



Town of New Castle, NH

Draft Firewards March 8, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Present: Fireward Dennis Dinsmore Chair, Fireward Reg Whitehouse, Damon Frampton, Bill Stewart, Selectboard.

1. Call to order at 4:00 PM
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll call of members present
3. Review of instruction
 - Welcome, please sign in with your first and last name, identify yourself as a resident or non-resident of New Castle, and provide your email address or telephone number.
 - The Firewards are conducting a public meeting and it is your "Right-to-Know" what occurs at this meeting, but, you do not have the right to speak during this meeting without the recognition and invitation to speak by the Chair's as stated in RSA Chapter 91-A.
 - Only during the Public Deliberation period is the public invited to speak. One can obtain the floor by raising your hand when the session begins or when the person speaking has finished;
 - Once invited to speak, stand, state your name and address and direct your question to the Chair. You will have thirty (30) seconds to ask your question or state your point.
 - After your question has been answered you have fifteen (15) seconds for one follow-up question directed to the Chair.
 - No one can speak twice on the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once.
 - Remarks must be courteous in language and attitude.
 - The Chair will attempt to follow Robert's Rules of Order and will rely on its guidance throughout the meeting.
 - The Chair's goal is to address all agenda items and adjourn the meeting at or before 5:00 PM.
4. Approval of minutes from February meeting
 - a. Motion passed
5. New Castle Fire Department's Monthly Report – February 2016
 - Calls for service in February: 18. Calls for service, year to Date: 35
 - Types of calls in February: 11 Medical Aid calls, 2 Carbon Monoxide Alarms, 1 Water in Basement, 1 Tree on House, 1 Arcing Wires, 1 Transformer Explosion, 1 Odor of Propane in the house.
 - Average response time: 4.27 minutes.
 - Average number of personnel per incident in February: 4.89
 - Apparatus responding to incidents:
 - i. Rescue 7 responded to 16 incidents in February and 25 YTD.
 - ii. Forestry 1 responded to 4 incidents in February and 7 YTD.
 - iii. Engine 1 responded to 0 incidents in February and 5 YTD.
 - iv. Engine 4 responded to 5 incidents in February and 8 YTD.
 - v. Hose 1 responded to 0 incidents in February and 1 YTD.

- vi. Marine 2 responded to 0 incidents in February and 0 YTD.
 - Training in February: 122 Man Hours of department in-house training.
 - Public Outreach Activities in February:
 - i. EMS and Rescue Swimmer standby during NHSPCA Doggie Plunge Event
 - ii. Hosted Red Cross Blood Drive
 - iii. 2 Members attended the Change of Command ceremony for the USS Providence at the shipyard
 - Mutual Aid Given in February: None
 - Mutual Aid Received in February: None
 - Budget remaining on 3/4/16:
 - i. Fire Department: \$136,619.17
 - ii. Emergency Management: \$5,828.36
 - Staffing:
 - i. 2 Career members and 28 Volunteer members.
 - Other activities:
 - i. Seabrook Station Combined Functional Exercise.
 - Areas of Concern: None
6. Fire Ward's Report

March 8, 2016

Select Board and Fire Chief
Town Hall
PO Box 367, 49 Main Street
New Castle, NH 03854

RE: Short Term Recommendations to the Select Board and the Fire Chief

The following letter contains ten short term Fireward recommendations formulated from numerous discussions over the past several weeks preceding the structure fire at 152 Portsmouth Avenue. Resolving the property protection problems that exist in New Castle today will not be fixed by these short term recommendations, but, they have the capacity to minimize additional losses until the infrastructure upgrades are completed. The true value of this letter will only be realized when your actions are initiated.

Select Board

Fire Hydrant Maintenance, In-Ground Valve Maintenance and Valve Turning Program

The Firewards recommend that the New Castle Water and Sewer Commission (NCWSC) service all of the New Castle (NC) Fire Hydrants and In-Ground Valves, as recommended by the manufacturer and authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), beginning April 1, 2016 and complete the maintenance process on or before July 1, 2016. With a fifty percent (50%) hydrant failure rate during the conflagration on January 23rd extending into January 24th, it is evident that the present maintenance and repair standards for the fire hydrants are inadequate. If the NCWSC does not have the manpower or capabilities to perform the tasks, contract with a qualified company to complete the job.

It is highly recommended that the NCWSC follow all applicable ISO requirements for hydrant maintenance and water flow.

