

MINUTES OF HAVERHILL FIRE COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, December 11, 2012
Draft Subject to Review, Correction and Approval at Following Meeting

Members Present: Rick Ladd, Howard Hatch, Don Hammond, Shawn Bigelow, Richard Morris, Rich Clifford, Dick Guy, Joe Maccini, Mike Lavoie, and Brad Kennedy

Member Excused: Deb McDanolds, Chris Demers, and Mike Bonanno

Public Present: Ed Ballam

Staff Present: Karen Hyde, Clerk

Staff Excused: Glenn English, Town Manager

Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM

Rick Ladd passed out a packet of information which included Agenda Considerations, Fire Department labor costs, Haverhill Corner Precinct Policies, a sample part-time Fire Chief job description from LGC, and Becoming a Firefighter from the Division of Fire Standards and Training and Emergency Medical Services. He then went over the different categories on the Agenda: Personnel Compensation for Fire Fighters; Personnel Compensation for Fire Chiefs; unique Fire District services, funding needs, responsibility, etc., that should be included in Town-approved funding; Capital Equipment; and Budget Development Steps.

Rick then went to the first item on the Agenda, which was Personnel Compensation for Fire Fighters. It was decided to go from \$10 & \$15/hr. to \$15/hr. across the board for all Uncertified Fire Fighters from the 3 Fire Departments. Certified Fire Fighters would go from \$15 & \$20/hr. to \$20/hr. across the board. EMS would stay the same at \$25. Fire Drills for all 3 Fire Departments would be \$10 if they made 8.

The next item was personnel compensation for Chiefs. A range of \$3,000 to \$5,000 was decided upon, with \$5,000 for current Chiefs and \$3,000 for inexperienced new Chiefs. The more experience, the more stipend they would receive, which would be decided upon by the local commissioners. The Chiefs would receive \$5200 to be dispersed to the other officers as they saw fit and then approved by the commissioners. Don Hammond suggested that Brad Kennedy could do all of the building inspections. Rick Ladd replied that if the Fire Departments got together and worked out a deal with Brad to do this, then they should go ahead and do it, but they couldn't do that through the Town. Haverhill Corner and North Haverhill would be given \$1,000 for building inspections and they could do what they wanted with it.

Rick Ladd then asked if there were any unique situations where someone was going to stand up on the floor and ask why are we funding this? Howard Hatch stated that they had talked about the Opera Block and the County and different places that don't generate income. He suggested a fire tax. A fire tax can be paid by the County to the ones that supply fire protection. A separate line item on the Precinct, a fire tax for the fire protection in Town – it would be a rate and everyone would pay into it. He feels that this would simplify a lot of things. Joe Maccini agreed with Howard because his place in Florida, all of their fire protection was funded by a fire tax. Rick Ladd asked if the Town could charge a fire tax if they didn't have a fire department. The answer was as long as the Town was funding the fire department. Every building, not land, in Town would be charged this tax. Joe Maccini suggested asking the N.H. Municipal Association what the legalities were of the fire tax.

Capital Equipment was the next Agenda item. Rick Ladd stated that they had talked about a Fire Equipment Advisory Committee, which would deal with the buying of trucks. He thought that the Committee would be made up of 4 commissioner reps, 2 members at large, and 3 fire chiefs. He also included the \$5,000 figure because that had been talked about in the previous meeting. He felt that this figure should be higher. Dick Guy asked if the Committee would meet to review the annual budget or meet in the middle of the year if a truck was needed. Rick Ladd stated that the Committee would make sure that if a new truck was needed, that that truck would mesh with the total mission of all 3 departments. There was a brief discussion of buying things in bulk and Don Hammond stated that all 3 departments couldn't buy enough to get a bulk purchase. He said that if Twin States could come up with a purchasing agent, then they could save money. Don Hammond thought that some kind of schedule for buying trucks could be set up. If there was money going into capital reserve every year, they could buy trucks every six or seven years. Rick Ladd stated that these were the kind of issues that the Committee would address. Mike Lavoie and Joe Maccini stated that they thought that the Committee needed 4 members at large so that everyone was represented. It was decided that the Committee would consist of 4 commissioner reps, 4 members at large and the 3 fire chiefs. The sale of equipment would now go back to the Town, as the Town is funding purchases.

Rick Ladd then discussed the budget development steps. (1) Fire department budget prepared by fire chief (large single capital equipment purchases reviewed by Fire Equipment Advisory Committee); (2) fire district commissioners accept and recommend the fire budget to the town manager; (3) fire budget submitted to town manager, town manager includes the fire district budgets within the town budget and submits to the advisory committee; (4) budget advisory committee reviews and makes annual budget recommendation (inclusive of the fire budget) to the town selectboard; (5) selectboard sets hearing and makes recommendation; and (6) town action at annual Spring meeting. Everyone felt that no cuts could be made to their budgets. Rick Ladd stated that any budgets that go to the Town floor could be cut. Dick Guy suggested a recommendation to the Selectboard, pending precinct approval, would be a good idea. It was unanimous that a recommendation to the Selectboard be made on what they had worked on at this meeting.

Adjourn Meeting: The meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde