

## Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting Called By:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	February 24, 2011 at 17:40
Transcribed by:	Kathy Tobine	Place:	Tilton School, new Academic Building, School Street, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 213, Tilton

Commissioner Gallant called the meeting called to order at 5:40 PM.

Present: Commissioners Gallant, Auger, Clark; Chief Brad Ober, Deputy Chief Mike Robinson, Treasurer Roland Seymour, Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine

### Minutes

#### January 17, 2010

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. The minutes were unanimously accepted as written.

#### January 24, 2010

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### Correspondence

#### DRA Choice of Audit Form MS-60A

Commissioner Gallant read the notice dated February 2, 2011.

*New legislation clarifies that all municipalities are required to have an audit by either a CPA or a locally elected auditor. Municipalities are required to inform the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) on the MS-60A form of their intended auditor option and time schedule.*

*The form MS-60A, Auditor Option and Schedule, is used to report which type of audit will be conducted and the schedule for completion. This form should be submitted to DRA no later than 10 days after the close of the fiscal year. For calendar year municipalities, this form was due on January 10. We have not received this form from your municipality. If you are an optional fiscal year community, we will be expecting the MS-60A on or before July 10, 2011.*

*Every municipality has the ability to choose how to audit financial accounts; by certified public accountant (CPA), locally elected auditor, or locally elected audit board. There could be other audit requirements for your municipality that would require an audit by a CPA. If your municipality expended federal assistance in excess of \$500,000, the federal granting authority may require an audit under the requirements set forth in the Governmental Auditing Standards or the Single Audit Act (OMB Circular A-133). If applicable, check with the federal granting authority regarding the type of audit necessary.*

*If there is a vacancy in the office of town or district auditor, that position will be filled under procedures in RSA 670:12 or RSA 669:68. Generally the vacant position is filled by appointment by the governing body or supervisors of the checklist.*

*Enclosed is a copy of the new law, as well as the MS-60A form. Please complete, sign, and return it to the address on the form as soon as possible. If your municipality has chosen to have the audit conducted by a locally elected auditor and the position is vacant, please be sure to include that office in your election process for the 2011 annual meeting.*

*If there are questions or concerns or if you would like training provided for a locally elected auditor, please contact us at 271-3397 or Barbara Robinson at [brobinson@rev.state.nh.us](mailto:brobinson@rev.state.nh.us). Thank you for your prompt attention.*

Commission Gallant stated that if you take the time to read the regulations it is clear to him that based on the size of the organization's total budget it qualifies them having an audit by CPA. Commissioner Clark felt having a CPA doing the audit is the way to go the first year out. Commissioner Gallant stated he feels same way. There has been enough discourse and they have enough responsibility to the two towns that they should have the audit. Commissioner Auger agreed to the audit this year and reassess next year at budget time. Commissioner Clark made a motion for the MS-60 form that they report they are having a CPA perform the audit. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Gallant stated that Kathy is to fill out the MS-60 and call him to sign it if needed.

**Public Comment/Members of the District/Employees of the District**

Chief Ober introduced Dan Leathers to the Commissioners and Roland. He stated that Dan is finishing weeks of orientation tomorrow and starting on shift next Wednesday. Commissioner Gallant welcomed him aboard. He told Dan that if he had any feedback to give to go through the proper channels. They would be happy to hear it. Commissioner Auger asked for his qualifications. Chief Ober replied Level II, Intermediate and CDL. Commissioner Auger asked where he came from. Chief Ober replied Meredith. Commissioner Auger congratulated Dan on being hired.

**Treasurer's Report**

Roland stated that in their packet they have what we were able to get at this point. As we don't have the finalized budget we didn't put any budget figures in.

Account Balances as of February 24<sup>th</sup>

1000 Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund	\$513,736.83.
This includes two months of fees collected.	
1002 Debit Card Account	\$4,951.90
1003 Operating Budget Account	\$149,622.61
1004 Payroll Account	500.00
1005 Land & Building Fund	\$216,319.01

Commissioner Gallant asked for up-to-date figures on the Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund for the District Meeting. He also asked for year end balances. Roland replied the year end balance is in the annual report.

Roland commented that a Profit & Loss was provided on the Operating Budget Account showing the revenue and expenses to date.

Commissioner Auger asked what Miscellaneous Revenues is. Kathy responded this is permit fees and medical records requests. Commissioner Gallant asked that the fees be broken out as we do have a fee structure.

