



Town of New Castle, NH

Approved Minutes of May 12, 2015 Meeting

Present: Fireward Dennis Dinsmore Chair, Fireward Reg Whitehouse, Fireward Damon Frampton, Chief David Blanding, Patricia Scholz-Cohen, Chairman Selectboard.

In Attendance: Tom Smith, Chairman Budget Committee and Dave McGuckin, Selectboard

The meeting was called to order by Whitehouse at 16:00 hrs.

A motion was made by Whitehouse to approve the draft minutes from the February 10, 2015 meeting with corrections. Seconded by Frampton. Motion passed.

Fireward's Report:

1. Dinsmore met with Minuteman Fire & Rescue Apparatus, Inc. and spoke with sales to price a present day cost to replace NCFD Engine 4 with a 1,250 gallon water tank. The pricing changed \$604,000 due to engine EPA changes and NFPA changes and suggested that the inflation be 3% per year.

Fire Chief's Report:

1. A three man crew was sent to Bale Mountain for a forest fire in Ossipee, NH due to a very dry season.
2. Monday night training consisted of forest fire training on Campbell's Island with permission of the land owners, scratching a fire break line, operated forestry truck and utilized the NCFD fire boat pumping water from the ocean enhancing capabilities of fighting island fires.
3. The fire tower on Mount Agamenticus is in disrepair, wood has rotted, the cab is rotted and maps are outdated. A "Go Fund Me" website has a goal to raise \$10,000 to fund repairs.
4. NCFD participated in the Naval Shipyard's graded exercise with an engine crew and EMS team. The exercise had no deficiencies in the drill which is an outstanding grade.
5. A Monday night training exercise was conducted on Riverview Road on a house to be demolished. Training consisted of door breaching, SCBA training, roof ventilation, simulated fire attach, dummy rescue, basement fire tactics.
6. Online NCFD store for hats, tee shirts, jackets, hooded sweatshirts, etc.

Select Board's Liaison Report:

1. Cohen thanked the Firewards for including her in the monthly meetings and for educating her about the fire department. She also thanked the NCFD for recognizing the passing of her father.
2. Cohen suggested the continuation of providing articles for the Island Items and has good reports surrounding the Pancake Breakfast hosted by the NCFD.
3. The town will be providing funds to support the NCFD's efforts around the 4th of July Parade.

Recruiting Efforts Report: None at this time

Unfinished Business: Frampton's Questions, Statements and Opinions

1. What is this truck? Replacement? Ladder truck? Quint? This fire ward opinion is that we do not need a ladder truck. I will let the other 2 wards speak their opinion although I already know what they told me!
 - a. It is the projected replacement for Engine 1. As the current Fire Chief of New Castle it is my opinion that the proper mix of fire apparatus should be one engine and one ladder truck instead of the current two engines. My opinion is based on knowledge, experience, an understanding of fireground tactics, industry standards and NFPA and ISO codes and standards. The ladder

truck would be a small version and not much bigger than an engine. It would have a short wheelbase, pump, tank and a 75' aerial ladder. Fire Service personnel would call this truck a Quint. The term Quint means a truck with a pump, tank, hose, ground ladders and an aerial.

January 15, 2015

To: New Castle Capital Improvement Committee
Subject: Fire Department 75' Ladder Truck (Quint)
Dear Committee Members:

As the Fire Chief for the Town of New Castle, I have proposed changing the mix of fire apparatus from the existing 2 Engines to 1 Engine and 1 Ladder Truck.

An Engine and a Ladder Truck are the usual compliment of a fire department's response to building fires. The Engine is used for attacking the fire with water hoses while the Ladder Truck parks close to the building and raises the aerial ladder to access the upper floors and the roof.

Some uses of a ladder truck are:

The rescue of people on the upper floors of buildings.

Access to the roof to cut ventilation holes to allow the fire attack and rescue to proceed into the interior of the building.

Access the chimney during chimney fires.

To apply a large caliber water stream onto the fire from an elevated position above the building.

