

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting called by:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	May 22, 2008 at 18:00 to 20:57
Note taker:	Janine Vary	Place:	Center Street Station

Attendees: Comm. Bob Watson, Comm. Kevin Waldron, Treasurer Roland Seymour, Chief Steve Carrier, Deputy Mike Robinson, and Secretary Janine Vary. Absent:

Comm. Gallant called meeting to order at 6:00PM. Stated for the record that 3 commissioners present, Chief and Deputy. Also present are the Tilton Board of Selectmen, here to address the fire commission. Katherine Dawson discussed MRI study looking to improve fire service in Tilton, the Tilton selectmen have come to see what the fire commissioners will be doing to support East Tilton. Creating new station east of 93, dissolving district, etc. what are the ideas. Katherine felt that this is an old question. Tom what about dissolving district, economically feasible. Katherine said their final report on due 7/1. Responses said it is only alternative to go to get the results for east Tilton, better coverage. MRI has not suggested to eliminate this station but to create a newer sub station east of 93. Tom Cavanaugh said they did to suggest eliminating the Center Street station to him, suggested to put in where the new police station is going. Felt proximity of these 2 takes care of downtown and the one on east side would be too close. Tim said would also need additional personnel. Tom asked Chief about response to East Tilton. 10 to 14 minute range to town line. Variable on traffic and weather. Had to study 10 worst response times. Some were 16 and maybe one 22 but in direct correlation to weather and multiple calls. Compare to rest of district, same as Oak Hill Road or Shaw Hill Road area. National standards 10 to 14 minute range to town line. Variable on traffic and weather. Had to study 10 worst response times. Some were 16 and maybe one 22minutes but in direct correlation to weather and multiple calls. Compare to rest of district, same as Oak Hill Road or Shaw Road area. National standards 4 to 6 minutes, EMS, 4 to 8 fire. Tom if we moved east of exit 20, chief said depends where, looking at new pd site, would drop response times by 3 minutes and increase time of response to this end. But as stated, staff both stations with two firefighters and that would give primary response set up for each station. Tom said we would be running both ambulances fulltime, Chief said you could. Chief said you would send closest ambulance to medical call and two engines to closest fire call. Tom said if move to east of exit 20, how can we fund it? People of Northfield won't support this. If this is our gut feeling, where does that leave us? Katherine said maybe optimistic that MRI report would suggest this and if educating the voters, then they would vote wisely. This station is becoming obsolete. Feels it must be terrible to heat, egress or ingress is difficult. Kevin stated if we built station east of 93 would we have to add on to Northfield station also for more manpower? If we build station east of 93, will we build a station on Oak Hill or Shaw Road? Katherine said everyone is owed better response times. We all are, especially in medical situations. Tom felt report was going to be geared to how district could better serve the district not just east Tilton. Katherine had RFP in hand and read it to Commissioners (a copy is attached to these minutes). Relates to town of Tilton. Remain in fire district or do we dissolve fire district and just have the Tilton fire Dept. RFP requested an outline of procedures to dissolve the fire district. Define staffing for Tilton. Define equipment. Katherine stated that it is not geared to east Tilton but preliminary results point to needs in east Tilton. Tom said there are 2 discussions: one if district is dissolved, how do we best serve Tilton. If not dissolved, how would we move forward? If we build east of exit 20, then we have to man the Park Street station and abandon this station. Mike said 70% of call volume is here in the village district. And 20% is east of 93. Chief said the Downtown is Main Street in Tilton, then downtown of Northfield and then in the commercial district of Tilton. Tim Pearson said they are also looking at trends at future growth. Not much other option than to dissolve. Economically not feasible. Tom said then if not feasible the likelihood is slight for all voters to agree. Tim said coverage could come from Northfield station for downtown area and look at total geography of area. Tom said then we would have to man the Northfield station. If we man full time then we need to enlarge that station. No room to put living quarters in there. Mike said when station was built, we questioned why being built right here, just 7/8's of a mile from Center Street. But we put fire stations wherever but need the people to go there. That station being up there doesn't make bad sense. It allows both stations a close proximity for the heavy call volume downtown. Tom said if 73% of the call volume on this side of exit 20, so the 2 people who are at Park Street will be covering that 73% of the calls. Otherwise, we would have to come from the east side of exit 20. Tom said the practicality of it happening he can't see. If you start with premise the district won't be dissolved, you are looking at a large capital investment and he can't see that happening. Katherine said if Tilton develops more, the 2 hotels, and the former Quinn T property becoming more densely populated like a little city, the demands will increase and must be met. Tom said time is right for the study. The one point for the RFP is the legality by which the district could be dissolved; we have to look at the feasibility of doing that. Is it fair to Northfield? What would be the effects on Northfield if dissolved? Town of Northfield wouldn't man the fire station in Northfield with full time personnel. So we would be subsidizing through manpower to the town of Northfield. Katherine said the surrounding towns would be providing mutual aid. Mike said mutual aid is designed to be an equal giving of service. Town of Hill was a member of Mutual Aid and took advantage of Franklin and got into a reimbursement program with Franklin. They can't provide service back to Franklin. They eventually went with a private service. Dave asked if Winnisquam would be reactivated? Tom said by whom? If Belmont, he doesn't feel that would happen. Sanbornton is asking the same question. Tom said the only way that would happen would be through regionalization. Mike said it would also have