Commissioner Gallant asked about Tilton's payment of \$65,100. He wanted to know if that was 100% of 1/12<sup>th</sup> of last year's budget. Roland explained that he did not change it. He told them to continue making the payment they had been making right along last year.

Commissioner Gallant told Roland that number needs to be changed to reflect last year's tax

rate. He wants the amount corrected to last year's total. Discussion ensued about Northfield. The Commissioners requested Roland let the Towns know that their payment will be 100% of the prior year.

Roland stated the Profit & Loss is just to show the revenue and expenses paid. As soon as the budget is approved, the numbers will be plugged in and we will go from there.

Commissioner Clark asked how we pay out more than we have. Roland explained with money we have at the end of the year that is carried over.

Roland asked about the line of credit with Franklin Savings Bank. He doesn't feel we will need it this year. Discussion ensued. It was decided that they would apply for the line of credit.

Commissioner Clark asked Roland if the Water District had included a warrant article to maintain the \$125,988. Roland stated they had a warrant article to maintain that number for 2011 and following the three years.

Commissioner Gallant stated that the ambulance charges are at \$31,873.54. Roland stated that this is for two months.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to accept the Treasurers Report as written. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

## **Chiefs Report**

Chief Ober handed out the annual report from Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid for review.

Chief Ober apologized for the handwritten report. The server crashed.

Chief Ober stated that they had met Dan Leathers earlier. He was the second new hire. Derek Farrell was the first. He is in the first week of his rotation. Both are an excellent fit. They are self motivators. Both are EMT-I's. Derek has taken the written test for his CDL and will do the practical exam in the next couple of weeks.

The renovation project is nearly complete. One phone line needs to be fished in to the wall and outlet for the fax machine. Clayton Communications will hopefully be coming in early next week to do phone work. We are adding two phone extensions. He will be tying in all the new phone lines that are run back to the brain. This is really all that needs to be done to complete it.

The training room tables are on order. Hopefully we will have them early next week. They are a molded table that is 18" deep.

We are vast on the way of reorganizing and setting up the office space. The main room is looking more presentable and organized.

Commissioner Clark asked what we were doing with old tables. Chief Ober replied we will be keeping one wood for lunch table/head table for training. Commissioner Gallant commented one has been donated to food pantry. They don't have a good table for that. Chief Ober stated the folding tables potentially being donated to the Grange. We won't be needing them. They are downstairs waiting for a new home.

Chief Ober reported that we did have some damage to the fire escape from ice falling. One board on the platform is broken. The railing needs to be re-secured. It will probably be recurring problem every year with ice falling.

Chief Ober stated he is starting to formulate goals for 2011. What he trying to do is break them down for one year, three to five years and master. This will encompass a lot of things. Commissioner Gallant stated this is something they had in their goals and objectives. He is glad to see it is included. Commissioner Clark asked if this is something they all would be working on together. Commissioner Gallant and Chief Ober replied yes. Commissioner Gallant stated Brad would do the framework.

Chief Ober reported they did finalize a bid spec for the Ambulance bid. It is about 160 pages long. They sent it to four companies. They are due back by March 7<sup>th</sup> by 3:30 in office. They will be able to go to District Meeting with an accurate figure. Out of the companies they looked at for demos Sugarloaf Ambulance Rescue Vehicle out of Sugarloaf, Maine has been the most responsive. Specialty Vehicles is the company they purchased the last two ambulances from.

Chief Ober reported they have a Quarterly Joint Loss Safety Committee meeting tomorrow morning at 7:00 AM. This will be immediately followed by a career officers meeting. Commissioner Clark asked who the career officers are. Chief Ober replied Tim Ames, Tim Joubert, Dave Hall and Greg Michaud. Brad stated that on Monday they will be having a department meeting. He and the Deputy have reviewed an agenda/program. This will include an official introduction of himself including his background. They will provide a road map of 2011. He will share with them some of the goals, etc. They will be doing some communications training based upon speaking and body language.

Chief Ober stated he has started a personnel policy review/update. Sometime in 2011 that finished document will be coming to the Commissioners for approval. Commissioner Clark asked if they could target a date like mid year. Chief Ober replied yes. Commissioner Auger asked if this would be for both full-time and call personnel or just full-time. Chief Ober replied it will be mostly full-time as it deals with health insurance, sick time, vacation and that kind of stuff; but it will cover both. Once that is finished the next part will be operations. Commissioner Clark asked if the target date for the personnel policy will be June. Chief Ober replied yes.