The ladder truck also carries an assortment of ground ladders of various sizes and rescue tools not normally found on an engine.

Industry standards (ISO and NFPA) call for a ladder truck to be available within a 2.5 mile response distance if a town has:

Five or more buildings that are 3 stories tall or are 35' or more in height to the eaves.

Five buildings or more that requires a fire flow of 3,500 gallons per minute or more.

Relatively isolated communities.

High potential outcome if a fire occurs. Many closely spaced houses.

Buildings of light weight construction or with truss roofs.

It is important to have a ladder truck on scene at a fire quickly. Currently we have to rely on neighboring towns to send us a ladder truck when needed. The Portsmouth Fire Dept. has one ladder truck and one large aerial platform that are both stationed in the southern part of the city at Station 2, but only one is staffed at a time. The response time during good weather and traffic conditions is 20 minutes, if available. The Rye Fire Dept. has an old 1988 ladder truck that has a 14 minute response time in good weather, if available. During storms/bad weather we usually have to fend for ourselves as the other communities are dealing with their own emergencies. Likewise, if there is a fire incident in one of the surrounding towns, neighboring ladder trucks may not be available.

Presently, we have a 35' ground ladder and a 24' ground ladder on our engines. The 35' ladder will reach about 28' up the side of a building.

We have no capabilities to safely rescue people from 3rd story windows or to safely ventilate roofs on many of the buildings in town, especially during inclement weather.

During the last two ISO (Insurance Services Office Inc.) inspections, The Town of New Castle was advised that a ladder truck was needed in town.

The proposed ladder truck would replace Engine 1. It would be equipped with a pump, a water tank, a 75' aerial ladder and ground ladders and could be used as an engine, a ladder truck or

both at the same time. In today's dollars, a new engine to replace Engine 1 would cost \$420,000. A new 75' ladder truck to replace Engine 1 would cost \$600,000 minus the trade-in value of Engine 1.

It may be possible to find a late model used ladder truck that meets our needs for much less cost than new. New Castle is a small town with relatively few calls and we could be well served by a good used ladder truck that was well maintained and has current certifications. Good used ladder trucks are rare but they are out there. The price range for a 10 year old truck is \$300,000 - \$375,000.

A ladder truck is approximately 5-6' longer than an engine but it will still be able to transit most roads in town. The intersection of Piscataqua and Walbach will need to be kept clear of parked cars.

Fuel costs will be comparable to an engine.

There will be additional training requirements to operate a ladder truck vs. an engine. The Fire Academy has a 40 hour course for Driver/Operator Aerial Apparatus.

Maintenance cost will increase slightly due to the need to maintain and test the aerial device.

All New Castle Fire Department Officers agree with the need for a ladder truck and they support this proposal.

2. How much water does it hold? Foam? Shouldn't we be getting a truck that holds 1000 plus gallons of water due to the lack of water in town?
 - a. 400 – 500 gals. It could be equipped with a foam system at additional cost. The City of Portsmouth has plans to significantly upgrade the water system in the next couple of years, well before this truck would be purchased.
3. Will it fit in fire station without leaving a vehicle outside or putting an addition on fire house?
 - a. Yes it will fit. The station was designed to accommodate a large ladder truck.
4. Why do we need so many vehicles for such a small town?
 - a. The actual number of vehicles will decrease to four. The ladder truck will replace Engine 1 and the Hose Wagon. The Hose Wagon was removed from the V + E Fund several years ago when the Ladder Truck was added.
5. Why do we need a new rescue vehicle?
 - a. We do not need a new Rescue vehicle. The Rescue is not programmed for replacement until FY 2018. We intend to keep the current Rescue in service as long as it is practical.
6. Can we combine 2 trucks in to 1? If not, why? I think we can combine the rescue vehicle and the 4 door pick up into **1** vehicle.
 - a. No. The two trucks are totally different vehicles with different missions. The Rescue is used for emergency medical calls and for firefighter rehab. It has compartments to carry all of the equipment and supplies that the EMTs need. It also allows patients to be taken inside out of the weather. The Forestry carries 200gals of water, a pump and hose and the compartments are filled with tools. It is also used to transport dept. personnel to emergency calls, training classes, other functions and parts runs.
7. The fire wards still need to have a review of the chief's performance on a yearly basis, which has not happened in year 2014.
 - a. Do you want me to initiate the process?
8. The fire chief has not given the fire wards his decision either. PLUS the fire ward must report to the Selectboard on his decision!

