

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
September 26, 2011

The Town Council meeting was held in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, Town Hall, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry.

PRESENT: Town Council: Chairman Sean O’Keefe; Vice Chairman Joe Green; Councilors: Tom Dolan, John Farrell, Tom Freda; Town Manager, David Caron; Executive Assistant, Margo Lapietro.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman O’Keefe opened the meeting at 7:47 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence for the men and women fighting for our country abroad and at home.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vinnie Curro, 103 High Range said that the 11th Annual Safety Day was held last Saturday. It was the first year with the Moose Hill PTA doing a ‘Touch a Truck’ fundraiser; he said they had about 17 different trucks for the fund raiser. He estimated that they inspected 21 car seats that day; they took 2 out of service and donated 2 to those families. The NH Free Masons processed 42 children through their children ID program. The Injury Prevention Center from Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center attended with their new Distracted Driver Simulator. They had 30 young adults participate and all crashed into 1 of 2 simulations they did. He thanked the Councilors and the community for their support.

Chairman O’Keefe brought up an incident that he was made aware of Friday night regarding ambulance coverage for a Lancer football game. John Robinson, 13 Elmwood Rd. and Nancy Hendricks, 14 King John Drive were in attendance. Chairman O’Keefe said that the School Board had heard at the last minute that there would not be an ambulance on the field for Friday night’s football game. The School Board was lead to believe that they had to pay for coverage. His first concern was that the proper notification was not given to the School Board and his second concern is how to resolve this issue going forward. Londonderry Fire Chief Kevin MacCaffrie said ambulance coverage has been provided it previous to the current budget; he spoke with the athletic director in early August and said that they could not guarantee a dedicated ambulance to be there at all times. They could provide coverage if the school would like to pay for it like the police do for details. If the on-duty ambulance is not busy at the time, they could put it there but would need to respond to emergencies throughout the community when called. Councilor Farrell verified that coverage would be provided if an ambulance is available. J. Robinson said that most schools do provide ambulance coverage. He said the first time the school heard was on Friday, and they will look into the communication chain. If there is a cost we as a town and school district should work it out together. Chairman O’Keefe asked J. Robinson if they unable to provide an ambulance will the fire truck work out. J. Robinson said they want a trained professional with professional gear available. Councilor Green said the

standard operating procedure is that the ambulance will be at the field if it is available. Councilor Freda asked how much would the detail be for one game. The Chief responded it would be \$64.00 an hour per person, with a minimum of 4 hours per person, the same as a police officer. Chairman O'Keefe stated there are definitely solutions we need staff to work on the solution.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

OLD BUSINESS

Appointments to the Public Safety Dispatch Services Study Committee – Chairman O'Keefe said they compiled a list of well qualified people who came forward to volunteer. Each member of Council picked one person along with 2 alternates and provided those names to him. Councilor Farrell chose Linda German; Councilor Green, Steve Chasin; Councilor Freda, Ed Nolan; Councilor Dolan, John Velliquette. Both Councilor Freda and Councilor Farrell chose Bradley Osgood and Brendon Burns as Alternates. The Alternates will have full voting powers if a regular board member does not show up. Councilor Farrell said they never interviewed or met Steve Chasin and asked Councilor Green if he spoke with him and does he have any insight on why he would be good for this committee. Councilor Green said based on the letter he wrote he has 13 years experience in fire departments and emergency services. He has also seen some success with emergency systems. Councilor Farrell said due to his not meeting the Councilors they were unable to ask questions such as if there are any conflicts of interest. Chairman O'Keefe said he has had some interaction with him but has not spoken to him directly. He was very vocal in the beginning by sending e-mails to him and the Town Manager asking them to look at things. He offers a good prospective. Councilor Farrell said other people came for interviews and in the interest of fairness we haven't spoken to him, it would be nice if he came to talk to us. Councilor Freda said the process was for each Councilor to make a pick, he said he didn't know that Councilor's picks had to be justified; he could justify his pick if necessary. Councilor Farrell responded he had no problem with his pick, the volunteer came to a meeting and was interviewed, we all got a chance to talk to him. Councilor Dolan said he would have liked the opportunity to ask Mr. Chasin the same question he asked all the other candidates and that was if he would be able to keep an open mind regardless of what direction things went and he does not know the answer to that question. **Councilor Dolan, made a motion to accept the nominations as read, second Councilor Farrell. Council's vote was 5-0-0.**

