

**Town of Haverhill, NH
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 2, 2020**

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

DRAFT / subject to review by the Committee

Members Present:

Darwin Clogston, Select Board Chair, Liaison
Jeff Robbins, Woodsville Fire Chief
Phil Blanchard, N. Haverhill Fire Chief
Doug Dutile, Haverhill Corner Precinct Commissioner
Dennis Fournier, No. Haverhill Precinct Commission Chair
Bob Long, Mountain Lakes Precinct Commission Chair
Jon Bouffard, St. Johnsbury Fire Chief, Resident of Pike
Keith Charpentier, Deputy Chief, Haverhill Corner Fire Dept.

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager: Brigitte Codling
Finance Officer: Jennifer Boucher

Members of the Public Present: None

Brigitte read the CHECKLIST to Ensure Meetings Are Compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

CALL to ORDER: The meeting was **Called to Order** at **7:30 PM.**

Present ROLL CALL:

Brigitte Codling (I am alone)
Darwin Clogston (No one is with me)
Keith Charpentier (I am alone)
Jeff Robbins (I am alone)
Phil Blanchard (There is one person with me)
Doug Dutile (Audio failure)
Bob Long (By myself)
Jon Bouffard (By myself)

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

Agenda Approval

MOTION #1: Jon moved to accept the agenda as written with the addition of the visiting schedule, and Darwin seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

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Approval of Minutes from 5-12-20

MOTION #2: Phil moved to accept the Minutes from 5-12-20 as written, and Jeff seconded the motion.

Keith and Jon had corrections to the Minutes from 5-12-20.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Audio failure). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES: None

Darwin clarified that Keith, Deputy Chief, Haverhill Corner Fire Department, is replacing Richard.

PENDING (OLD) BUSINESS

Reread and Approve Mission Statement

Mark and Bob wrote the Proposed Mission Statement, as follows:

“The Mission of the Fire Department 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.”

MOTION #3: Darwin moved to accept the Mission Statement as written, and Keith seconded the motion.

Jon suggested removing “...best ~~consolidated~~ fire department...”

Brigitte: Those who made the Motion, are you OK with the modification? Darwin (Yes), Keith (Yes)

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Reread and Approve the Purpose Statement

Jon wrote the Purpose Statement and Brigitte incorporated revisions, as follows:

“It is the purpose of the Town of Haverhill Fire Department Committee to examine facts and elicit input from the public, for the purpose of developing a Town Fire Department, including all the structural elements needed to deliver a superiorly efficient, truly effective, and fiscally responsible fire service for the residents of and visitors to the Town of Haverhill. The Committee’s work is to affect positive and progressive change in the delivery of public safety services including: Fire, Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue, EMS, Public Health, and Emergency Management within the Town of Haverhill.”

MOTION #4: Darwin moved to accept the Purpose Statement as written, and Dennis seconded

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the motion.

Darwin suggested that the statement is overreaching. Discussion ensued.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Yes), Darwin Clogston (Yes), Keith Charpentier (Yes), Jeff Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Yes), Jon Bouffard (Yes), Dennis Fournier (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Pros and Cons from Fire Chiefs

Brigitte asked: What are the pros and cons that your staff can offer to the development of the new Town of Haverhill Fire Department?

- Phil, N. Haverhill Fire Chief, met with his staff (40+) and the majority were up to speed, Phil has communicated with all his department's officers. A town level and precinct vote has been done. Everyone is behind the process.
- Jeff, Woodsville Fire Chief, stated that in his department the pros were buying power with better pricing, vehicle rotation (20-year cycle), and mutual aid; cons were that there was not a solid plan, and they don't know how the structure will look
- Keith, Deputy Chief, Haverhill Corner Fire Dept., stated that the pros and cons were written up in a document and sent to the Town. Keith said that the annual precinct meeting has not been held, so there is no indication how the residents feel. Pro—cross-training, scheduling, salary base. Cons—loss of identity, closing the station, administration unknown, and not knowing what's going to happen.

Discussion followed. Darwin asked the number of members in the various Fire Departments: N. Haverhill—more than 40; Haverhill Corner—23; Woodsville—19.

NEW BUSINESS

N. Haverhill Fire Station Ownership

Brigitte offered background and provided a deed from 1953 for the N. Haverhill Fire Dept building, which showed that the property had been transferred to the NH Water and Light at that time. Brigitte stated that she will get the deed reviewed by a lawyer.

Schedule for Department Development Efforts

Jon prepared a schedule, which Brigitte provided for the members. Jon noted that the next step is community-driven strategic planning and to develop tools to elicit communication from the community. Jon suggested a survey to gain community input. Brigitte suggest ZOOM meetings. Keith noted that printed copies to the community should be included in the plan. Focus of the survey included internal (firefighters) and external (public) stakeholders. Brigitte stated that surveys would be on the website and Facebook and hard copies would be distributed to public places. Public meetings would be held via videoconferencing. Brigitte suggested that consensus for the survey proposal be stated in a Roll Call vote.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Yes), Darwin Clogston (Yes), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff

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Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Yes), Jon Bouffard (Yes), Dennis Fournier (Yes). The vote was unanimous. Consensus was achieved.

Discussion about the timeline for the Fire Department meeting topics continued.

MOTION #5: Phil moved to accept the preliminary schedule for discussion topics of the Fire Department Committee as revised, and Bob seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Yes), Jeff Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Next Steps

Brigitte requested that Jennifer Boucher, Financial and HR Officer, become part of the Fire Department Committee.

MOTION #6: Brigitte moved to approve Jennifer Boucher as a member of the Fire Department Committee, and Jon seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Yes), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Yes), Jeff Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Yes), Jon Bouffard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

MOTION #7: Brigitte moved to approve Jon Bouffard as Chair of the Fire Department Committee, and Dennis seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Yes), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Yes), Jeff Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Yes), Jon Bouffard (Abstain), Dennis Fournier (Yes), Jennifer Bouchard (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Darwin wishes to thank Keith and Jeff for participating in this Committee.

NEXT MEETINGS: Tuesday, June 16 at 6:30 PM

ADJOURN MEETING

MOTION #8: Phil moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 PM, and Bob seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Yes), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Yes), Jeff Robbins (Yes), Phil Blanchard (Yes), Doug Dutile (Audio failure), Bob Long (Yes), Jon Bouffard (Yes), Dennis Fournier (Yes), Jennifer Bouchard (Yes). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Transcribed by Joanna Bligh