The Firewards also recommend the NCWSC perform the following responsibilities;

- Develop a numbering system for all fire hydrants
- Develop and maintain an In-Ground Valve Turning Schedule
- Develop a detailed records keeping program for all hydrants
- Flow 100% of the fire hydrants twice a year in the Spring and Fall
- Attachment A – Sample of Fire Hydrant Maintenance actions
- Review sample video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWW_YrYmpvs

Independent Hydrant Flow Tests

In conjunction with the fire hydrant maintenance program and suggested completion schedule date of April 1, 2016 through July 1, 2016, the Firewards recommend that an independent engineering firm, such as Hydra Tech Inc. (<http://hydratetechwater.com>), be contracted to conduct Hydrant Flow Tests for 100% of the hydrant system in New Castle to provide actual (available) water flow rate vs. prescribed (needed) water flow rate demand based on the existing building density throughout New Castle.

Advance the Replacement of Engine 1 to January 1, 2017

The Firewards recommend enhancing New Castle Fire Department's (NCFD) capabilities for immediately delivering more water to a structure fire by investing in a Pierce Pumper Tanker (PPT) as a replacement for Engine 1. The following is a short list of benefits that NCFD and the town will receive by early replacement of Engine 1 to a Pierce Pumper Tanker.

- An increase of 2,000 gallons of water to the scene
- Onboard CAFS (Compressed-Air and Foam System) with the fire-stopping effectiveness of the water supply increasing up to five times. Conservatively between 6,000 to 8,000 gallons of water equivalence
- Engineers are proficient with the Pierce pumper technology, panel configuration, driving maneuverability, capabilities and operation
- Similar footprint within the Engine Bay
- Decreased purchase price for PPT in 2016
- Increased trade in value for Engine 1
- Estimated cost of PPT; \$350,000 - \$450,000

Wentworth Bridge

The Select Board must pressure the NHDOT to accelerate the replacement schedule for the Wentworth Bridge. As long as the bridge span remains weight restricted, NCFD and the Town, will be extremely limited as to how mutual aid apparatus can respond to an incident. During the Tarbell fire, NCFD could only establish a tanker shuttle using the causeway due to the weigh limitation of the Wentworth Bridge. Furthermore, since it appears that the Portsmouth Water Department is not willing to make water infrastructure upgrades on Wentworth Road, before the bridge is replaced, delays on the part of NHDOT affect more than just when the Wentworth Bridge is replaced. As importantly, the water line replacement from the Wentworth by the Sea Hotel to the Coast Guard Station should proceed without regard to the Wentworth Bridge project.

Underground Saltwater Canal and Manhole Station

To provide an unlimited 7 x 24 source of available saltwater to the downtown and waterfront area of New Castle, the Firewards encourage the Select Board to contract with a marine engineering firm, such as, Appledore Marine Engineering, Inc., to provide a feasibility study for the installation of a permanent underground/underwater water source. We envision a large diameter pipe (6') to extend from a land based manhole out into the Piscataquis River, well below the low-water mark, providing a continuous source of water within the manhole.

Underground Precast Cistern

To provide a limited 7 x 24 source of available water to several areas of New Castle, the Firewards encourage the Select Board to prepare a request for information (RFI) to companies such as, Michie Corporation, for a fire cistern solutions in one or several areas throughout the town. Review website, <http://www.michiecorp.com/fire-cisterns/>

Form a Committee to Focus on Life Safety Protection Issues in New Castle

The Firewards recommend that a group be formed, to meet on a monthly basis, consisting of fire, police and New Castle residents, to discuss the life safety risks presently facing the Town of New Castle, and, to develop strategies, solutions and referendums to resolve those risks.

Fire Chief

Adjustment to Running Cards - Initiate Automatic Events

Establish an automatic notification to mutual aid participants for all Rockingham County Dispatch Fire (RCDF) 911 calls identifying "Smoke Showing" or "Fire Showing" at the onset of the incident. This will allow for additional resources to be in route and on the fire scene sooner, providing additional manpower, water and apparatus. Also, the Firewards recommend adjusting the current run cards to include a tanker shuttle request on a NCFD first alarm notification to RCDF, this will enhance a more timely water intervention. If the Fire 911 call is manageable and does not require mutual aid, the first on scene New Castle crew can have the additional companies stand down.

Develop a Pre-Plan for All Structures in New Castle

Develop a profile for each building in New Castle for the express purpose of combating a fire event to that structure or the structures on abutting properties.

Saltwater Auxiliary Pre-plan for Waterfront and Abutting Structures in New Castle

Survey all potential locations to access the Piscataquis River, Back Channel and Little Harbor from floating docks or the shoreline and identify equipment requirements for high, mid and low tide options if they exist. Identify all deep water docks to stage the Portsmouth Fire boat. As an example, the dock located at the end of Atkinson Street.

As you review the information and develop questions that may need additional information or clarification, please provide me with your written comments.