Hemlock Street Structure Fire Workshop - In attendance was Chief Kevin MacCaffrie, Capt. Douglas Cardwell; Capt Jim Roger, and Firefighter Bruce Hallowell. The PowerPoint presentation also contained actual radio communication at the scene. Capt. Roger reviewed the structure of the house, the water supply was an issue because the hydrant was located in Derry, 890 feet away from the house and was low on pressure. He reviewed the Fire Station locations and time frame. The mutual aid stations were listed and he thanked them for their help along with the Londonderry Police Department. Firefighter B. Hallowell reviewed the normal driving time from mutual aid. Capt. Roger reviewed the weather conditions, the time of the call and

noted that all stations were at a full staff of 10. He proceeded to explain the staffing of each fire station. Firefighter Hallowell reviewed the alarm response time for the first and second alarm. He listed the time line from the call to time of arrival time which took eight minutes. Capt. Roger said the initial call to 911 was reported as a porch fire. Capt. Roger also stated that 80% of the house was involved in fire upon arrival at 4:28; the initial call came in at 4:20. The roof had partially collapsed. Capt. Roger explained that the speed of a fire doubles in size every 90 seconds. He explained that our first two engines carried 3,000 gallons of water, the Windham engine brought in 1,000 gallons. With that water they attempted a rescue of the 2 individuals still in the structure but due to the collapse of the roof were unable to execute a rescue. Capt. Roger explained the procedure of "Vent, Enter & Search" which was employed to locate the 2 individuals with thermo imaging techniques. Capt. Roger explained that the communication specialist were familiar with the town and were able to direct the mutual aid responders directly to the street. Councilor Farrell asked if with additional staff the result would have been any different. Capt. Roger responded additional manpower would not have helped out with this fire; the house was too involved upon arrival. Discussion ensued about water flow, hydrants, distance from hydrants, and the amount of water in a tanker. Combustionable materials, fire alarms and smoke detectors in the house were also discussed. The response time for Londonderry and mutual aid was reviewed. Capt. Cardwell explained the different radio frequencies used by Londonderry and the mutual aid. Waters supply time line and hydrant issues were also discussed. The deficiency issues were the lack of available water on scene and lack of personnel on scene to complete their tasks. Capt. Roger reviewed the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 staffing standards which would total 15 personnel for Londonderry. He explained that we are 7 short and are in compliance of that standard by 56.2%. The staffing issue we have of a 2 man engine company is not recognized around the country. He reviewed their internal strengths. Improvements are needed in the areas of on-duty staffing; crew integrity; fire ground frequencies; a tanker; more training with mutual aid; update run cards; municipal water system improvements.

Councilor Farrell said there are two glaring questions, tanker and personnel. Councilor Freda clarified the NFPA 1710 standards for staffing required 15 firefighters – Chief MacCaffrie explained we would need 15 firefighters to perform every function within the first 8 minutes. Chief MacCaffrie said Londonderry arrived in about 12 minutes; mutual aid arrived in about 20 minutes. Capt. Cardwell explained there are different ways of evaluating staffing levels, today we have 9 assigned due to budgets cuts and he said we have apparatus that we don't staff. Capt. Roger explained at the north end of town staffing will be a lieutenant and 2 firefighters; at Central will be a Captain, a Lieutenant, 2 paramedics and 1 firefighter; at the south end will be a lieutenant and 1 firefighter. If someone calls in sick or takes a vacation the staffing will be less. Councilor Freda asked how many firefighters they have, Chief MacCaffrie responded 40. Councilor Farrell asked what is the status of the SAFER grant; Chief MacCaffrie responded it was unfunded. Councilor Freda asked what adding 4 firefighters would do, Chief MacCaffrie and Captain Cardwell said it would give us two 3-man companies. Discussion ensued regarding the federal law that requires 4 firefighters on scene before they can enter a building. Capt. Roger explained they took extraordinary chances at this fire because they thought they had a rescue. They had one firefighter running two pieces of fire apparatus. Chief MacCaffrie said all of Londonderry's crew arrived within 8 minutes. Councilor Green asked how many communities meet the NFPA 1710 requirement? Capt. Roger said the City of Nashua, Derry during most

