



Town of New Castle, NH

Board of Firewards

Approved Minutes of October 14, 2014 Meeting

Present: Firewards Chairman Dennis Dinsmore, Fireward Reg Whitehouse, Fireward Damon Frampton.

In Attendance: Chief David Blanding, NCFD, Peter Rice, Jim Rini, Tom Smith, Dave McGuckin, Bill Cronin, Teddy Golter, Mark Wooley, Terri Golter, Ryan Chase, Thomas Keturakis, Steve Blanding

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dinsmore at 16:02 hours, followed by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Whitehouse to approve the draft minutes from the September 9, 2014 without correction. Seconded by Frampton. Motion passed.

Fire Ward's Report:

New Castle Board of Firewards Responsibilities presented by Dinsmore

1. TITLE XII - PUBLIC SAFETY AND WELFARE, CHAPTER 154; FIREWARDS, FIREFIGHTERS, AND FIRE HAZARDS: Firewards, Fire Chiefs and Fire Departments; Organization, Powers and Duties, Sections 1 – 34.
2. The New Castle Board of Firewards is a three member board, elected by the residents of New Castle, to provide governance over the New Castle Fire Department (NCFD) as a whole.
3. The Board of Firewards is directly accountable to the Town of New Castle.
4. The Board of Firewards function independent of the New Castle Board of Selectmen.
5. The Board of Firewards is the appointing authority of the Fire Chief and Firefighters.
6. The Board of Firewards, assisted by the Fire Chief, has broad oversight and control over NCFD operations, inclusive of matters associated with daily department operations, hiring and oversight of personnel, and budget preparation.
7. As a matter of clarification; subject to NH Statute, Charter, or Local Ordinance, and in addition to such written formal policies or guidelines as may be adopted or approved by the appointing authority, the Fire Chief shall have organizational and administrative control of the NCFD, the authority to direct and control all NCFD employees of his or her department in the normal course of duty, and, shall be responsible for the efficient and economical use of all NCFD equipment.

Fire Chief's Report:

1. The annual Maude H. Trefethen School (MHTS) inspection, mandated by the State of NH, has been completed ahead of state required date.
2. NCFD conducted an Active Shooter training evolution at the MHTS as part of the departments Monday night training.
3. NCFD personnel and NCPD personnel conducted the first Lock Down drill at MHTS during the week of October 6th.
4. NCFD personnel participated in a Fire Prevention visit at MHTS to review important items with students, faculty and staff.
5. NCFD participated in the second of three Seabrook Station emergency training drills held at the NCFD Public Safety Building. The third and final graded exercise will be conducted at the end of October.

6. The New Castle annual 5k Race was on Sunday, October 12th with Rescue 7 in attendance at the Great Island Common with three (3) EMTs, one (1) EMT patrolling the race route on a bicycle, two (2) firefighters patrolling the route on a bicycle and motor scooter, and four (4) firefighter Engine Company on duty at the NCFD station. There were six (6) medical calls during the 5k race.
7. NCFD will be hosting an Open House on Sunday, October 19th from 12:00 to 5:00, providing free hot dogs, hamburgers, Italian sausages, soda, water and baked goods. A Ladder Truck from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Fire Department will be on display in addition to the York Maine Fire Department SMART truck and an antique fire truck with Dalmatian mascot.
8. The New Castle Volunteer Firefighters Association will be displaying a LUCAS™ Chest Compression System (LUCAS) in an effort to raise money for purchasing a LUCAS device.
9. On Wednesday, October 15th, several NCFD members will be attending a Firefighter Survival Program in Dover, NH.
10. Ryan Chase is the first “Homegrown” NCFD Firefighter/EMT in the history of the department, to earn the rank of Paramedic, and was in attendance to accept Chief Blanding’s congratulations.
11. The State of NH has introduced a new Emergency Preparedness website, www.readynh.gov, providing information to the general public on topics such as what to do in the event of a power blackout, floods, cybercrime, hazardous chemicals, earthquakes, cyberterrorism, etc. A valuable website to be familiar with.
12. Chief Blanding encourages New Castle residence to sign up for CodeRED Emergency Communications Network notifications on the Town of New Castle’s website.
13. NCFD has signed up with the State of NH New Hampshire, Division of Forests and Lands, ONLINE BURN PERMITTING SYSTEM for online Fire Permits to residence of the town for a three dollar (\$3.00) fee. <http://www.nhdfl.org/fire-control-and-law-enforcement/permits.aspx>

Select Board’s Liaison Report: None at This Time

Unfinished Business:

1. As a reminder; Joanne Ireland, publishes a church newsletter in conjunction with the New Castle Congregational Church and is willing to assist the NCFD in presenting information about the department to the town by publishing articles in the newsletter.
2. Frampton made a suggestion to present articles in the Islander magazine on a regular basis. Chief Blanding will inform the NCFD personnel of the opportunity to write articles for the monthly release of the Islander magazine and quarterly release of the Island Times newsletter.

New Business: None at This Time

Announcements:

1. NCFD Annual Open House on Sunday, October 19th from 12:00 to 15:00

Public Deliberation

1. Jim Rini stated that the October issue of the Islander magazine will have an article on home central alarm, fire monitoring systems.
2. Terri Golter discussed the issue of an increase to the amount of pay firefighters and EMT’s receive for training and emergency calls, stating that is would be a good solution for attracting additional volunteers to the department and to further compensate the existing volunteers for increasingly dangerous emergency call activities. No dollar amount was discussed.
3. Ryan Chase spoke in support of Terri Golter’s remarks.
4. Damon Frampton suggested that a survey of the volunteers be initiated to determine if an increase in pay would help to retain the volunteers and encourage more participation in response to emergency calls.
5. Bill Cronin clarified his previous statement of “it’s not about the money” as the only reason volunteers dedicate their time and effort to the NCFD. Additional considerations include; quality of training, mutual aid support offered to surrounding communities, modern firefighting tactics and equipment. Where the pay becomes a factor is during normal working hours, when it is not economical for a volunteer to leave his fulltime job for the stipend of \$14.00 per call, forfeiting \$50.00 to \$100.00 from a primary job responsibility.

6. Chief Blanding stated that NCFD has not kept pace with the cost of living over the past several years for increases in volunteer pay, suggesting that the department keep pace with the cost of living as a starting point, and to discuss the topic further during the upcoming NCFD budget committee meetings.

Upcoming Fire Ward's Meeting

1. November 11, 2014 at the Public Safety Building from 4:00 – 5:00PM

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 16:41 hrs. by Frampton and seconded by Whitehouse. The vote was unanimous.

Reggie Whitehouse, Secretary
New Castle Board of Fire Wards

Draft Minutes Submitted: October 16, 2014
Minutes Approved: November 11, 2014