Sincerely,
Dennis G. Dinsmore, Chairman

ATTACHMENT A

Fire Hydrant Maintenance

1. It is recommended that hydrants be inspected (flushed) twice a year, spring and fall. After each use in extremely cold weather, hydrant should be checked specifically for drainage.
2. External Inspection: a. Check chains, make sure they allow the nozzle cap to turn freely. b. Check all caps, make sure they all can be removed. c. Check paint, remove all loose paint and repaint if necessary.
3. Lubricate Hydrant Prior to Operating Hydrant a. Where oil is specified use white mineral oil USP (Mobile Whiterex 425 or equal). Vegetable oil is not an equal! b. Where grease is specified use Mystik FG-2 Food Machinery Grease.
4. Flushing Fire Hydrant
 - a. Using a Hydrant Operating Wrench turn the hydrant in the direction of opening indicated by an arrow cast in the hydrant. A pipe wrench is not the equivalent of a hydrant operating wrench.
 - b. Open hydrant at a moderate pace, typically one turn per second. It is not a race.
 - c. Open hydrant to FULL OPEN, it will come to solid stopping point. DO NOT try and open hydrant past this point. Damage can be done to the internal parts of the hydrant. If hydrant is not fully open water will flow out of drain or weep holes and cause damage to the drain field around the hydrant. Water may come up the sides of the hydrant or nearest valve box.
 - d. Flow hydrant until water becomes clear and no objects are flowing from the hydrant such as rocks. Be sure to control the direction of the flow of the hydrant so that damage is not done to anything in the water's path. Using some type of diffuser is recommended.
 - e. Close hydrant slowly, 1 turn every 1+ seconds so that the hydrant does not close too quickly and create a water hammer that could possibly blow a water main.
 - f. When hydrant is closed you should be able to back off the operating nut a quarter to half turn (Sweet Spot) water pressure should hold hydrant valve shut.
 - g. Place hand over nozzle and feel suction.
 - h. Leave nozzle cap off or loose to allow for hydrant to drain. Closing cap tightly before hydrant is drained will cause water to remain in hydrant barrel. In the winter this could freeze and cause the hydrant barrel to split or damaged internal parts of the hydrant. It could even possibly cause the hydrant to open itself up because of the weight of the ice in the barrel.
 - i. When hydrant has drained place small amount of food grade grease on nozzles and put on nozzle caps. Failing to routinely remove and grease nozzles could cause cap to rust to the nozzle and not allow the cap to be removed.
5. If hydrant fails to shut off, DO NOT force hydrant closed. Open hydrant back up and try to flush the obstruction out of the hydrant. It may take 3 to 4 attempts to flush out the obstruction. If this does not work hydrant must be taken apart for main valve and possibly hydrant seat replacement.

6. If hydrant fails to drain, put all caps in place and tighten. Then open the hydrant 2 to 3 turns to attempt to flush out the drains of the hydrant. Let sit in this open position for 5 to 10 minutes. Close hydrant and remove one of the caps to check for drainage. If hydrant still does not drain, it should be pumped after each use.

7. Select Board's liaison report

- a. Select Board (SB) is looking into a Task Force and the discussion is in the SB minutes from last meeting.
- b. Dinsmore asked about the criteria for being Task Force member; Stewart replied, looking for a good cross section of people in the town with different expertise, different geography, and diverse education and discipline standpoint. Not a specific criteria for any slot on the Task Force.
- c. Dinsmore asked about how many individuals would be on the Task Force and if it would be by appointment or volunteers; Stewart replied, three or potentially more people by appointment of the SB.
- d. Dinsmore asked if appointments were for residents or non-residents of New Castle; Stewart replied they are think about residents only.
- e. Dinsmore asked if appointment would be New Castle elected officials or civilians; Stewart replied, non-elected individuals that would interface with the town officials, fire department, etc.
- f. Dinsmore asked if the SB would be publishing a request for individuals to be a part of the Task Force; Stewart replied they are still working through the issue but they would not be looking for volunteers initially.
- g. Whitehouse suggested that the SB publically announce the request for volunteers; Stewart replied that they have a couple of people identified.
- h. McGuckin stated that they want the Task Force to be small, work efficiently and get the program started. The three person task force may look for volunteers at some point.
- i. Whitehouse recommended that the SB publish a request for volunteers to attract knowledgeable individuals that the SB may not be aware of.
- j. G Strehl commented that New Castle is a small town and does not need committees and subcommittees, suggesting that the best expertise for the Task Force is the Fire Chief and members of the fire depart, and should be considered for the Task Force.

8. Recruiting update: None

9. Unfinished business: None

10. New business: None

11. Announcements

- a. Pancake Breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2016 and the NCFD has invited 20 or more members of the USS Providence crew to join the department at the breakfast

12. Public Deliberation: None

13. Upcoming Fireward's meeting is April 12th at 4:00pm

14. Adjournment at 4:28 PM

Reggie Whitehouse, Secretary
New Castle Board of Firewards
Draft Minutes Submitted: Mon 3/9/2016
Minutes Approved: