

**Town of Haverhill, NH
FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 20, 2020**

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

DRAFT / subject to review by the Committee

Committee Members:

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

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager: Brigitte Codling
Finance Officer: Jennifer Boucher

Members of the Public Present: Anthony Smith.

CALL to ORDER:

The meeting was **Called to Order** at 7:00 PM by Brigitte Codling.

Codling announced that Jon Bouffard sent a letter of resignation as Chair of the Committee; however, he will be remaining as a member. Codling will chair tonight's Committee meeting and use the Meeting Minutes from 9-1-20 as an Agenda relating to the homework assignments, as follows:

ACTION ITEMS

1. Job descriptions from HC and NH (Blanchard and Charpentier).
2. Budgets and reports (Boucher).
3. Research on buildings and purchase and sales on vehicles (Codling).
 - Regarding Town vehicles, Joanna is working on locating information about the vehicles that the Town owns to submit paperwork for obtaining titles from the State.
4. Chiefs to locate ISO reports (Charpentier).
 - Charpentier discovered that each chief had to request their own ISO reports.
5. Run data from dispatch (Blanchard).
6. Reach out to Woodville Commissioners (Bouffard).

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- Bouffard found out that the Commissioners are meeting tonight and will address the request for an alternate member to attend the Committee meetings.
7. Survey data to review for next meeting (Codling).
- The Survey is now closed.

Attendance ROLL CALL:

Brigitte Codling (Here)
Darwin Clogston (Here and alone)
Keith Charpentier (Here and alone)
Jeff Robbins (I'm here and alone)
Phil Blanchard (Here and alone)
Jennifer Boucher (Here)
Dennis Fournier (Here and alone)
Jeff Robbins (Here and alone)
Jon Bouffard (Here and alone)

Codling noted that Bob Long, Mountain Lakes Commissioner, will no longer be attending Committee meetings.

MINUTES REVIEW

MOTION #1: Codling asked for a motion to accept the meeting Minutes from September 1, 2020, as amended. Clogston made the motion and Boucher seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Aye), Jennifer Boucher (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

ACTION ITEMS, cont.

1. Job descriptions from HC and NH (Blanchard and Charpentier).
 - Bouffard stated that the job descriptions from Haverhill Corner were sent to the members by email.
2. Budgets and reports (Boucher).
 - Bouffard stated they were looking at combined budgets vs. individual department budgets.
 - Codling stated we have those reports and numbers, and we can look at them and do a comparison.
3. Research on buildings and purchase and sales on vehicles (Codling).
 - Codling is looking at deeds.

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- The chiefs are responding to requests for information about Town fire department vehicles.
4. Chiefs to locate ISO reports (Charpentier).
 - Charpentier discovered from the insurance company that each chief had to directly call for their own ISO reports.
 - Blanchard stated that the wait time for the phone call to the insurance company was long.
 - Robbins stated the same.
 5. Run data from dispatch (Blanchard).
 - Blanchard stated that the dispatchers' logs have all calls; accurate data will require a lot work.
 6. Reach out to Woodville Commissioners (Bouffard).
 - Bouffard found out that the Commissioners are meeting tonight and will address the request for an alternate member to attend the Committee meetings.
 7. Survey data to review for next meeting (Codling).
 - The Survey summary was provided to the members.

Discussion

Robbins stated only 188 responses to the Survey from the entire Town. Codling noted that most were from N. Haverhill.

Summary of Responses

Codling reviewed the responses to the Survey. Regarding Service, the first Survey response was about how fast a truck can get to the house and, second, was when the truck arrives if there were enough firefighters to safely operate the equipment. Regarding the question relating to the feelings about the process: The first response was Hopeful and second was Interested. The responses to the question about the fire service: The responses showed a combination of Part Time and On Call firefighters. Regarding Satisfaction responses, most people were satisfied. Regarding operational costs: 53% of respondents said "Yes" to continue funding local fire departments if they choose to remain independent, and 47% said not to fund precinct fire departments. Regarding certification: 75% responded that firefighters and 74% responded that chiefs should be certified. Regarding physical fitness requirements: 70% responded "Yes." Codling noted that there was a large list of freeform comments at the end of the Survey for all members to review.