to be done with full time people; and that was an issue with Winnisquam. Tom said if Sanbornton said we'll man the Winnisquam station, Belmont would welcome that. When Winnisquam functioned, their response to our calls the line where we intercepted with them kept moving toward the bridge. The call members weren't available during the day, worked out of town. Tom said we look forward to seeing the report and working together when the report is received. What are their recommendations and the practical approach to it? If economically feasible in some way, being a district we have to consider the effects on the town of Northfield. Tim asked if MRI met with commissioners and Tom said they interviewed all three. Katherine asked what we would do to increase response times to Oak Hill, if Northfield station manned, would it improve times. Chief said maybe a minute and a half, because it is only a mile away. Newer properties are at least protected by sprinklers. Katherine said it would be nice to have a whole package. Tom said it would work for everyone in the district. This is part of the education, how it affects me and my family in both communities. Tom thanked the selectmen for coming over. Tom asked to have a meeting after the report is given by MRI. Chief said the call breakdown. 62% in Tilton and 38% in Northfield. Main downtown district. 28% call occur. In Northfield 20% of calls, east of Exit 20 is 26% of calls, rest is elsewhere in the towns.

Review of minutes: Minutes of special meeting on May 1 public session, Kevin motioned to accept minutes as printed and seconded by Tom. Discussion, none. All commissioners voted to accept the May 1 public session. Tom motioned to hold to review the nonpublic minutes from May 1 to the nonpublic session at the end. Kevin seconded.

Review of Treasurer's report. Roland not present due to the change in meeting dates for this meeting but he had prepared his reports for commissioners' review. Kevin asked about wage buyout for insurance, was this an employee who did not participate in TNFD health coverage. Chief affirmed. He also asked about the 6 wheeler, Chief said we had it serviced, transmission was slipping and had it repaired. Kevin asked what happened to the elections line. Janine commented that she put all bills in that line whether copying, student coverage, ads in papers, workers, etc. and had previously discussed that with him. Tom asked if both towns up to date in payments, Janine said yes. Chief commented that water line was under budgeted, line 412. It was cut significantly when dealing with the bottled water we no longer get. However, the water bills come in from each town, so he anticipates we will over spend on that line. Bob motioned to accept treasurer's report Kevin seconded. Vote taken and all 3 commissioners accepted treasurer's report unanimously.

Review of Chief's report: he attended a couple training classes that were beneficial and community functions. We had a compressor fire at Freudenberg's. Found smoke conditions, thought a bad transformer but was an industrial compressor. Was a \$300,000 loss, could be most significant loss of the year. They had a twin compressor. Fire alarm did its job, had one minor injury, no loss time. Had 3 separate incidents at Wyman Gordan. Gas leak caused, panel fire and an oven fire that evacuated the plant. The first two fires put them out of business for a week, pretty significant; Tom said it costs them \$300,000 a day when closed down. Chief said it has heightened communications and work out plans. Had an injury during swift water training, an equipment failure. Our multiple call rate is 20%. This is simultaneous calls. It seems to happen here often and he can't explain. Tom asked about the trailer they used could it be a command post and rest used for storage, med supplies for acute care center. Through that health network they would apply for that grant. Their offices are in Franklin but would probably be placed into a fire station somewhere so that it could be dispatched easily. No other questions for Chief's report.

Tom read the letter from Hooksett Fire Dept. into the record regarding the swift water training (a copy is attached). Tom felt that it said something for the dept. Kevin said Chief mentioned an event that was a state event. Chief said we had a drill of an acute care center. A 35 bed field hospital that would take people suffering from flu like symptoms, as overflow from hospital. Chief felt it was successful but you don't have the opportunity to interact with other health providers. There were two evaluators. He knows there will be a written report to follow.

