

Chester Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes – August 16, 2023
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The Chester Board of Fire Commissioners met on August 16, 2023 at the Fire House, 6 High Street. In attendance were Bob Bandzes, Bob Quale and Rick Schreiber. Ex-officio member attending was Fire Chief James Grzybowski. Also present were Fire Marshal Dick Leighton, President Rich Tsou, Captain Jim Schaefer and Assistant EMS Chief Parker Divis.

Item 1: Call to Order

Vice Chair Quale called the meeting to order and noted all who were present.

Item 2: Audience of Citizens – there were no guests present.

Item 3: Report of Board of Selectmen

There was no one present to make a report.

Item 4. Report of Fire Chief

Chief Grzybowski advised the newly hired Administrative Assistant, Karen Schaefer, started in the position this past week, with training started. Work schedule was reviewed, with times scheduled to give the Chief as much time for coverage as possible. Training time is priority; reports will follow as training and time permit. EMT personnel has been picking up shifts, providing good coverage as needed.

Activity for July was a busy month, while the beginning of August has been slightly slower. The Chester Fair will be the end of August with Department personnel covering the booths. EMS responders will be present on site at all times and ambulance with crew will be available. Fire personnel will also be present. The Department has its own building on the property, available as needed.

Triathlon events have completed for the season, with the four events generating \$1,000 income for the Department for the services and coverage provided. That organization will be holding a swim-only event on September 10, with anticipated participation requiring Department coverage by personnel and equipment. A Closer to Free event will come through Chester, with the Department providing personnel and ambulance at the United Church.

The truck committee has reviewed the contract. A change order is being reviewed and upon approval can be signed, with the contract as modified signed as well. The marine vessel is in the water, undergoing sea trials and making modifications as needed. Additional training and fine-tuning will be performed, following which it will be taken out of the water to have the bottom painted and the minor modifications completed. Additional training for drivers, both current and new, will be conducted upon final completion. Details of additional work put into construction of the vessel, equipment and supplies were noted and discussed.

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Annual DOT inspections of vehicles, pumps and inspections of other equipment is currently being performed, with maintenance performed as needed.

Budget information was distributed and discussed. The 2022-2023 fiscal year ended with an anticipated over-expenditure of approximately \$30,000, and income received of nearly \$300,000, the most ever received. Current budget is about 11% expended.

Item 5: Report of Fire Marshal:

Fire Marshal Leighton distributed activity reports for July 2023 for the Fire Marshal and Building Official, noting it had been “pretty much a routine month”.

The sprinkler system in the Town Hall building has maintenance issues, which are under review. (Pipe from that system to show corrosion was shown.) Other repairs that are needed will potentially require temporary relocation of offices outside of the Town Hall to accommodate construction activities.

Installation of electric vehicle charging stations, potentially located off of Water Street, is being pursued. It was noted that the Water Street location under consideration is within the designated flood zone. Code requirements under which such an installation would be permitted were also noted and discussed. Rich Tsou, Department President, pointed out that the Fire House property would be a better location for installation of charging stations because it is out of any flood zone, is on Town property, and has present parking available with future parking expansion pending, among its positive features.

Connecticut Water Company is completing installation of lateral lines and the pipe over the stream. When completed, the Public Works Department will be able to install drainage and re-pave the surface.

Pending the Public Hearing by the Planning & Zoning Commission in connection with the application for multi-family development of property at 47 Middlesex Avenue, plans have been provided, reviewed, revised, etc. but no further actions can be undertaken at this time. Details were, however, reviewed and discussed.

Item 6: Report of Resident State Trooper

There was no one available to report.

Item 7. Report of Emergency Management Director – no one was available.

Item 8. Old Business:

The Chief was asked about the status of the requested inventory report. He reported it was “on his desk” and, pending receipt and entry of updated costs, it will be available and can be provided. The new truck and equipment will need to be added to be included in the report when completed.

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Item 9. Approval of Minutes of the meeting on July 19, 2023:

On motion by Rick Schreiber, seconded by Bob Bandzes, the minutes of the July 19, 2023 meeting were approved.

Item 10. Reports: Nothing was brought up.

Item 11. New Business:

Item 12. Correspondence: None received.

(Correspondence received for the Chair will be addressed at the next scheduled meeting.)

Item 13. Other – Members or Guests

Item 14. Adjournment:

There being no further business brought up, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bettie Perreault
(Minutes prepared from recording of this meeting.)