

**OFFICE OF SELECTMEN  
6 HOLLAND STREET  
PO BOX 139  
MOULTONBOROUGH, NH 03254**

**Selectmen's Work Session, 7 P.M.**

**January 30, 2014**

**MINUTES**

Selectmen: Joel R. Mudgett, Chair, Jonathan W. Tolman, Edward J. Charest, Christopher P. Shipp, Russell C. Wakefield; Town Administrator, Carter Terenzini.

1. Joel called the meeting to Order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Firefighter Vacancy: This discussion of January 23<sup>rd</sup> was picked up with Fire Chief Dave Bengtson reviewing the results of a survey on salary to compare our Firefighter/EMT (Basic) to other communities:

Our Grade IX	\$37,765 to \$49,284
EMT-I (AEMT)	\$26,187 to \$36,108
Paramedic	\$36,108 to \$41,194

The Chief estimated start-up costs to equip the apparatus with paramedic level equipment at \$61,274, with an annual budget cost (non-salary) at \$5,329. A contract modification with Stewart's Ambulance would range from \$30,000 for 90% +/- paramedic coverage to \$40,000 for 100% paramedic coverage. The Sandwich Fire Chief is interested and would be willing to approach his Board for cost sharing.

Chris spoke to the second call where our personnel are the first responders. He saw this issue as having three pieces: 1) Bringing our staff to paramedic level; 2) Bringing Stewart's to paramedic level; 3) Equipping our trucks to a paramedic level. Chief Bengtson spoke to the level of service we provide and the additional feature of paramedic intercept mid transport. He felt we were providing service at the needed level and said if he had EMS gaps he would have been bringing it up. Joel said our paramedics had only responded to roughly 35 calls out of the 400 or so EMS calls. Chris commented that the money being discussed wasn't a huge expense. Jon said there were zero second calls in 2012 where we needed this. He felt the issue wasn't necessarily the money, but the ability to attract and retain staff and noted there was only one call in 2013 where the added services was needed. He said that adding paramedic level service (via career firefighters) for 40 hours was no guarantee it would be there when needed. Jon felt the \$40,000 to Stewart's for 100% paramedic coverage was the best way to go. The Chief and Chris discussed our coverage of two ambulances in Town and the staffing patterns with Chris suggesting they were not fully staffed at all times leaving the second ambulance effectively out of service. Russ said he agreed with Jon. Working with Stewart's was our best spent dollar and perhaps equipping our apparatus as a possibility, but not staffing up to paramedic level to become a revolving door of staff. Chris agreed with the attraction and retention issues (acknowledging we might have to adjust pay) and that we couldn't guarantee coverage, but said we have the positions (two) now and we should upgrade the skill levels required of them. There was discussion of the availability of our paramedic volunteers, the varying certification levels of our firefighters, and the potential improvement in "outcomes" if we had more persons with higher level certifications. The Chief spoke to the various steps that had been taken over the past few years to improve service delivery and the training programs offered to the firefighters to allow them to improve their skills levels. He explained achieving the paramedic level certification was a time commitment equivalent to a two year associates degree and that the most

recent person who started the program dropped out due to the time commitment. After discussion about advertising the vacancy as EMT Intermediate required with paramedic preferred Chris said he was comfortable with this. The Consensus of the Board was to have a special warrant article for \$40,000 to upgrade the staffing certification levels for Stewarts' Ambulance to require paramedic level for the ambulance based here in Moultonborough. It was also by consensus to have another special warrant article for \$62,000 for equipment.

Joel moved on to the requirements for the firefighter/EMT and asked whether, since we had a number of call firefighters with basic certification, we should allow someone an opportunity to achieve the EMT-I within a given period of time. Chris felt this was weakening the requirements. Carter noted that this would be consistent with several other positions in Town (citing a few) where we allowed someone to achieve the needed certification after hire. He also pointed out that persons with the required certification are also accounted for in the scoring matrix. Joel Made the Motion to upgrade the firefighter/EMT position to require an EMT-I certification or the ability to obtain one with six months. Russ Seconded. The Motion carried with four in favor, Chris opposed.

2. Apparatus: Chief Bengtson spoke to the various types of tankers and why he had chosen the type he was proposing. He also spoke to the advantage of the four wheel drive tandem axle truck in "mud season", the maneuverability of the slightly shorter (by one foot) overall length, and the "improvement in water equivalent" capacity of the proposed fleet configuration (on-board water plus compressed air foam system). Chris said he supported the proposal for tankers which he saw as an absolute, but that he was more concerned with the "Initial Attack" vehicles. He asked how the Chief saw the initial attack vehicles being used and learned it would be able to respond to roughly 90% of the calls. The Chief thought they would always be sent on medical calls and used on inspections so the Firefighters can respond directly to a call without coming back to the station first. Jon said and the Chief agreed that this should give our 3 full timers better response times. Chris asked if the vehicle was too big for everyday use and learned it was about the size of Center Harbors' rescue vehicle. The Chief felt comfortable it was appropriately sized given its advantages. Ed asked and learned the amount of money for the proposed fleet was fairly close to our current capital planning ARC (Annual Required Contribution). Chris expressed some concerns that "combination" vehicles while good at a number of things might not be good at meeting all the Town's specific needs. The Chief spoke to the improvements in pump sizing (previously underpowered) and other features which overcame these concerns. The consensus was to support the proposal. Carter, noting the first impact of this would be on the 2015 capital proposals, said it would be brought forth sometime in February for formal approval.
3. Code of Conduct: Carter reviewed the Draft of this which had been circulated with formal wording on how a complaint against a BoS member would be handled. The consensus was to move forward.
4. Annual Report Cover & Dedication: OK
5. Non-Public Session: Russ made the Motion for the Selectmen to go into Non-Public Session per 91-A:3 II (c) and only to reconvene for the purposes of adjournment. Ed seconded. A roll call was taken: Jon – Aye; Chris – Aye; Ed – Aye; Russ – Aye, Joel – Aye. The Selectmen went into Non-Public Session at 8:22 p.m.

The Board exited Non-Public Session at 10:09 p.m. having voted by a vote of 2/3 or greater of the members present to seal the minutes, as determined that divulgence of the information discussed