Capt. Brad Ober presented Fire Prevention Activity log. Hampton Inn looking for June 10th to open. Water line has been extended up to the other side of them. Hydrants are not in yet. Holiday Inn Express coming along a few months behind Hampton Inn. Walgreens is making good progress now. Tractor Supply store: they'll be submitting plans for fire alarm system. Nothing more from Winnepesaukee River Health Care Facility. Tanger Outlet: newer stores will be opening within the week. NHVH project is continuing. Winnisquam Village is at a stand still. Tom asked about Lochmere Meadows. Mr. Bedard was doing a site plan change and has been going to Tilton Planning Board. Brad thought he was looking at a pretty drastic change. Home Depot has 4 portable tanks and portable water pump supplying their sprinkler system. Not sure if they'll choose to fix or replace their fire tank. Chief, Brad, Home Depot and town of Tilton talking about extending water line up to the Spinnaker location on Sanborn Road. Now that the town of Tilton has an interest, we are trying to get them together, distance isn't that far. Brad hoping that Water District will come on board also. Water dead ends at Wendy's, Home Depot, Hampton Inn and at J Jill. No other questions for Brad.

Old Business

Credit card – we have an application and discussion with FSB. We can get a credit card or we can get a debit card on the

operating account. Could have a pin number and set a limit that could be expended from that account. Could change the limit at any time. If \$750 limit, and had a \$1000 expense, we could change it that way. So we could do strictly credit with paying another bill, etc. Kevin said he does have concern with having a debit card with the entire account. Janine mentioned that only the commissioners and Roland could apply for the debit card, it has to be one of the signers. Kevin felt if it was in its own account, he would feel safer. Tom is not in favor of the debit card on the general account. Bob agreed and Kevin agreed. Aside from the fact of when we meet and the due date to pay the bill, if a regular credit card, that could be taken care of. He would in favor of a debit card on a separate account and just reconcile it back each month. Tom motioned to authorize the Treasurer to establish a new account that the debit card would be used with and limited to \$5000 and reconciling back to \$5000 each month. Kevin seconded. Kevin asked if we were talking one or more cards. Chief said he could only see one would be necessary. Kevin felt one card in the office and possibly one to Chief. Chief said it would be used more for online purchases and thought one would be sufficient. No more discussion. All three commissioners agreed.

Audit for 2006 - Draft of audit is ok by Tom, he thinks we can accept the draft copy and it can be issued as final copy. Tom still feels we still need to do the MD & A letter. Greg Colby can't issue the audit without negatives without that letter being signed by someone. We don't have anyone in the confines of the district that can do that letter. A town administrator would issue the letter, but we don't have an administrator. Originally the letter was a big deal, now it is as boilerplate as it can be. Tom suggested a letter be drafted and signed by one of the commissioners stating that the 2006 annual report draft as submitted by Greg Colby is acceptable. That gives him the authority to go forward then he will ask for that letter to be signed. Janine provided a copy of the sample letter. This is a cover yourself letter. They have taken the information you have given them and put in a general acceptance form. Last year they had exceptions to the report. This year we have a bonafide audit under GASB, so now they are as complete as they can be. This letter is management representation, we didn't have last year. Based on the information they have been presented with, so now they need this sign off. Tom wouldn't have any problem signing it. Without it you will get an exception to the audit. Casts a negative shadow over entire audit. Generally chair would sign it, and Tom would if the other two commissioners agreed. We are accepting the responsibility for information given to them. Bob said he would sign the letter.

Wal-Mart donation check: check had not been released because Franklin Fire Department. Franklin Fire didn't get the FSB grant. They don't have any money to do their portion (about half the total cost). So now Brad is seeking donations from businesses that we would use the equipment for. We have received \$500 from 3M for it and then the system will be ours. Brad would like to see the Wal-Mart check released to Fire Tech and Safety. Brad is raising about \$1400. Tom said \$3600 is the lions share of \$5,000 bill. Check is for \$1,125. Kevin said he still doesn't want to release the money. If we couldn't get further donations, then we can't accept equipment. Brad needs to get the remainder of the balance secured, then the amount could be released. There was more discussion. Bob was for releasing the check and Kevin was against. Tom voted to release the money to break the tie of votes.

