

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting Called By: Commissioners

Date, Time: 8/10/2021, 5:30 PM

Transcribed By: Beth Joslin

Location: Tilton Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street
Tilton NH

Call to Order

Commissioner Pyra called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Attendance

Commissioners Paul Auger, Jon Cilley, Eric Pyra; Chief Michael Sitar, Deputy Chief Timothy Joubert and Administrative Assistant Kathy Tobine

Public: Kevin Waldron and Kevin Cate

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

There was no public comment.

Correspondence

Town of Northfield letter dated July 20, 2021, regarding the Fire District becoming a member of Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid in place of the Town of Northfield. Commissioner Cilley commented that if they assume responsibility for Northfield, they would probably need to do the same for Tilton. Commissioner Pyra asked if it had been discussed that the Fire District assumes responsibility for the bills for LRMFA while the towns remain members. Chief Sitar replied that it had. Discussion ensued regarding how it would work and what effect it would have on LRMFA if the Fire District took over the spot for both towns. It was decided that Kathy will reach out to the Administrative Assistants in each town to arrange a meeting between their selectmen and the commissioners.

Chief's Report

Budget

- The 2020 Unassigned Fund Balance is: \$626,117.
- Total Apparatus and Equipment Fund balance through July: \$251,035.70
- 2021 Ambulance Revenue Through July: \$262,172.49
- We are 58% through the budget year and have expended 52.1% of the Operating budget.

Commissioner Pyra commented on the legal and vehicle repair columns being over and asked Chief Sitar if he was cutting back in other places to which he replied he was and that they are also finding ways to economize some of the repairs on vehicles that are to be replaced soon.

Commissioner Cilley commented on Ladder 1 being the first out truck and asked if that was because the engines were both in the shop. Chief Sitar replied that yes, they were both being repaired at the same time. Discussion ensued regarding which vehicles are responding to which calls.

Fire Prevention Report for July 2021

- Report included in handout.
- For the Month of July, there were 48 Fire Prevention inspections.

Commissioner Cilley commented that he was happy to see other people taking some of the inspection duties.

Run Report for July 2021

- Report included in handout.
- For the Month of July, we had 216 incidents.
- 148 of the incidents were EMS in nature and that equates to 69% of our total incident volume for the month.
- The Engine responded to 41 EMS and MVA incidents last month.

Overlapping/Simultaneous Incidents for July 2021

- Report included in handout
- We had 54 overlapping/simultaneous incidents for the month.
- Overlapping/simultaneous incidents account for 25% of all incidents for the Month of July.
- Of the 24 simultaneous incidents TNFD responded to 52.
- We received 9 mutual aid Ambulance responses, 7 transported.
- We responded to 0 mutual aid Ambulance requests.
- We received 1 mutual aid Engine responses.
- We responded to 1 mutual aid Engine requests.

Apparatus

- Annual PM completed for A1, F1, and U1.
- U1 had multiple repairs
- E3 had multiple repairs. Generator too costly to repair.
- A1 rear door latch replaced due to corrosion
- L1 PM 8/9/2021

COVID-19

- Operating under the revised State COVID EMS protocols.

Commissioner Pyra asked if there has been an up tick in cases. Chief Sitar replied that the state as a whole has seen a rise in cases but there haven't been any significant changes within the district.

Center Street

- Open to public using NH H&HS guidelines.
- Researching a method of redundant internet service

Park Street

- Bathroom project underway

Fire Department Radio System

- Park Street
 - A building Permit for tower was issued.
 - Parts for the tower will be arriving soon
- Repeater
 - I have been contacted and am having discussions on the possibility of collaborating with Tilton PD and Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid to add a receiver to FD system, a simulcast radio for the PD, and a backhaul link for LRMFA.

Personnel

- Conditional offer for Frangelli replacement. Still waiting on background.

Currently Working On

- New Hydrant & Water Cistern locations
 - Meeting with Peter Ames NH Dams 8/10/21

- SAFER Grant Implementation
 - Received our first reimbursement, first quarter of 2021
 - Second quarter was submitted and approved.
- COVID-19 Grants
 - July 2020 – awarded \$9,121.
 - January 2021 – awarded \$1,983.78.
- 2020 AFG Grants: submitted a regional training grant.
 - Awards to be announced in July and August
- Capital Improvement Program
 - New Deputy Vehicle 2022
- 2022 Budgets

Commissioner Pyra asked about a video he saw posted of the crew training and using water and asked if they were allowed to use the water. Chief Sitar replied that it was from a truck and they are allowed to use the fill line to fill their trucks. Deputy Joubert added that Franklin Fire also was using the training prop recently.

Chief Sitar commented that regarding his meeting today about cisterns and dry hydrants it looks favorable at that location.

New Business

Fire Station Building Committee

Chief Sitar shared a list of people who expressed interest in being a part of the committee. Kathy commented that some come with conditions. Discussion ensued regarding the candidates and where they live to determine equal representation for both towns.

Commissioner Cilley made a motion to put a request out to each person that if they are still interested that they would like them to be part of the committee. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Fire Station Building Committee Charge

Commissioner Cilley commented that the findings of the last committee were that building on the Park Street plot is the immediate solution, maybe not a 50-year solution, and maybe a sub station will need to be built down the road.

Commissioner Pyra commented that the company building the tower at Park Street had problems with the soil not being able to support the weight and asked if they should have the committee authorize borings to make sure they don't run into the same issue.

Kevin Cate commented that the tower would have much more psi on the base than a building would have, also noting that it was much closer to the wet lands. Discussion ensued regarding borings and ground quality.

Commissioner Pyra asked how much money they had in the land & building fund. Kathy replied that there was \$100,000 and that it is earmarked to be used for that purpose.

Kevin Cate suggested that the main charge be for the committee to design the building. Discussion ensued regarding possible charges for the committee.

Deputy Joubert suggested the committee meet so they are up to date on the plan from the previous committee and can provide some input. Then the Commissioners can create the charges. Chief Sitar commented that he would like to see this committee create a shovel ready plan, ready to be funded to bring to district meeting for approval.

Kevin Cate inquired about the process that was used to make a plan for the police department. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Cilley asked if the department has a way of sharing documents. Chief Sitar replied that they had tried google drive last year but that several people had trouble accessing it.

Kathy asked if they could readdress LRMFA, stating that in 2017 it went before both the towns as a warrant article to withdraw from LRMFA and for the district to become a member. It failed in Tilton and passed in Northfield, meaning it failed because it had to be approved by both towns.

Old Business

Starting Pay

Chief Sitar stated that he did a survey of area departments' starting pays and these were the results:

Average Starting pay in the Lakes Region (Franklin, Gilford, Plymouth, & Laconia)	\$19.50
Average Starting pay larger area (Franklin, Gilford, Plymouth, Laconia, Goffstown, & Epping)	\$21.06
Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS starting pay	\$17.93

Chief Sitar added that he also surveyed the towns regarding their benefits and the following numbers are what the towns pay per year in wages (starting), paid holidays, family health plan, and dental. He noted that some departments offer more benefits and not all departments pay dental.

	Tilton-Northfield	\$68,579	
Franklin	\$78,886	Laconia	\$76,507
Gilford	\$71,178	Goffstown	\$76,566
Plymouth	\$74,624	Epping	\$80,965

Commissioner Pyra asked if the district was having trouble recruiting. Commissioner Cilley commented that everyone is having trouble. Discussion ensued regarding hiring struggles and what incentives other departments are offering.

Chief Sitar commented that his goal is to be offering median starting pay for their area. Commissioner Pyra asked if they raised starting pay would that raise everyone else as well. Chief Sitar replied that it would. Chief Sitar stated that he can get together costs of what it would be to raise up. Adding that they have done step raises but not COLAs so they haven't been staying with the market. Discussion ensued regarding pay and the economy.

Commissioner Pyra stated that he would like to see what the impact on the budget is if they raise everyone to meet the average as well as above the average to stay competitive with other towns. Commissioner Auger asked if the officers' pay was on par with other areas. Chief Sitar replied that they have fallen behind but it is harder to compare officers to other communities because they may have different ranks and responsibilities. Discussion ensued regarding wages and benefits.

SAFER Grant Continuation Committee

Commissioner Cilley asked if there was anymore interest in joining the committee. Kathy replied that they still had only one person interested. It was decided to put a deadline of Friday, September 3, 2021 on applying for the committee.

Tilton & Northfield Water District

- Special District Meeting

Chief Sitar stated that per Judge O'Neil's orders they need to go through their process to have a Special District Meeting to address the situation with the Water District and come to

an agreement. Discussion ensued regarding what kind of agreement they could propose. It was decided to request a meeting with the Water District before going to Special District Meeting.

Clerk Job Description

Chief Sitar handed out copies of the Clerk's job description for review. Commissioner Auger asked if it was an hourly position and if there were any benefits. Kathy replied that it is hourly and there are no benefits, holidays are also not paid but the clerk is given the opportunity to work more hours in the week to make up for the time off. Chief Sitar stated that they would be making some changes to the description and that he would show the Commissioners those changes.

Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2021 Public

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept the minutes of July 13, 2021 Public session as written. Commissioner Cilley seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

July 13, 2021 Non-Public I

Commissioner Cilley made a motion to accept the minutes of July 13, 2021 Non-Public session I as written. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

July 13, 2021 Non-Public II

Commissioner Auger made a motion to accept the minutes of July 13, 2021 Non-Public session II as written. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Commissioner Cilley made a motion to seal the Non-Public minutes of session II from July 13, 2021 because personnel discussed could be easily identifiable. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Other Business

Manifests were reviewed and signed.

Adjournment

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to adjourn at 7:48 P.M. Commissioner Cilley seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:

September 7 at 5:30 PM.
Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room,
257 Main Street, Tilton NH