times and the City of Manchester. Councilor Green asked about the possibility of having Call Firefighters being used. Capt. Roger said we do have them but times have changed. We have hired them for our department when we have had openings. We currently have 10 active Call Firefighters and they still train once a month. Councilor Green asked if they were on duty that night. Capt. Cardwell explained they are not on duty, they respond to a paging system if they can. Councilor Green asked how many communities in the area have volunteer departments. Capt. Roger, explained there are a few that have combination departments like Hampstead and Windham. The problem these days is that we have to have the same training standards for both volunteer and career, which is very time consuming. Councilor Dolan asked what was the cause of the fire. Fire Marshall Brian Johnson said the State Fire Marshall said it was undetermined due to the extensive damage; it could have been smoking material or electrical. Councilor Dolan said there are three items of concern: staffing levels, the tanker and the fire hydrant infrastructure. Capt. Roger responded 46% is covered. Councilor Dolan asked how many of the residential areas are covered with hydrant protection; Fire Marshall B. Johnson said there is definitely over 50% that is not covered. Councilor Dolan said we should find out what our options are for hydrants. He suggested the Town Manger check with Pennichuck and Manchester to find out the cost and implementation of hydrants in town. Chairman O'Keefe said when he was on the Budget Committee they looked into the feasibility of that and it was a very expensive investment. He also said that even if a tanker is put in place we still have a staffing level problem. Councilor Dolan asked if could use the water in a pool, Capt. Roger said they could. Chairman O'Keefe asked if it would make more sense having a tanker truck right now because it would be more efficient and it will allow you to be a contributor to other communities, Capt. Roger replied definitely. Capt. Cardwell gave the mutual aid statistics from 1997 to the present which showed requests from Londonderry for mutual aid has increased. Councilor Farrell said the CIP will not be finalized until October 2012, he suggested they talk to Community Development Director A. Garron and put the money in that plan. Councilor Farrell said the staffing of the fire department is bigger than us and he suggested the idea of asking the voters if they want to increase staffing, show them the cost and what it will be on the tax rate. If the residents want to add firefighters then our direction is clear. Discussion ensued. Councilor Dolan came up with another idea of putting a Warrant Article out and let the Deliberative Session work on it. Chairman O'Keefe said for years the town has been asked to cut, streamline, hold back; the town employees have done more with less. Councilor Dolan said in the end it is up to the voters. Councilor Freda said according to the 10 year staffing history in the Annual Report personnel remains flat. There have not been more than 3-4 increases in staffing; the Town has new businesses and a thousand more houses in the past 10 years. At some point there is a breakeven point and we have hit it. Now we have apparatus that is being unmanned. We are not going to have a 50% increase in 1 year in the fire department's budget so we have to do what we can do in the town budget. Councilor Green said the issue is not having water; the water hydrant is an issue, he asked if the firefighters had an indication of where the closest bodies of water are. Chief MacCaffrie said that is all mapped out, it still requires a manned piece of apparatus to draw the water out, and it is still manpower intensive. Councilor Green said he read the report and there seemed there was an awful lot of time spent trying to get the hose laid and communicating with the staff laying that hose to get water to the fire. He said it scares him to hear that 60-70% of the residences in town don't have hydrants around them. Councilor Farrell asked for a consensus to direct the Town Manager to ask the Fire Chief to add 4 personnel into the budget that he presents to us so we can see what it costs. Chairman O'Keefe said the

hydrant option has been investigated, it is not a good option because it is extremely costly. He asked the Town Manager how much it costs per hydrant. Town Manager Caron responded that just the rental is \$600.00 per year in one district, but that is minimal compared to the extension costs. Councilor Green said he would like to look at it again and update the research. Chairman O’Keefe said what he is hearing tonight is that they need more firefighters and need to have water enroute with them. Don Moskowitz, 7 Tokanel Dr. spoke to the water situation, he said it looks like it took 45 minutes to get pressurized water and 23 minutes before Litchfield was on scene with 2,500 gallons. He suggested purchasing 1 or more pool water trucks which have about 10 thousand gallons each, maybe look at a used one. Capt. Cardwell said 25 years ago they had a single tractor trailer in headquarters. Maintenance was too expensive and the amount of trained drivers to drive was a problem, they had to maintain a CDL license. They preferred a manufactured apparatus. Fire Marshall Johnson cautioned homeowners to make sure smoke detectors work and are replaced every 10 years, change their batteries twice a year, do home fire drills, and having an alarm system is wonderful. He explained that new construction has to have hard wired smoke detectors with battery back-up on every level and carbon monoxide detectors on all levels. At this point in the meeting the consensus was to agree to ask the Town Manager to ask the Fire Chief to add 4 personnel into the budget that he presents to Council so we can see what it costs us. It was also agreed that the Chief would request a tanker through the CIP process. Councilor Green suggested looking into how many other communities have a combined paid/volunteer department. Councilor Farrell said we are not looking for an all volunteer department, finding the right volunteers when you have an airport and a major highway is a great idea but he said he didn’t know if it would work best but it is worth looking into. Capt. Caldwell said 25 years ago they had more volunteers and had 5 permanent men on duty. What happened is our call volume went up so high the volunteers didn’t have the time to respond or train. We are doing a lot with very little. Councilor Green said if you don’t have the money in the budget maybe people will volunteer to do the job. He said he is not talking about call firefighters he is talking about people manning the station. Councilor Roger said the standards haven’t changed, we still have to have physicals, pre-polygraphs and polygraphs, train, buy equipment, it is all the same process as for regular firefighters. They also will have to keep up their certification. Capt. Cardwell said that history has taught them that once they are trained they will leave for a paying job. It costs \$4K for equipment; training is \$4-5K and that is without pay. Councilor Green asked the Town Manager to investigate the use of volunteers.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of Council’s Public Meeting of 9/19/11 – Councilor Farrell made a motion to accept, second Councilor Green. Council’s vote was 5-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Liaison Reports – Councilor Farrell said the Elder Affairs Committee is looking at a new piece of property located near the Triangle Mobile.

Town Manager Report - Town Manager Caron stated that there is a scheduled meeting for next week; currently there is nothing on the agenda. He asked if they wanted to meet. The consensus was to pass up next Monday night and the next meeting will be 10/17/11.

Board/Committee Appointments/Reappointments – None

Ed Nolan questioned the protocol for meetings for the Dispatch Service Study Committee and thanked the Committee for allowing him to volunteer. John Velliquette thanked Council for his nomination as well.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Green made a motion to adjourn at 10:38 PM, second Councilor Farrell . Council's vote was 5-0-0.

Notes and Tapes by: Margo Lapietro Date: 09/26/11

Minutes Typed by: Margo Lapietro Date: 09/29/11

Approved by: CIP Committee Date: 10/17/11