Training policy. Mike handed out the current policy. He commented that it needs some updates, was written in 1997 and approved by commissioners at that time. Reimbursement talks about the commitment to the training, the reimbursement for the training cost and hours put in. You are required to fill out a request form for pre-approval and then a request at completion of training. One is monthly training and its definition, 2 and 3 of 3 is "other training", outside of dept. and training that lasts 50 hours or more. Policy includes a commitment to the dept. for a period of time once reimbursed. According to policy is a 2-year period. We need to add to the training policy wording for a paramedic class. It is a huge step and makes an individual more attractive to other depts. For paramedic training, we would reimburse the cost of the class but not the hourly rate for hours attended. Their commitment would be for 2 years to the dept. or follow the reimbursement schedule. Chief said Greg is proposing over a 3-year period. Chief believes \$7700 total cost for course. Bob Bousquet addressed the commissioners. In 2000 the fire dept. paid \$4000 for a certificate program for him. Now paramedic is a degree program. Bob had to pay extra costs. Mike feels that we would need to add the wording for paramedic. There are other corrections; training is paid now quarterly, changes in how they have been reimbursed. There were updates in 2006 and proof of successful completions, etc. Kevin asked about the wording of years of service. Mike said that would come from Chief and Commissioners. Tom asked about the recourse if they leave early. Mike felt the intent is stop and think about it before you jump into it. Tom felt Kevin makes a valid point. Tom asked Mike to draft a new policy and get it back to the commissioners to view and Tom asked if Bob could draft his thoughts and put into letterform so it can be taken into consideration. Kevin commented that if we had an employee scheduled to work on Tuesday but class is on Tuesday, how is his shift covered. Chief said it is not covered in policy. Chief decides if covered or not. Chief said if he has someone covering that position we are paying overtime. Tom suggested a great deal to be thought about in this regard. This will be carried on to June's meeting.

Tom said the DRA letter of disallowment will be set aside for now.

New business

Chief had a number of Purchasing requests: the wall posters for the NH minimum wage employee criteria, etc. Some need to be updated. We can be guaranteed a full year of updates for \$85.00 and consolidates all laws into 3 posters. Tom said the posters need to be posted by law. If someone wants to keep up with the laws through DES, it can be done but that takes an HR person. Kevin feels if it can be gotten for nothing, then we can't buy it. Purchase denied.

Local mariners checked for the boat motors. Can't sell motor without boat. Most couldn't get this engine, so we are back to the original quote. \$4856.00 Yamaha 2 stroke pump jet loader unit. Chief had the file on it. Kevin asked if it is the lowest price, Chief said this person out of Portsmouth RI. He has info on Evinrude for \$5500. The engine we have is a Johnson but not made any longer. Mike said Mercury makes the true jet but sucks up sand from the bottom. Kevin asked if it is delivered price. Chief said yes. Kevin approved and Bob approved purchase. Tom abstained. Purchase approved.

Memo requesting funds be released to conduct ground ladder testing and aerial device. American Testing is \$1252 and Ewell UL \$1730 only 2 companies that will come onsite. Both commissioners agreed on American testing. Testing approved.

Generator: is \$4000 to repair, that has been removed from Rescue and was an approved repair. Generator is not on the rescue at this time.

Hold off on paramedic program till next month.

Chief has three prices for high volume portable pumps. \$6600 Darley, Waterous at \$5000 to \$5700 and a CET \$4900. We have a CET pump now and works very well, can we purchase the CET pump? That will take the place of pump on E2. That pump is not out of service but sometimes it is questioned if it will start. Looking at replacement. Bob approved, Expected life? Chief said 20 years. Kevin approved. Purchase approved.

Chief wanted to dispose of old air bags and a 1968 portable power unit and has been rebuilt. Perrin's can't do much to keep it operating. He wants to dispose of it. He doesn't believe there is any value. The air bags have outlived their expected life. Don't feel it is appropriate to give to another dept. Bob said it could be a liability issue if we gave it away. Kevin asked about what we have. Chief said we bought new air bags out of last year's budget. We have two power units on the rescue truck. Bob said to dispose of it. Kevin agreed to dispose of it. Disposals approved.

Chief said we have been working with our insurance company on the repair of the pickup bay roof that was damaged by snow/ice falling on the roof. The complete roof will be replaced, our share of it will be \$5000, we have a deductible and depreciation that is figured into that also. The job hasn't been awarded yet. Tom said he would question where they came up with that number. Tom just had that situation in a similar case. The numbers may be reliable but we should visit it with them. Tom would be glad to look at the numbers and how the depreciation is calculated.

