

Minutes of TNFD District Meeting
Monday, March 7, 2005
7:00PM
WRHS Cafetorium

Moderator Scott McGuffin called meeting to order 7:08 PM. Opened meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Informed ground rules of this district meeting. All can speak and all can listen. Questions and comments directed to moderator.

Moderator read the warrant articles. The following articles were voted on:

Article 1. To choose a Moderator for the upcoming year. Roland Seymour nominated Scott McGuffin. Tom Gallant seconded. Motion carried.

Article 2. To choose a Clerk for the upcoming year. Tom Gallant nominated Janine Vary as Clerk. Seconded by Jan Yeaton. Motion carried.

Article 3. To choose a Treasurer for ensuing year. Harold Harbour nominated Roland Seymour for Treasurer and seconded by Andy Sleeper. Motion carried.

Question was asked if there is a paper ballot vote if more than one person is nominated for Commissioner.

Article 4. To choose a Fire Commissioner for the ensuing 3 years. Andy Sleeper nominated Tom Gallant as Fire Commissioner and Harold Harbour seconded.

Dina Hunter nominated Kevin Waldron of Northfield as commissioner. Point of order called. Comm. Gallant expressed that both towns must be represented with one representative from Northfield and one from Tilton. Therefore, the nomination can only be for a Tilton resident only. There was much discussion. Mike Robinson motioned that there would be representation from both communities for fire wardens and seconded by Candy Robinson.

Moderator: Asked the body to vote whether or not there should be a representative from both towns on the board of fire wardens. Did by hand vote. Ayes - 46 Nays - 22. Moderator clarified that this vote is to eliminate a person to be nominated from Northfield. Motion carried.

Moderator re read the Warrant Article 4 again. Has already been seconded. Moderator asked, consistent with the vote, if there were any other nominations from Tilton from the floor. Seeing none, hand vote taken to elect Tom Gallant to position. Motion carried.

Article 5: To see if the District will authorize the Commissioners to purchase a new Ambulance for the District. Further, to see if the District will vote to appropriate an amount not to exceed One Hundred Thirty Six Thousand Dollars (\$136,000.00) to purchase said Ambulance, and to further authorize the Commissioners to withdraw an amount not to exceed One Hundred Thirty Six Thousand (\$136,000.00), from the Rescue Capital Reserve

Trust Fund. Such amount is to be used to fund the purchase of the Ambulance. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Harold Harbour motioned to move the article and it was seconded. Chief Carrier had a small presentation relating to the ambulance. Chief thanked all for their coming out tonight for district. One person didn't want to hear details. Therefore, Chief Carrier addressed the ambulance. This request is to replace A1 which is a 92 Ford. Looking for approval to expend those funds. Moderator asked for any questions or comments. Ken Waldron. Other than fact that it is 1992 ambulance what is wrong with it. Chief: the ambulance has 81,000 miles on it. This is not a passenger vehicle. There are many hours of idling time due to its service. The box has also aged to not meet the ambulance services. Cracks in surface of materials, floor, etc. New standards require that there are no cracks and seams to keep the vehicle serviceable. It doesn't meet current standards. The new ambulance is a back up to the one in housed in the Tilton station. Questions: any resale value in this one? Chief we plan to trade in but would be surprised to get \$2000 for it. Paul Auger: why do we need two ambulances in this town? Chief: we do 1000 ambulance calls this year, which averages 3 a day. Emergencies happen more than one at a time, back to back calls. Due to motor vehicle accidents multiple patients need to be transported. Also, only one ambulance would cut receipts from ambulance billing. The District raised \$180,000 last year, which went back into the general fund of this budget. Kevin LaChapelle: asked if the money is just being released? Chief: affirmed.

Other questions/answers followed: There were 101 mutual aid calls, but some of these were fire calls; the current ambulance is licensable and does not have to be taken out of service; to try to "fix" current ambulance could run up to \$120,000; the newer ambulance is two years old; the usual life of an ambulance is 10 –15, maybe not 10 years depending on call volume; we will take some equipment off the old ambulance but will need to buy some new equipment to outfit the new ambulance; the cost \$136,000 is a quote we have received after getting three quotes for similar vehicles; we have had two ambulances for two years; the older ambulance is the back up now for the newer one. We extend the life of the backup vehicle. If we don't replace the older one, then you will have a worn out newer one and an older one that may not meet certifications. This could be a worse scenario than what we are looking at today. The reserve ambulance is at the Park Street station.

Question: can you explain how the money is there? Chief: money has been put into rescue funds as a capital reserve item and needs to be voted on if we want to use it. Tom Gallant: monies that are being asked to vote on are monies that were raised through taxation. The money raised from ambulance billing has gone to general fund to reduce tax benefit. \$134,844.82 in the trust fund. All that money was raised through taxes and placed into that trust fund.

Another question: would this deplete this fund? Tom Gallant: yes. Another question, how can we borrow \$136,000 when we have \$134,000? Tom: due to the lead-time to have the ambulance built, additional interest will be built in and would increase amount available. Article has a cap at \$136,000.

A motion was made to move to question and was seconded. Motion carried. Moderator read article again. Oral vote taken. Ayes have it. Motion carried.

Article 6: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), to be added to the Land and Building Capital Reserve Fund. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom Gallant motioned to move to floor, seconded by Harold Harbour. Discussion: How much money is in the fund? Tom: \$8204.70 as of 12/31/04. Arlo: will this work the same as the truck fund? Tom: absolutely. Lee French. Tilton wanted to build across from home depot a small development. This group would put a substation. Chief: we have formed a building committee from both towns. This item did come up in last meeting. This is very early in discussion. There is a site plan out that shows a police dept. and fire dept. However, this is a 15-year project and we don't know where we stand as to when our building will be built. Building committee said they still want something at Northfield. One thing we may come forward with is half the project at Park Street and then maybe something down the eastern corridor. Lee: so you don't see that as happening soon. Chief: there is a lot hinging if it will even go through. There are zoning changes to be voted on. A good deal of unknowns.

Question: As we have talked about raising money for a land and building fund, will it be \$100,000 for next year, 3 years, 5 years? Chief: \$100,000 would have been $\frac{1}{4}$ of the project last year. So if a two-year project, we will be back for \$100,000, might even be more, next year. The building committee will decide this. Would be two offices and living quarters for two people and storage space.

Call to vote by moderator. Moderator asked for a count. Ayes 38 Nays 27. Article carried.

Article 7: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00), to be added to the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Harold Harbour motioned to move article to the floor. Jerry Davis seconded. Moderator asked for questions on article.

Kevin Waldron: how much is currently in this fund and what kind of equipment. \$137,497.50 in fund as of 12/31/04. Looking to appropriate \$50,000 more. Tom asked Chief Carrier to address. Chief: would be buying a piece of apparatus that would be a water supply truck. Have a pump and supply hose. We haven't specked out this truck. We expect to replace 2006 E4, which is a 1974 International. Has some issues especially when pumping for a period of time. Not a modern truck. We are looking to be proactive with this. Jerry: how old is engine 3? 1989. Kevin: if replacing an engine in 2006 will we have enough? Chief: if we were buying a front line piece, we wouldn't have enough. But for a water supply we should be really close. We did apply for a grant for a tanker and were not awarded the grant. He will reapply again and this would be a replacement for E3.

Point of order, do we need a simple majority vote on these money items? Moderator: a simple majority. No other questions. Moderator asked for the vote: Ayes have it. Article 7 carried.

Article 8: To see if the District will vote to renew the Water Contract and raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$130,000.00) for that purpose. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Andy Sleeper motioned to move to the floor, seconded by Harold Harbour. Summary of questions and answers: This is the fee charged the district for the use of the hydrants which are owned by the Water District. The fee is not based upon amount of water used. In Chief Carrier's time here, we may have used hydrants 5 to 10 times, but we do refill the tanks on the vehicles using this system. In rural areas we carry water to the scene in vehicles or we use dry hydrants. Within the water district, we are a class five whereas in the rural districts we are a class nine for insurance purposes. There were questions made about the consequences of not voting to pay the water district fee but Chief Carrier was not sure of the consequences.

Article called to vote. Moderator asked for a count. Ayes 46 Nays 9 article carried.

Article 9: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$12,850.00) for the support of the Winnisquam Fire Department. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Andy Sleeper motioned to move article to the floor, seconded by Harold Harbour. Kevin Waldron: questioned why we pay for coverage for that end of town, yet we don't pay Franklin or Sanbornton. We are paying twice for something we can get for nothing. Comment: who participates in this? Chief: Winnisquam responds to calls in Tilton, Sanbornton and Belmont. They are completely volunteer. They are subsidized by these three communities. We and Sanbornton pay 25% each and 50% comes from Belmont. Winnisquam responds from Dodge Hill and up to Mosquito Bridge and all roads off of it. Comment: feels it is nice to have their services due to their location and feels it is well worth it as compared to our having another station up there. Question: when Winnisquam transports, where do their funds go? When they transport it is held in a fund earmarked to be used for capital expenditures in Winnisquam fire Dept. Dina Hunter: why are we paying that money when we don't let them transport. Chief: the policy changed. We both run ambulances. Winnisquam responds and they offer first responder services, fire protection (have 2 fire engines) and are trained as first responders in both fire and EMS. Question: if you have an emergency up there, why can't they transport. Why wait for TNFD to get there just to go to Franklin Regional Hospital? Chief: has given the officers the opportunity to make that decision. If there is a life threatening decision, then do what is best. Many times we are arriving on scene at same time, there is time involved with packaging the patient and we could still do the transport and not impact patient care at all. If we voted this down for Winnisquam to cover us, will we be looking for a new building over there? Chief: have meetings with the area fire departments. If they pulled out their funding what would happen? If one of the towns pulled, then Winnisquam Fire Dept. would have difficulty in maintaining their position. Belmont has discussed taking over the Winnisquam station. If that were to occur and they requested some funding to still go there, the commissioners and Chief feel it is money well spent. The question how would we cover is good and it takes a lot of thought to weigh out what we would lose or gain if they weren't there. Could be 4 to 6 minutes additional response time. The problem we see is the same with all volunteers – recruitment and

training issues, getting the equipment out, etc. question: we just had a huge fire in Belmont and Winnisquam was first on scene. Kevin Waldron: we are getting there simultaneously now? Chief, yes it has happened in the last two weeks.

Is Winnisquam a mutual aid participant? Chief yes. They act as back up when our vehicles are out. They have 2 engines, 1 ambulance and a boat. Estimate \$700,000 worth of equipment. Feels that is pretty cheap to have this coverage. Vote taken: ayes have it. Article carried.

Article 10: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Two Hundred Seventeen Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Six Dollars (\$1,217,636.00) as the operating budget for the Fire District. This article includes all warrant articles. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom Gallant motioned to move article to the floor and seconded by Harold Harbour. Kevin Waldron: this is over a 10% jump since last year. Chief: 9.8%. Kevin: Where is this going to stop? What are we doing with all this money? Chief: the money is going to increase the services to the communities. We are going to 24-hour coverage and have reduced response times in half in the evenings. No wrong taken at the call company due to additional time to get ready to get out. We are still very dependent upon the call company. Trying to provide the best services to the communities. Tom: increase \$120,000 of 50,000 is to capital outlay. 57,000 is for capital items. We have budgeted to paying for the 24 hour a day coverage. Question: page 88 in book for career salary wages, approximately \$100,000 increase. Is this a raise for fire district? Chief: includes full years salaries for 2 men who came on board last May, 1 more new person to allow us to go 24 x 7. New person's salary is \$30,000 a year. This is a base salary so there is holiday pay and overtime, also. Question: why is this not it's own article when new positions are put in? Chief: these issues are discussed at the fire commissioners meetings that are public meetings. We were in a crisis coverage situation where we had no one signed up to cover during the evening the commissioners felt it was in best interest of communities and services provided. Question: are we not anticipating the same amount of OT? Chief: first option to fill vacancy would be from the call firefighters. But there will be OT issues for major incidents and occasions where we can't find coverage.

Question on telephone and data processing going up. Are there purchases being planned? Chief: One item is for cell phones for 2 of the engines and 1 for the second ambulance. Data processing is increased to purchase a server for the data kept at the station. What are we using now? We do have an incident reporting using a peer to peer system we now have. The server would speed this up. Kevin Waldron: we are raising career salaries and decrease the call salaries. Seems to be a big difference. Tom: the proposed salaries for 2005. There is zero for OT and zero for Other. If you look back at 2004, if you add all three together. \$325,000 as compared to the \$393,000 for 2005. Tom: there as been a bookkeeping reclassification and OT and Other in the 2005 Career Salaries. Kevin: dues and subscriptions. What are we getting for that? Meetings, dues and subscriptions. Meetings attended by commissioners or Chief, dues to professional associations and subscriptions. Will we not see the line items split up? Chief: has made a note to himself to be sure that the report reflects each sub-line in each line item. Kevin: did TNFD go ahead

with the full time coverage even though voted down last year? Chief: the plan last year was the \$400,000 addition to Park Street. We used space in the Center Street station to build this bunk room. Three beds, a shower and 3 bureaus; we have lost office space, storage space. We heard last year that body was not in favor of the building but not that they were opposed to the 24 hour coverage. Motion to move to question. Ayes have it. Vote taken on article 10. Ayes have it. Article carried.

Article 11. To see if the District will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 31:95-C, to restrict the revenues from Ambulance Billings to expenditures for the purposes of Apparatus and Equipment replacement. Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special fund to be known as the "Apparatus Replacement and Equipment Fund". This fund would be separate from the General Fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the General Fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the Fire District at a District Meeting to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of revenues. Tom moved the article to the floor, Harold seconded. Kevin Waldron asked what happens to the rescue fund. Tom Gallant: what we are striving for is to create a fund that is self perpetuating from gross revenues from ambulance transports each year. That money would go into this fund. If approval comes tonight, then next year, we will ask to close out the other funds and put into this fund. Also, in the future you would not see the articles to raise money for the truck fund, or the ambulance fund. Article number 5 is more what you would see – asking authorization to remove the money from that fund. Question: what is the purpose for that? Will we have to raise more for the general fund? Tom: not necessarily. If that were the case this year and if we had that fund this year, instead of raising \$994, 443, with the exception of a building fund, all other capital expenditures and apparatus purchases come out of the general operating budget. You would not be raising more money, other than the building fund, not the general operating fund. Reason is to provide a basis to use revenues that are received from transports for those in the district to be used in the district. Monies would be in the fund and we would come and ask if we could take money out to purchase this vehicle. Question: we will have to still to raise the money for the general fund. Tom: Belmont has used this since 1993 and has done it successfully. Question: this would not include the building fund? No, just apparatus and equipment. Question: if you take money out of general fund and put in sub fund, how is it made up from? Tom: you are removing \$180,000 but also removing items from expense side. \$220,000 in expenses would be taken away. Kevin Waldron: the \$180,000 would buy the ambulances and fire trucks. Tom it is not our intention to come back and ask for that. Question: is this effective for 2005? Tom: no, we have already set our budget in prior articles. So it will only change in 2006. Call to vote: ayes have it. Article voted on. Article carried.

Article 12: To accept the report of the Treasurer and the Fire Commissioners and pass any vote relating thereto. Tom Gallant motioned to accept report as printed in the Tilton annual report and the corrected Northfield report. Seconded by Arlow. No comments. Vote taken. Ayes have it. Article carried.

Article 13: To see if the District will vote to authorize the Fire Commissioners to apply for, receive and expend federal and state grants, which may become available during the course

of the year, in accordance with RSA 31:95-b and also to accept and expend money, from any other governmental unit or private source, to be used for the purposes for which the Fire District may legally appropriate money. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Harold Harbour moved to put motion on the floor, Tom Gallant seconded. Questions: Kevin: is the expenditure of any money we get from any grants up to the voters or is it the commissioners. Tom: generally these grants are for specific purposes. For example, the tanker grant was specifically for a tanker. We have no authority to change what the grant specifies. No other questions: vote was taken. Ayes have it. Article carried.

Article 14: To see if the District, in accordance with RSA 33:7, will vote to authorize the Fire Commissioners to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom Gallant motioned to move the article to the floor, Harold Harbour seconded. Tom addressed article. We did not borrow any money in anticipation of taxes. We are asking to have authorization from the body. We have a good relationship with both towns and they are sending in their anticipated funds each month. We don't foresee any event but if something came up then we would at least have the authority to borrow funds if needed. No other comments. Vote taken, Article carried.

Article 15: To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting. One person wanted to thank the staff and people and commissioners for running a well run department. Also asked if Chief wanted to still do presentation that he should. That was made available to anyone who may be interested after the meeting.

Randy Barclay from Northfield made a motion to dissolve the district and make two fire companies. Moderator. Article 15 addresses issues that may come before the meeting. This motion would have had to be made as an article by petition. Moderator would have to rule this motion is out of order. So if Randy gets 20 votes on a petition he can have placed as a warrant article to go with next year's warrant articles.

Supervisors of the checklists were asked numbers of voters attending: 27 from Tilton, 44 from Northfield. Fire commissioners need to discuss the makeup of the commissioners. Moderator says that it should be a warrant article for clarification to the bodies. Question on when and where commissioners meetings are held and where these notices are posted. Currently, meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month (up to May, 2005) and then will revert back to the first Thursday of each month. Announcements are posted at both town halls, Hall Library, Jim's Drive In and at both fire stations on doors. Suggestion was made to post things on town websites.

Motion to adjourn was made adjourn. All in favor of adjournment. Ayes have it. Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM

Respectfully submitted,
Janine L. Vary, Clerk