refresher and tutoring.

Commissioner Sattler commented on the loss of two call firefighters. Deputy Valovanie informed the Board they hired one today, and another has an interview on Monday.

Water District

- Notice of Jury Trial
 - One-day trial anywhere between January 22, 2024, and February 2, 2024.

Currently Working On

- 2024 Budget:
 - Budget Committee Meetings have begun.
- Continue to work with Loureiro Construction regarding plans for a fire station.

Old Business

Department Happenings

Deputy Robinson reported on the boot drive for the Children's Auction. They raised \$1,062 and change. He commented on what a good job Travis always does with it.

Reports of Committees

Building Committee

Commissioner Sattler reported that at their last meeting, they reviewed the Loureiro report on Center Street station. The Committee was disappointed with what Loureiro provided as it was more about parking and less about the building.

The Committee has requested the Board talk with the Town of Tilton regarding Center Street and building a new fire station there.

Extensive discussion ensued about the feasibility of building a new station at Center Street and other site possibilities.

There were questions about what the taxpayers want and if they would choose any of the three site options so far: Park Street, Sanborn Road, or Center Street. Extensive discussion ensued.

The Board requested the Building Committee review the space needs to come up with building square footage for multiple scenarios for a future survey and public forums.

New Business

2024 Meeting Dates

The Board agreed on the following dates for their 2024 monthly meetings. All meetings will begin at 5:30 P.M. unless otherwise noted. Kathy will provide the location for each meeting once it is confirmed. These dates do not include any budget work sessions.

January 2nd, February 6th, March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th, June 4th, July 9th, August 6th, September 10th, October 1st, November 5th and December 3rd.

The Warrant Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for February 8th pending the Budget Committee's hearing date on the Budget. They like to hold the meetings on the same night. The meetings will begin at 6:00 P.M.

District Meeting is scheduled for March 18th. It is being held at Winnisquam Regional High School Cafetorium starting at 7:00 P.M.

2024 Draft Warrant Articles

Article 03 Operating Budget

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Three Million Five Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Six Hundred

Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$3,525,659.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.

Discussion ensued about the 18.48% pay increase that the Budget Committee unanimously voted for.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to recommend Article 3. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 04 Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund Budget

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$225,559.00) for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue, EMS Equipment and Ambulance Charges, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Replacement Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to recommend Article 4. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 05 Purchase New Ambulance

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Five Hundred Fifty-Nine Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$559,520.00) for the purpose of a new ambulance with equipment, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to recommend Article 5. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. Chief Sitar stated that they have already placed the order for a new ambulance with the agreement that if it's not funded, the company will sell the ambulance to someone else. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 06 Purchase New Pickup with Plow

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$79,950.00) for the purpose of purchasing a new ¾ ton 4x4 pickup with plow with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept Article 6. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. Commissioner Sattler asked if the wording was accurate for this article. Kathy responded that these articles will be sent to DRA for review to be sent back with comments and recommendations after the Board votes on them. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 07 Add to Land & Building Fund

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to be added to the Land & Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established and to make the Board of Fire Commissioners agents to the fund.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept Article 7. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is

recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 08 Fire Prevention ETF

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Thousand Six Hundred Twenty-Seven Dollars (\$9,627.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept Article 8. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 09 Fire Prevention Budget

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Seven Hundred Nine Dollars (\$4,709.00) for the purpose of purchasing materials, tools, and equipment related to public education, code enforcement, training, etc., with said funds to be withdrawn from the Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept Article 9. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. A brief discussion ensued about what this fund is used for. Deputy Chief Valovane mentioned smoke detector kits, inspection tags, a fire extinguisher trainer, and a safety trailer. Kathy commented that as of 8/31/23 there is \$47,001.70 in this account. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 10 Health Insurance Deductible ETF

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Hundred Seventy-Nine Dollars (\$879.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing Health Insurance Deductible Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to approve Article 10. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. Kathy stated that this would change by about \$500. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 11 Communications Tower ETF

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Three Thousand Eighty-Nine Dollars (\$23,089.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing Communications Tower Expendable Trust Fund as established by Warrant Article 11 at the 2021 District Meeting with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Sattler made a motion to approve Article 11. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 12 Establish Contingency Fund

To see if the District will vote to establish a contingency fund per RSA 31:98-a and raise and appropriate Thirty Thousand One Hundred Twenty-Seven Dollars (\$30,127.00) to put in the fund. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to recommend Article 12. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and is/is not recommended by the Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Article 13 Transact any other business

To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

Commissioner Pyra asked if any known new warrant articles are coming. Kathy said not at this time.

2024 Ambulance Rates

Commissioner Sattler made a motion to set the 2024 ambulance rates listed and to authorize Chief Sitar to add the rates, effective January 1st, 2024. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. Chief Sitar explained how he calculated the 2024 ambulance rates. Commissioner Auger asked what percentage COMSTAR gets from payments. Chief Sitar responded 6%. Discussion ensued. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2023, Public

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2023.

Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

November 7, 2023, Public

Commissioner Auger made a motion to approve the minutes of November 7, 2023, as amended. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. Commissioner Sattler requested that the word "requests" on page two be changed to "responses". There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

November 7, 2023, Nonpublic Session II

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to approve Nonpublic Session II minutes of November 7, 2023. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

Any Other Business

The manifests of November 30th were reviewed and signed.

Public Comment

Nonpublic Session I

Commissioner Sattler made a motion to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II(I) *Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.* Commissioner Auger seconded the motion.

Roll Call vote to enter nonpublic session: Paul Auger, Yes; Eric Pyra, Yes; Timothy Sattler, Yes

Motion passed. Nonpublic session was entered at 8:25 P.M.

Commissioner Sattler made a motion to leave nonpublic session. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote to exit nonpublic session: Paul Auger, Yes; Eric Pyra, Yes; Timothy Sattler, Yes
Motion passed.

Public session reconvened at 8:48 P.M.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to seal these minutes until such time as the matter is resolved. Commissioner Sattler seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

Commissioner Sattler asked why the dollar amount for the fix for the tanker was \$2,600. Chief Sitar responded that it was because of parts and labor.

Adjournment

Commissioner Auger made a motion to adjourn at 8:51 P.M. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney Palmer

Courtney Palmer
Administrative Assistant

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:

January 2, 2024, 5:30 P.M.
Tilton Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street
Tilton, NH