Chief had a Sole source approval for pagers, portable replacement and repairs, batteries. This is a memo from Greg Michaud. We have been using Belknap Communications solely. They are located in Northfield. More cost effective to us. In past we have been using Lily Pond Communications. Bob said if they have been doing a good job, Kevin said they are also local. Both commissioners agreed for this sole purchase provider.

Tom mentioned that the 2007 Audit should be discussed. Also, DRA needs to be dealt with. The hour was getting late and Tilton Selectmen had invited commissioners to their meeting. Nonpublic session that needs to be dealt with soon. Tom suggested to set up special meeting to deal with nonpublic issue next week. Other commissioners wanted to continue with our meeting.

There was an invoice that was crossed off the manifest which was a training payment for a number of people attending one training, so the cost was significant, this was \$715.00. Chief wasn't sure but thought that this was already voted on or was possibly used as an example. Kevin isn't sure why we are sending fire fighters to officer seminars. Chief feels that we want all our employees as well trained as possible. The better your followers are the easier it is to lead them. This is to reach out to officers and instructors and give training that would be brought back to our fire depts.. There was great deal of discussion of tactics and strategies at fire fighter level. Chief felt it was more than appropriate for our firefighters to be there. Reinforcement in fire ground safety, becoming an officer, fire ground tactics. Kevin noted that this class was already attended. He felt that it was done backwards. Chief stated it was under the \$750 limit and we had discussed this possibility early on, having multiple invoices for one event; it's not a piece of equipment. Chief asked if we need to go before commission for every training event that will have multiple people attending. When Kevin realized the total was less than the \$750 limit, he said he misunderstood the total of the invoices and approved the payment.

Tom asked for public comment: Gretchen Wilder. Regarding the dept of labor postings, these are all PDF forms available on

line for free. She has web site links, most are on 8.5 by 11 and she would be glad to share that information with Janine. Chief felt that if they can be consolidated into smaller pages, it is easier to post on our wall space. Gretchen said the state does not pay for special posters. Regarding the Wal-Mart check, she understood it was to benefit the TNFD and city of Franklin. If Franklin won't benefit from it, does it jeopardize the donation of the money? She had concerns that seeing that Franklin did not get the FSB grant, did we now have a \$5000 training tool that taxpayers will have to pay for. Brad commented that he already had a number of calls to businesses in the area. We had already received a check from 3M for \$500 towards the unit. He felt very confident that we would be able to raise the funds through contributions, not through the budget. Gretchen stated that through the monthly reports, we now have Brad Ober and FF Stetson doing fire prevention; that we now have an assistant. If we can't keep up with Brad's duties, then we don't have enough staff to utilize this tool. Chief felt this was an unfair discussion because we are not talking about the shortage of personnel. Fact of matter is FF Stetson has been carrying a large load of fire prevention duties. Gretchen said prior to this tool coming in in December, we talked about being short handed in public meetings. We have Greg filling in a part time basis working toward our goal of getting rental properties up to code, etc. Now we have this \$5000 new piece of equipment. Chief said we offered fire extinguisher training before this unit was received but with very rudimentary equipment and this new unit allows us to not have any impact on the environment. There are large companies we do training with each year. The work load, yes, we have been impacted negatively due to a shortage of staff. Gretchen said she agreed, we talked about this unit in December and still in May, do we have a deadline on accepting this unit? A tool not completely paid for? Chief had said that that wasn't our choice. Other's made that choice. Again she asked if there was a deadline. If not, does it go back? Chief said we are not sending it back. The vendor knew had already agreed to receive payments as the contributions were received. We have confidence that the money will be raised through contributions. She feels that the purchasing policy will help stop situations like this. She also expressed great frustration with Comm. Gallant casting a vote regarding this after being absent from some of the meetings.

Tom motioned to go into nonpublic session at 8:20. Kevin seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken: Kevin aye, Tom aye and Bob aye. Commissioners went into Nonpublic session according to RSA 91-A:3 II.

Back into public session at 8:43PM. Janine had been looking into purchasing a recording device to record discussion of commissioner meetings so there would be a backup if there was any question regarding the minutes. She could only find a couple of devices that used tapes, nothing with CD's. Only one had the ability to hook one external microphone to it. Kevin would like a system with more than one microphone. Commissioners asked Janine to do further research.

Kevin motioned to adjourn and Tom seconded. All commissioners voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:57PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Vary, Secretary

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:	June 19, 2008 at 18:00 at Center Street Station
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