

**FIRE COMMITTEE MEETING  
APRIL 9, 2013**

**Call to Order**

Councilor/Chair Starkweather called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at the Fire Station facility.

**In Attendance**

Councilor/Chair Starkweather, Councilor/Member Dzujna, Councilor Sharon, City Manager Dragon, Finance Director Milner and Chief LaChapelle.

**Department Presentation**

Chief LaChapelle welcomed all present and asked to start the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chief mentioned that the Franklin Fire Department has had a great year and briefly touched on the following:

- 51% of our budget is spent on our most valued resource – our personnel
- We were able to participate in valuable training this year due to a grant at the NH Fire Academy
- The National Registry has come up with a new level – Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians which by 2015, all the people that are now Intermediates will have to be at this level. LRGHealthcare paid for a training program for the members that had to be recertified this year.
- The Inspection Division has seen an increase in their services. We utilized the services of the Boscawen Inspector for four inspections while our Inspector was out this past week.
- Many requests for training and education from local Industries concerning fire drills and safety.
- Emergency Preparedness – School safety.

Councilor Starkweather asked Kevin to talk about the Swift Water Rescue Course. This is a course that was stated in 1998 by Chief LaChapelle and members of the local Water Rescue Team and it has recently been adopted state wide and is now nationally accredited.

Councilor Dzujna asked if the policy of transferring patients from LRGH has put a large burden on us. The Chief stated that once we made the position that if we were requested by LRGH that the bill would be sent directly to them that our services have not been utilized.

**Budget:**

The chief stated that the budget that he is presenting is what it takes to run the Fire Department. He presented the budget line by line explaining any increases or decreases that were made.

**Administration:**

- City Manager Dragon asked why there were so many physicals performed each year. The Chief explained that physicals are done on all career personnel one year and the next year all call personnel who wear air packs. It was asked if he could clarify the account detail as it was confusing.

- The uniform budget has decreased as promised last year back to the original amount.

Fire Station:

- “Other Contracted Services” account was increased by \$10,000. The Chief explained that a “10 year sprinkler test “ will be performed this year as this has never been done and the station was built in 1970. The increase also is due to taking care of a huge concern of his - station security. A vestibule is going to be constructed in the front hall.

City Manager Dragon asked for back-up for the \$14,000.

- Chief LaChapelle mentioned that Engine One is starting to show it’s age and as of today’s date they experienced tank corrosion problems.
- City Manager Dragon asked the Chief to give backup for the money requested in the Capital Equipment line.

Code Enforcement:

- “O/T Wages” – the Chief mentioned that he neglected to add money to this account and that this line needs to be increased. In the past Chuck Bodien has accumulated up to 40 hours of comp time but now that the limit has been changed to 20 hours he has been getting paid overtime and at this date we have overspent this line by \$300.00.
- Chief LaChapelle gave an explanation of the Code Enforcement training budget. Chuck maintains credentials on an annual basis..

Fire Alarms Dispatch:

- Lakes Region Dispatch Services has increased due to the increase in their Retirement and labor costs and to absorb one member Department that has left the system.

EMS Rescue:

- The Staff Development line has been decreased due to LRGHealthcare paying for the cost of many training classes
- “Professional Services” - City Manager Dragon stated she wanted to cut this line from \$22,000.00 to \$17,000.00 and wanted to know if that would be enough.
- “Operating Supplies” was increased due to equipment being older and cost of parts and repairs.
- “Medical Supplies” line was increased due to the actual cost of purchasing our medical supplies. Captain Goldthwaite does an excellent job of watching costs and purchasing the items through the supplier with the better price.
- “Machine & Equipment” line has increased significantly due to our two defibrillators being 9 and 10 years in service. Suggested replacement is 5 – 8 years. The two items that are used on every ambulance call is a jump kit and a Defibrillator and they are showing wear.

The dry suits are also showing wear with drying rubber and needs to be replaced.

Councilman Dzujna asked if the Hospital would be willing to help out with the cost of the defibrillators. The Chief replied that the request had been made and that they are not willing to drop that amount of money to us right now.

Chief LaChapelle said that we will be receiving two CPR machines donated from money raised at the "Red Dress" fund raiser and these are at a cost of \$16,000 each.

The Fuel Depot. Finance Director Milner explained that the Fuel Depot is an Internal Service Fund, meaning that the sale of the fuel pays for the maintenance of the Fuel Depot. Chief LaChapelle mentioned that as of 12/15/15 all fuel depots in the state must be double walled fiberglass tanks and pipes. Right now it looks like our tanks would be OK, but we would have to replace all piping and outside canopy area. We only have 43,000 in that account at this time to replace the Fuel Island.

Lakes Region Environmental Services will help with a site survey. We are looking at putting in above ground tanks. Councilor Starkweather asked if there were different requirements for above ground versus below ground tanks. Councilor Dzujna asked if you needed more room for above ground tanks. Chief LaChapelle stated "yes" to both of these questions.

Chief LaChapelle has met with the State DOT Fuel Manager. He stated to the Chief that the State will give us a verbal answer by July whether they would be able to sell to us or not. City Manager Dragon explained if we joined with the State they would be able to get a better bulk rate price due to the increase in sales.

Revenues – Ambulance. Our ambulance rates are 20% above the Medicare rates to help make up the difference of what Medicare does not allow – which is generally 20%. Chief LaChapelle has contacted Comstar and most of their customers in NH bill 50 – 70% above Medicare rates.

In meeting with Finance it was decided to increase our rates 50% above Medicare rates which would be an increase of approximately \$13,000.

Councilor Dzujna asked where the money would be coming from. Chief LaChapelle told him that the money would be coming from other insurance companies and self-pay. Chief LaChapelle did state that 11% are self-pay and this is a concern for him.

Another item that has been discussed is "Bundle Billing". Instead of billing singly for each skill, there will be one fee for BLS, ALS1 and ALS2 transports.

This concluded the meeting with general discussion of upcoming meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn P. Morrill  
Franklin Fire Department