

**Town of Haverhill  
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 12, 2020**

(All members participated by videoconference because of the COVID-19 pandemic)

**DRAFT / subject to review by the Committee**

**Members Present:**

Brigitte Codling, Town Manager  
Darwin Clogston, Select Board Chair  
Richard Morris, Haverhill Corner Fire Chief  
Jeff Robbins, Woodsville Fire Chief  
Phil Blanchard, No. Haverhill Fire Chief  
Michael Lavoie, Haverhill Corner Precinct Commission Chair  
Dennis Fournier, No. Haverhill Precinct Commission Chair  
Jon Bouffard, St. Johnsbury Fire Chief, Resident of Pike  
Mark Johansen, Mountain Lakes Precinct Commissioner (*proxy for Bob Long*)

**Members Not Present:**

Paul Kidder, Woodsville Precinct Commission Chair  
Bob Long, Mountain Lakes Precinct Commission Chair

**Members of the Public Present:**

Shawn Bigelow  
Renzo Chumbes  
Jennifer Boucher  
Ed Ballam

Brigitte read the CHECKLIST to Ensure Meetings Are Compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the State of Emergency.

The meeting was Called to Order at 6:30 PM.

**ROLL CALL:**

Brigitte Codling (By myself)  
Darwin Clogston (No one is with me)  
Richard Morris (Tony Smith is with me)  
Jeff Robbins (My fiancé is with me)  
Phil Blanchard (I'm alone)  
Michael Lavoie (I'm alone)  
Dennis Fournier (By myself)  
Jon Bouffard (By myself)  
Mark Johansen (By myself)

**Town of Haverhill  
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 12, 2020**

**HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS:**

**Agenda Approval**

**MOTION #1:** Jon moved to accept the agenda as written, and Mark seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Darwin Clogston (Aye), Richard Morris (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Michael Lavoie (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Mark Johansen (Aye), Brigitte Codling (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

**Approval of Minutes from 4-27-20**

**MOTION #2:** Jon moved to accept the Minutes from 4-27-20 as written, and Dennis seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote:** Darwin Clogston (Aye), Richard Morris (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Michael Lavoie (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Mark Johansen (Aye), Brigitte Codling (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES:** None

**PENDING (OLD) BUSINESS:**

**Revisit Rules of Procedure**

Brigitte presented the Fire Department Committee Rules of Procedure. There was consensus to adopt these rules of procedure from the Committee members.

**Review and Discuss Mission Statement**

Mark and Bob provided an email of a Proposed Mission Statement to the Town Manager earlier in the day to present at the meeting, as follows:

“The Mission of this committee is to develop a pathway towards building the best consolidated fire department the Town of Haverhill could field in all the districts and gain the professional input of all our current fire chiefs, volunteer firefighters, Town officials, and the general public to ensure we are acting in the best interest of the Town, as well as the current fire departments.”

Darwin suggested that comments be reserved for the next meeting. Brigitte tabled the Mission Statement discussion until the next meeting.

**Review and Discuss Purpose Statement**

Jon and Phil contributed to the writing of the Purpose Statement. Jon stated the purpose statement, as follows:

1. “...positive and up-to-date change in the delivery of public safety services (Fire, Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue, EMS, Public Health, and Emergency Management)
2. It is the purpose of the Town of Haverhill Fire Department Organizational Committee to examine facts and elicit opinion of the public for the purposes of developing a Town Fire Department and all-encompassing structural elements to deliver a superiorly efficient and fiscally responsible service to residents and visitors of our Community.”

**Town of Haverhill  
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 12, 2020**

Jon continued with an outline and chart of specific purposes of fire departments with multiple lists, including administration, State statutes, equipment, training, capital budgeting, strategic planning, current inventory, community risk reduction planning, performance, service gaps, and more.

Jeff stated how well the departments have worked together as a group in the last 5 years. Brigitte noted that there is some misinformation about forming a Town-wide fire department that has gone out to the public, but the goal is to work collaboratively in this committee. Phil stated that it's a way to make the Town of Haverhill stronger and the fire service cohesive. Jon showed the members feasibility study documents that he has gathered from the Eastern United States for the Committee's review. Additionally, Jon stated that 8 communities have joined together and have awarded a contract for a Regional Fire Protection Study in the area.