Discussion, cont.

Robbins discussed the payment for volunteer firefighters. Charpentier noted that public outreach is needed to let people know what it means to be a volunteer. Codling stated that there was a lot of good feedback.

ORGANIZATION CHARTS

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Codling introduced the topic of organizational mapping of the three fire departments in charts, which was requested by the public and will help with the planning process. The Committee came up with a chart of the organization of the fire services after 2020:

Scenario 1: N. Haverhill is the Town’s Fire Department and Woodsville and Haverhill Corner Fire Departments are independent.

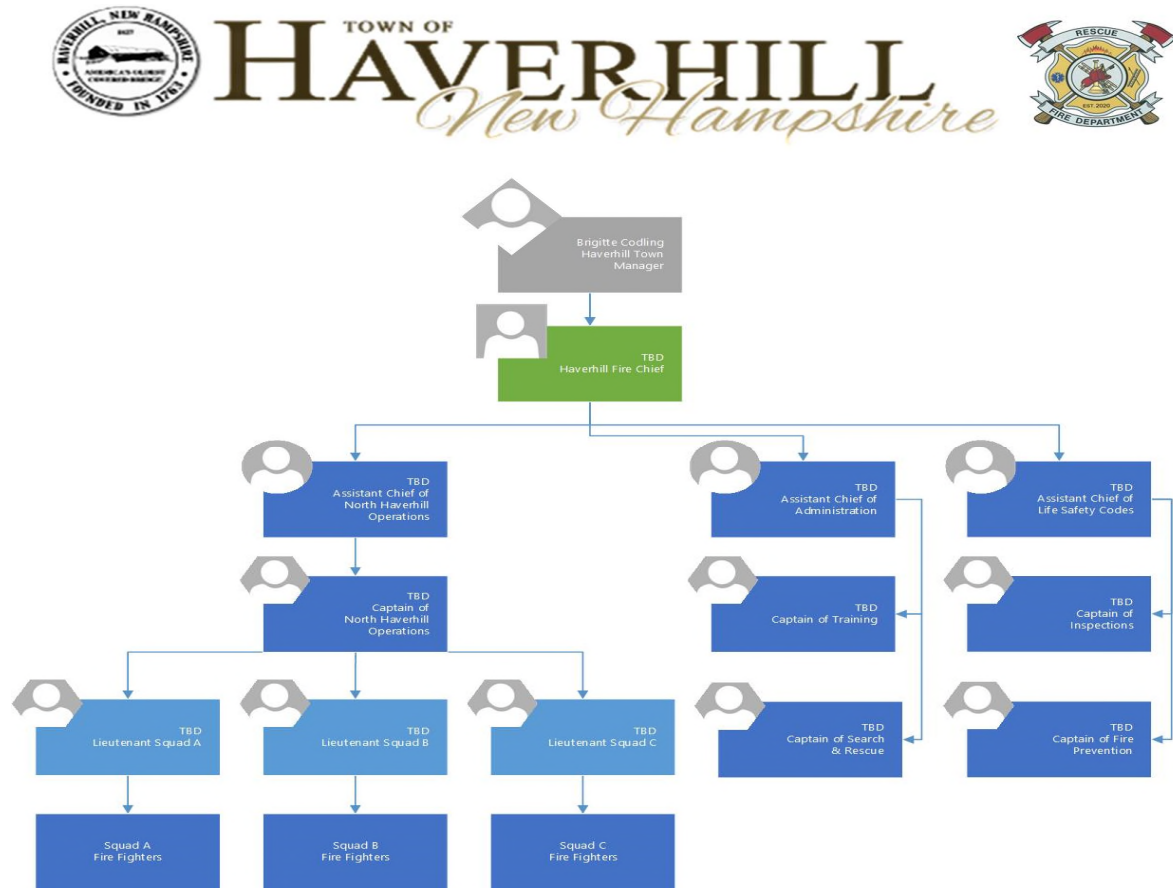
Scenario 2: The Town’s Fire Department includes Haverhill and Haverhill Corner, and Woodsville remains independent.

Scenario 3: The Town’s Fire Department includes Haverhill, Woodsville, and Haverhill Corner.

The Committee will fine tune the organizational structure, budgets, and mutual aid process with Scenarios 1 and 2.

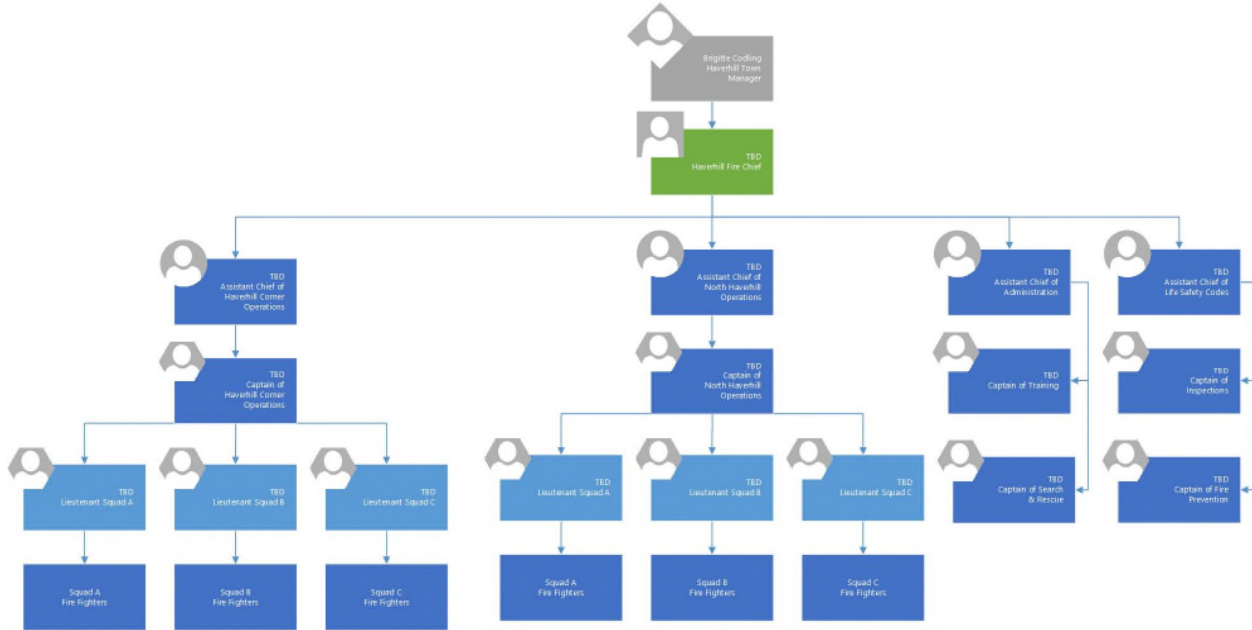
SCENARIO 1, 2

Codling presented the organization structure as follows:



SCENARIO 1

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Scenario 2

Discussion

Codling noted that in the Scenarios, the Town Manager oversees all department in the Town, and the Chief and Assistant Chief oversee their departments. There would be a captain of inspections, life safety codes, fire prevention, training, administration, operations, and search and rescue.

Charpentier stated that it is top heavy with administration. Blanchard noted that in N. Haverhill there are 28 fire fighters and two assistant chiefs. Codling noted that it looks top heavy with just Haverhill, but adding the other precincts then there are some who are specializing and the jobs are expanded. Bouffard complimented the chart and suggested adding a level of senior firefighters to add recognition and, also, combining the assistant chiefs' roles.

Question arose about building permits and inspections. Boucher stated that the fees for the building inspection are for commercial properties, and the Town does collect those. The process includes: the Fire Department building inspection paperwork of a new construction or renovation is sent to the Town. The Town returns the paperwork to the Fire Department to insert applicable fees, which are paid to the Town. The Fire Department then inspects the finished construction and issues a Certificate of Compliance. Discussion continued.

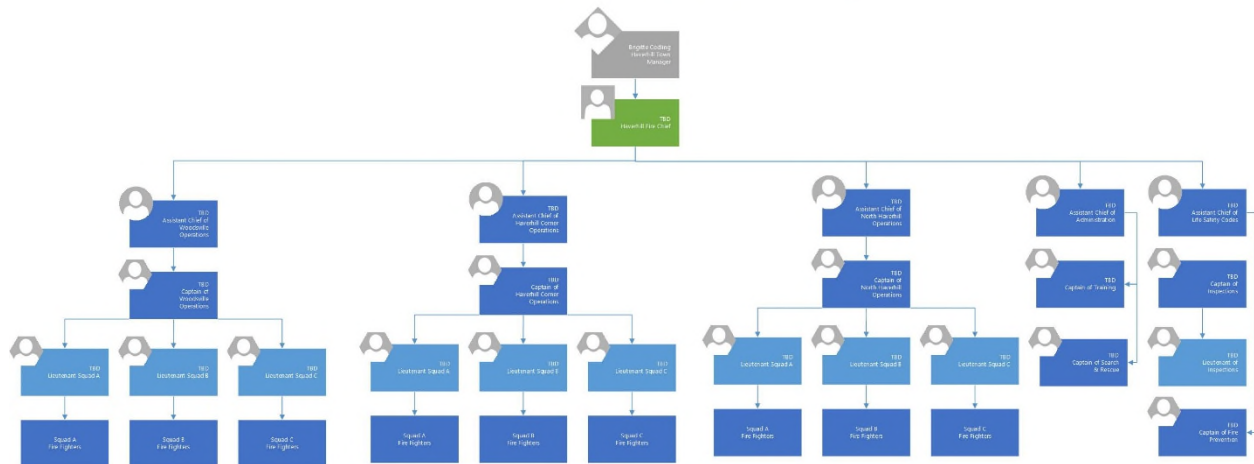
Bouffard noted that search and rescue goes under Training, but Charpentier suggested that in the smaller department it could go under Operations. Robbins stated that in Woodsville there are a

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chief, assistant chief, two captains, and three lieutenants. Blanchard stated that in North Haverhill there are a chief, assistant chiefs, two captains, and lieutenants. Bouffard recommended that Operations and All Hazards Response be organizationally separated. Discussion continued.

Scenario 3

Codling presented Scenario 3:



Scenario 3

Discussion

Codling requested feedback from the members for the three-station scenario. Codling noted that when the vote comes in March, she wants the residents to know exactly what they are voting for. She will be constructing high level budgets for each scenario and what agreements would look like. Discussion continued.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Job descriptions from HC and NH (Blanchard and Charpentier).
2. Budgets and reports (Boucher).
3. Research on buildings and purchase and sales on vehicles.
 - Administration will work on this.
4. Chiefs to locate ISO reports.
 - Charpentier was asked to find out who oversees the reports. Codling suggested drafting a letter.
5. Run data from dispatch (Blanchard).
 - Codling suggested a work-around for obtaining the information.
6. Reach out to Woodville Commissioners.

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- Codling asked Bouffard to reach out to Woodville to see if they have chosen a Fire Department Committee member.

Codling reminded the members to send job descriptions to her.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 7:00 PM

COMMENTS

Anthony Smith interjected a comment about job descriptions and combining administrative paperwork including building inspections.

ADJOURN MEETING

MOTION #2: Clogston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 PM, and Fournier seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Brigitte Codling (Aye), Darwin Clogston (Aye), Keith Charpentier (Aye), Jeff Robbins (Aye), Phil Blanchard (Aye), Dennis Fournier (Aye), Jennifer Boucher (Aye), Jon Bouffard (Aye). The vote was unanimous. The motion passes.

Transcribed by Joanna Bligh