Chief Ober reported that this past week we have had server up and down hick ups. This morning it hick upped for the last time and it is dead. Brian Dumka will be in tomorrow morning to set us up with a temporary server so we can get back up and running to 90% function of that. It is nine years old. Brian will look at it tomorrow to see if he can bring up an error log. Commissioner Clark asked if it is backed up and where. Chief Ober replied it is backed up on the hard drive.

### **Activity Report**

Chief Ober reported there are quite a few reports there. He spent a little time with Fire House. To get these reports was very easy. He asked if the Commissioners want all those reports every month or just the second page in. It was decided that these same reports will be presented next month and at that time they will let Chief Ober know what they want. Commissioner Clark asked for a walk through of the reports. Chief Ober went over each report with them.

Chief Ober told the Commissioners that we have a temporary employee through Work In Progress. There is no charge to us for the employee. They are paid by the State for the hours they work which is 20 hours per week. She will be working with Kathy to get the files updated. She will also be working in FireHouse on data clean up, especially the address data base. Commissioner Gallant stated they are utilizing this program in Tilton. They are using to them

to scan info. Chief Ober stated one of our goals is to have all inspections scanned and linked to the address of the occupancy in FireHouse. Commissioner Gallant asked if the ability was there to look up the inspections as well as the number of calls. Chief Ober replied yes. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Gallant stated these reports are a very useful tool. They are far more reliable. It can be a good management tool if used properly. He would like to come into the office and sit down to see what it can do once we are proficient at it. Discussion ensued.

### **Fire Prevention Report**

Chief Ober reported we do not have one this month.

### **New Business**

#### Purchasing Requests

1. Server. Chief Ober stated he is still getting pricing on a new server. They range from \$2,800 to \$4,500. Brian Dumka is coming in the morning to set us up with a temporary server. He would like the Board tonight to authorize up to \$3,500 and allow us to get something purchased and ordered tomorrow. Commissioner Gallant asked what was in the budget. Chief Ober replied that line is \$3,500. The total line is \$6,000. He explained the current server is nine years old. It's a good server if you are a "computer geek" and have your home set up so you have computers everywhere. It is not good for a small business atmosphere. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Auger made a motion to authorize Chief Ober to spend up to \$3,200 for the purchase of a new server. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously to authorize Chief Ober to extend a purchase order for up to \$3,200. Chief Ober is authorized to sign for the purchase as Chief.
2. Cutters Edge Ventilation Saw. Chief Ober explained that this is a chain saw designed to do ventilation on a roof during a building fire. Commissioner Gallant read the memo from FF Joubert to Chief Ober and Deputy Chief Robinson for the record. *The Cutters Edge ventilation saw has been OOS for the past three weeks due to mechanical failure. Due to its age and the extent of damage, the saw is not considered repairable. This saw has been in service for the past fifteen years and has proven reliable with no significant issues. I have researched other brands of ventilation saws and found that there would be no significant savings going with another brand. I recommend that we purchase a new Cutters Edge 20" ventilation saw from C&S Specialty Inc. for the price of \$2,419.38. There are three estimates: one from Fire Tech & Safety for \$2,765; one from Firematic for \$2,765 and one from C & S Specialty Inc. for \$2,419.* Chief Ober recommended they approve this purchase pending approval of the warrant article for new equipment. The purchase would be under miscellaneous. It will come from the Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund. Commissioner Gallant stated there is no reason to wait. Commissioner Clark made a motion to allow Chief Ober to purchase the saw from C & S Specialties for \$2,419. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Hydrant Gate. Chief Ober explained this is the gate that sits on the truck. The water supply line coming in to the truck connects to this hydrant gate. The current one has failed. The parts are obsolete. It is not worth rebuilding. He is requesting they approve the money to purchase this at the fire show in Springfield in June for less money. Commissioner Gallant asked if he felt that was prudent. Chief Ober replied yes. You can sometimes get up to \$200 off at the show. They won't see this expenditure until probably July.

Commissioner Clark asked if this is a show we typically go to. Chief Ober replied that he goes to this show. Commissioner Auger asked if this was going to be logged in on the computer as to when it was purchased and what was paid. Chief Ober replied yes. Commissioner Clark asked if this would be purchased out of the Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund as well. Chief Ober replied no. Commissioner Auger made the motion to purchase the hydrant gate at the June show in Springfield. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Gallant requested that once the purchase is made that the Commissioners be apprised of it. Commissioner Clark asked what line the purchase will come out of. Commissioner Gallant replied 630.