- a. Not sure what decision Frampton is talking about. Is he referring to confidential personnel communications made during an executive session of the Board of Fire Wards? If so, I believe I indicated my willingness to resign from my position with an appropriate severance package.
9. In my heart I think the fire department is building a full time fire department from behind closed doors and backwards as well. If you look at the equipment and vehicles it is better than most if not all volunteer fire departments and we have 2 full timers and starting a weekend coverage study as well.
 - a. Chief Blanding disagree with this statement. Nobody is trying to build a full-time paid department in New Castle. All efforts have been to leverage volunteer resources and to provide excellent emergency services to the town at the lowest possible cost. It is my opinion that the NCFD has a very well managed operating budget. The Fire Department is the only town dept. that even uses volunteer help. The police and public works departments pay hourly wages for all work performed. Our vehicles and equipment is comparable to other small departments in the area. NCFD maintain our vehicles and keep them in service for many years. Most of our neighbors are paid departments. The only one that still has any volunteers is Greenland. Greenland is hiring more paid people.
10. I believe that because we are a wealthy town, people forget that we are a small town. People move here because they like the small town atmosphere and living. This fire department is not what small town living is. Bigger and More is not better.
 - a. Chief Blanding disagree with this statement. He does not think anyone would want to move to a town that does not have a good fire dept. This department is the same size it has been. It certainly is not growing. Even a small wealthy town needs a full service fire dept. If the residents call 911 they are going to expect an appropriate response. In fact they are going to demand it. Why should Portsmouth and Rye taxpayers subsidize the New Castle taxpayer's responsibilities?
11. I think our focus as a town and fire department is on how to recruit more volunteer emt/firefighters instead of filling up the fire house with expensive vehicles with no drivers!!!!!!
 - a. Recruiting and Retention has always been and remains a top priority. We do have drivers for our vehicles.
12. I will not mention a name but an officer in the fire department said" we have enough firefighting equipment right now to service the town of Rye".1000 or so year around residents in new castle and 5000 or so year around residents in rye!
 - a. That is not true and I don't believe that an officer of the NCFD would make such a statement. The Chairman would like to know who the individual that made that statement. Chief Blanding believes the fire department has minimal equipment. We have a pumper and a backup pumper. If we didn't have two pumps then we couldn't participate in the mutual aid system. If you don't provide mutual aid then you do not receive mutual aid. We certainly need to have two trucks with pumps. What would happen if one failed and there was no backup?
13. List the hours and days of week the two paid employees are expected to be on duty at the fire station.
 - a. Mark Wooley is an hourly employee, he works 0730- 1300 and 1800-2030 on Monday and 0730-1530 Tues – Fri.
 - b. Chief Blanding is a salaried employee and works 40+ hours a week at the Public Safety Building and works 1000 – 1800 to increase coverage during the day.
 - c. Chief Blanding is also on call nights and weekends.
14. Are these hours posted anywhere?

New Business: None at this time

Announcements: None at this time

Public Deliberation:

1. Cronin spoke about the first class training provided to the NCFD and the volume of experiences we engage in on a monthly basis.

Upcoming Fireward's Meeting: June 9th at 4:00 PM Town Hall

Fireward Final Comments: None at this time

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 16:47 hours by Whitehouse and seconded by Frampton. The vote was unanimous.

Reggie Whitehouse, Secretary
New Castle Board of Firewards

Draft Minutes Submitted: June 9, 2015
Minutes Approved: June 9, 2015