**Resume Purpose Statement Development**

Brigitte stated she believed #2 of the Purpose Statement more clearly reflects the work and purpose of this committee.

2. It is the purpose of the Town of Haverhill Fire Department Organizational Committee to examine facts and elicit opinion of the public for the purposes of developing a Town Fire Department and all-encompassing structural elements to deliver a superiorly efficient and fiscally responsible service to residents and visitors of our Community.

Jon expressed the need for the Town Fire Departments to work together to develop a fire service that is cost efficient and reflects the needs of the taxpayer base. Darwin stated that at the Town Meeting the taxpayers voted to have one Town-wide fire department. Brigitte stated that stations are not going to be shut down because the Town needs to examine where services are most needed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**New Haverhill Fire Department Webpage**

Brigitte added a page linked to the Town's website named Haverhill Fire Department that includes a list of members with contact information and a link to the Minutes of the meetings for the public to read. Other documents, as well as, the mission and purpose statements can be added.

**Next Steps**

Brigitte asked that the members go back and read the mission and purpose documents presented by Bob, Mark, Phil, and Jon.

**Town of Haverhill  
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 12, 2020**

**MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Phil discussed that what is being done now is not perfect. His biggest Pro was working together and not being individualized or separate as far as manpower. Staffing will be the most difficult decision. Pro—sharing manpower; one excellent Fire Department; combined we are stronger. Con—we don't know how this is going to work out. This is about providing fire services.

Richard stated as a Pro—to cover the Town with building inspections and that things are working well as they are. Richard discussed payroll as a combined fire service.

Phil noted that staffing is another important discussion needed in the combined fire department.

Jon stated that standards exist. RSA1720 says 15 to 17 firefighters are needed in the first 10 minutes of a fire and that means 60 staff in the department.

Richard suggested that Haverhill Corner and Woodsville keep their fire stations and their men and still go under the umbrella of the Town with a contract.

Phil stated that employees are the biggest asset and nowhere has it been stated that we will lose men or stations.

Brigitte stated that when she has talked about a centrally located emergency services or public service facility, it will include the police department, highway department, and fire services. Three services are required to get federal funding to refurbish the building. And, there would be space for conferences and training.

Brigitte stated that no decisions have been made about who is going to be the chief or any other position because this committee hasn't even developed an organizations structure yet and none of those decisions have been made. And, task-based job descriptions need to be developed, so no one has been placed in positions.

Jeff noted that volunteer firefighters staff the department and now everything is going to change. That's my concern. Con—what is it going to look like? Pro—collaboratively working together.

Brigitte appreciated everyone's input and different perspectives.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

Review the Mission and Purpose statements

Review the Minutes from tonight's meeting

**NEXT MEETINGS:** Tuesday, June 2 & Tuesday, June 16 at 6:30 PM

**Town of Haverhill  
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 12, 2020**

**ADJOURN MEETING:**

**MOTION #3:** Jeff moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mark seconded the motion.  
Roll Call Vote: Darwin Clogston (Aye), Richard Morris (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye),  
Phil Blanchard (Aye), Michael Lavoie (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye),  
Mark Johansen (Aye), Brigitte Codling (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM

*Transcribed by Joanna Bligh*

**Zoom Meeting Recording:**

**Topic: Haverhill Fire Department Meeting (5-12-2020)**

**Date: May 12, 2020 06:18 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Meeting Recording:**

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/vpVOKb73\\_VxLGJHfuW7VGYN6Xbn0eaa8gXAa8\\_ZfyxuYSntub22hN\\_Kw20jBHoKZF](https://zoom.us/rec/share/vpVOKb73_VxLGJHfuW7VGYN6Xbn0eaa8gXAa8_ZfyxuYSntub22hN_Kw20jBHoKZF)

**Access Password: 8Z+2Q801**