#### Call Company Pay Increase

Commissioner Clark had asked this to be put on the agenda. The Call Company payroll is budgeted for \$70,000. They get paid quarterly on an hourly basis. Chief Ober stated that is the base and then it depends on their training levels as to what their pay is. Commissioner Gallant stated the bottom line is we are compensating the career staff with a 2.5% increase and Commissioner Clark had indicated it might be appropriate to consider that for the Call Company. Commissioner Gallant asked how we would do that. Chief Ober stated across the board and the adjustment should come at the base pay rate. As early as two years ago they did receive a significant increase. Discussion ensued about when the rate increase would take effect. Commissioner Clark made a motion to increase the base pay from \$10.00 per hour to \$10.25 per hour and leave the increments as they are with the pay increase to start January 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion.

Discussion: Deputy Robinson stated he and Chief Ober had a discussion on that this afternoon. No one on the Call Company has stated they wanted a raise. They are entering into a year of goals and objectives on things they want to accomplish. He wanted to know if they could set a sum aside for incentives. Commissioner Gallant stated he doesn't disagree with that. The whole point of this is that if 2.5% is acceptable for the full-time employees, then so should it be for the Call Company. They need to do what they can to integrate the full-time department and call department. It's being absorbed in budget they are not raising anything. Commissioner Clark stated the motion was to give 2.5%. What Mike is saying is to look at it a little differently. Commissioner Gallant said it will amount to about \$1,500. He agrees with what Mike said. However he agrees with that looking forward into another budget year. They need to look further about incentive bonuses, incentive pay. Step and grade shouldn't be much more than a cost of living increase. What they are suggesting should be looked at for the Call staff as well as the Career staff. Commissioner Clark stated some homework needs to be done. He wanted to know if they can put a price on this. He also wanted to know what other departments do. Chief Ober stated in the theme of keeping everybody equal for 2011 keep it the same and change it for 2012 if that's what they decide. Discussion ensued. They are giving 2.5% to everyone this year to put everyone on a level playing field and is a one time unilateral increase.

There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Decision was unanimous.

#### **Old Business**

##### Labor Grade & Step System Policy

Commissioner Clark made a motion to bring the Labor Grade & Step System policy on the floor for discussion purposes. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. Chief Ober stated that after comments made through the budget process he revised a couple of sentences. The

second paragraph that starts *The wage schedules for work weeks* if you look at the last sentence there it says *The latest CPI-W (consumer price index) shall be one of the factors used during this re-evaluation.* Previous to that it said that will be the factor used. The last thing he changed was the last paragraph. It says *Upon approval of the Board of Commissioners full-time employees shall receive automatic step increases.* It didn't say that before. It just said full-time employees shall receive automatic step increases. This gives you control back. As everyone has said throughout this process it will need to be looked at annually. For 2011 this is what you have talked about doing. It doesn't lock you in to anything that is an automatic year after year after year. Commissioner Clark said a couple of things do make it sound like it is locked in. The latest CPI shall be used as one of factors. He would like to expand on that. Things like the latest CPI shall be a factor along with merit and economic conditions. He would strongly advise that at least they add merit to that. Chief Ober cautioned that they do not have a good merit system in place. That is his only caution about doing that without adopting a good merit system. Commissioner Clark stated right now they have 2.5% this year that they have agreed to. He thinks it was really loud and clear at the public hearing that people felt that there is no step and grade system in the private sector. He thinks they have to be willing to show people that they are tuned into that and the economic realities that they are facing. Chief Ober stated don't think he's saying that's not a good way to go. You don't have that system in place so be careful on what you say you are going to judge something by if it's not there to judge. The wording there if that's what you want to do should probably go in the last paragraph. Further discussion ensued. Commissioner Gallant stated they have beat this to death. There is a motion on the floor. There is a second. They are going to take a vote. He called the vote. Commissioners Gallant and Auger for, Commissioner Clark against.

#### Retirement Budget

Chief Ober brought up the retirement budget and gave credit to Kathy. She found a mistake. The budgeted amount for 2011 was off a projected increase from the State. That projected increase is reflected in the current Governor's budget which is on the table for approval. That is the worst case scenario. If his budget is approved we have the appropriate money budgeted for that. What he is saying is the State portion is going to be reduced pushing more cost to local jurisdictions. That amount of money is \$40,000. The question is, do we roll the dice and reduce our budget by \$40,000 and hope or think that his budget is not going to pass and that the percentage breakdown between State and employer are going to stay as they are today or do we leave the \$40,000 in there in anticipation his budget probably will pass and we have that money budgeted for the increase. The problem is if we reduce our budget by \$40,000 he doesn't know where we will come up with money should the Governor's budget pass. Commissioner Gallant stated the conservative way to approach this is to leave it as it is and if the money is not used it will go back into the general fund and they can choose to offset money raised by taxes next year. If we choose to decrease the budget and the Governor's budget passes he doesn't know where we will get the \$40,000. Chief Ober asked if we can take the \$40,000 from the unreserved fund balance. Commissioner Gallant replied no and explained. Deputy Robinson asked when the State budget runs. Commissioner Gallant replied on a July 1<sup>st</sup> fiscal year. He recommends leaving it as it and bringing it to the body and let them make the decision. Give them the option and make it clear to them that they are jeopardizing their own public safety if they take it out of there and the Governor's budget passes. The better way to do it is to raise it and if we don't use it bring it forward to next year and use it to reduce taxes. Give them that as an option. It is a failsafe. Deputy Robinson stated we budgeted based on their fiscal year. Commissioner Clark commented that his

thoughts on the whole thing are that he isn't comfortable with the fact that 100% of this increase, if it goes into effect, being paid by the District. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Clark made a motion to bring it up to the voters at District meeting, explain what the situation is with the retirement fund and leave it up to the voters at that time. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Commissioners Auger and Clark for, Commissioner Gallant against as it is not an appropriate item to have as a motion by this Board.

### **Other Business**

Chief Ober brought up the surcharge we are paying on our gasoline purchases. All parties met Wednesday. They have discovered that the tank and pumps are on Fire District property. There is no real documentation of all the agencies involved, which are the Fire District, Northfield, Tilton and the School District, as to who owns it. There is tons of documentation that all parties contribute to the expense of it. In 1999 a new tank was put in. What came out of the meeting is that a memo of understanding will be drafted for all parties to agree on so historically they can go forward. They have agreed on a fuel surcharge will still be charged. One trust fund will be established, not two. There is about \$13,000 in the trust fund and they are 10 years into it. They are projecting it will cost \$60,000 to \$80,000 to replace the tank in another 10 years. The whole point of the trust fund was to pay for maintenance and to replace the tank. Through this MOU that is to be drafted we believe that there should be one trust fund to be bill by the School District. The trust fund is currently controlled by the Town of Tilton. That surcharge will reflect actual maintenance and replacement costs. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Gallant stated he asked Joyce who has the legal liability for the tank and pumps. She told him that because we all are contributing on an equal basis that each and every one of our insurances would cover it. The primary responsibility would fall with him whose property it's on. Commissioner Clark asked who was at meeting. Chief Ober replied he was there, the Business Administrator Assistant from the School District, the Water District, Joyce from Tilton and Northfield Highway. An MOU is being drafted for all parties to review. It will spell out the amount of the surcharge and what it will be used for. For example, there is annual testing that has to be done on it and Northfield paid for it out of their budget last year. Discussion ensued.

### **Non-Public**

Commissioner Gallant made a motion to go into non-public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) to discuss personnel issues at 8:20 P.M. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, roll call vote was taken: Commissioner Pat Clark, yes; Commissioner Paul Auger, yes; Commissioner Tom Gallant, yes.

At 8:21 P.M. they have gone out of public session.

There being no further items to come before them in non-public session Commissioner Gallant made a motion to go out of non-public session at 9:10 P.M. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken: Commissioner Pat Clark, yes; Commissioner Paul Auger, yes; Commissioner Tom Gallant, yes.

At 9:11 P.M. they are back in public session.

Commissioner Gallant made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public meeting. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. The vote was unanimous in favor of keeping the minutes of the non-public session sealed.

**Other Business**

Commissioner Gallant stated he would like to investigate the possibility of changing the meeting from Thursday night to another night. He would also like to investigate having the meeting somewhere else. The Tilton Selectmen cannot come on Thursday, Northfield cannot come on Tuesday. He asked if Wednesday would be acceptable. Secondly, he would like to think about meeting somewhere else. Commissioner Clark asked if he had any ideas. Commissioner Gallant replied we could rotate by meeting six months in Tilton and six months in Northfield. It might help sponsor a partnership. It might make them feel more comfortable. Discussion ensued.

**Pay Bills**

There were no questions on the bills. The manifest for February 11, 2011 in the amount of \$14,145.66 was approved.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Auger made a motion to adjourn at 9:16 P.M. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Vote was unanimous to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Tobine  
Administrative Assistant

**Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:** March 17, 2011 at 17:30. Meeting to be held at Tilton School, new Academic Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 213, School Street, Tilton.