

**TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE**  
**Board of Fire Commissioners**  
Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 23, 2018 – 6:00 pm  
Woodbridge Fire Department

Present: *Chairman Elia Alexiades, Vice Chairman Michael Horton, Secretary Mike Soufrine, Commissioner Karen Baldwin-Kravetz, Chief Sean Rowland, Assistant Chief Chris Bahner, Fire Marshal Joe Cappucci, Nate Case (Executive Board Liaison), Susan Jacobs (BOF Liaison)*

Absent: *Commissioner Bruce Mandell, First Selectman Beth Heller (BOS Liaison)*

**Call to Order**

Chairman Alexiades convened the meeting at 6:05 pm.

**Public Comments**

None

**Liaison Comments**

Susan Jacobs reminded Commissioners of the Preliminary Budget Hearing tonight at 7:30 pm.

**Review Current Financial Statements**

Year-to-Date FC Operating Budget and Capital Budget

Chief Rowland distributed and reviewed the budget reports, stating the budget is over where we thought we would be. Clerical overtime, which is not budgeted, is over due to the number of calls. This generated a lot of extra paperwork that has to be submitted to the state in the time frame. Chief authorized it and the Chairman approved. Discussion took place regarding the call on Rimmon Road and Fire Department response to provide assistance to the Police Department. Chief reviewed the number of calls and number of firefighter hours from 2007 through the first quarter of 2018 (attached). Firefighter hours are just time on scene; the figure does not include putting the trucks back together after a response.

Repair/maintenance (53510) is over due to the Inwood fire. Insurance will cover much of it. It is a heavy year for truck repairs. Historically, we have spent \$90,000 - \$120,000 and we are on pace with that. Chief sent a memo requesting coverage from contingency. Discussion took place on the logistics and predictions of what will be spent each year and the cost of services. Technical (55120) is over by \$4,000 and will be over at the end of the fiscal year. The department has gone through a lot of supplies – with a record year last year and a high start to this year. The lines that are over are justified by the call volume.

Capital – nothing to report.

**Fire Chief's Report – Fire Chief Rowland**

**Receive Report**

WVFA elections are tomorrow night. The Installation Dinner is Saturday, May 5 in the bay. Two firefighters remain out on injury.

**Apparatus Report**

Engine 3 died on the way to a call. Had to tow it for service; there is something wrong with the radiator and other items. Hope to have the specs done for the new Engine in the next 5 weeks. The inner wheel

well was ripped off of Engine 2; waiting for the cost. Also, during one of the storms, a branch came down in front of Squad 10 and they hit it. No one was injured but it damaged the front bumper.

### **Dispatch –**

Dispatch remains an ongoing issue. The town is still waiting to figure out the next step. Chief stated we need to move forward and start getting the training that is needed for the Police Department if that's the way we are going to go. A few weeks ago the Fire Department was dispatched to an activated alarm and dispatch gave the wrong address. Discussion took place. Dispatchers need training and there should be two dispatchers on at all times. Discussion continued on the issue of two dispatchers. In 1998, the schedule was two for the day shift, two for 3 pm-11 pm, and one for 11 pm -7 am. Something got changed. There is supposed to be two during the day, but if one calls in sick, the administration doesn't bring anyone in. Having two on is not a contractual requirement according to the union.

Discussion took place about outsourcing dispatch; such as moving to Northwest dispatch. Chief stated keeping dispatch in town is the best system, but it is mismanaged. According to the Chief the best option is keeping it local, with two dispatchers on at once. Discussion took place on the downside of outsourcing to Northwest including potentially losing communication with them, what happens when they are busy, and the problems Bethany Fire Department is having with them not answering their radios when they call in. The option is to fix the system we have or outsource. Chief said outsourcing doesn't do the townspeople the best; there is a cost savings of an estimated \$250,000 a year, but it jeopardizes the level of service that could be had by keeping it local.

Liaison Jacobs stated the budget and management issue of not having two dispatchers on needs to be fixed. Chief stated the town needs to invest into what we have to make it work. He added the hardware/software upgrade does not necessitate two dispatchers – it makes operations streamlined and more efficient – it's everything else that requires two dispatchers. The new radio system doesn't fix the dispatch problem. Dispatchers are answering the door; we are the only town that does this. Chief recommends a committee to manage public safety dispatch. Dispatch is vulnerable where they are, answering the door – they shouldn't be dealing with the public. Have the non-emergency line be answered by secretarial staff during business hours. Discussion took place on action the Board of Fire Commissioners can take. Chief asked the Commissioners for direction on the dispatch issue. The department can keep documenting the problems, except it causes punishment to the dispatchers.

### **Radio System Upgrade –**

There is another meeting next Monday night to go over it. The generator bids went out. The civil work will go out next Monday night. The committee is scheduled to make a report on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **WFD Activity Report – Assistant Fire Chief Bahner**

AC Bahner distributed and reviewed his report for March. The numbers show the impact of the storms; mostly wires down calls.

### **Fire Marshal's Report - (See attached report)**

FM Cappucci distributed and reviewed his report. He conducted 39 inspections, 2 consultations, 2 plan reviews, and 2 fire investigations this month. He finished the Inwood fire and had one on Fountain and another on Woodfield.

**Chairman's Report**

None

**Executive Session per section 1-200**

None

**Correspondence**

None

**Other Business that May be Voted to be Placed on the Agenda (if necessary)**

None

**Approval of Minutes –**

Susan Jacobs left at 6:58 pm.

MOTION (SOUFRINE/BALDWIN-KRAVETZ) to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 22, 2018; MOTION approved unanimously (ALEXIADES/HORTON/SOUFRINE/BALDWIN-KRAVETZ).

MOTION (HORTON/SOUFRINE) to approve the minutes from the meeting on February 26, 2018; MOTION approved unanimously (ALEXIADES/HORTON/SOUFRINE/BALDWIN-KRAVETZ).

MOTION (BALDWIN-KRAVITZ/HORTON) to approve the minutes from the meeting on March 19, 2018; MOTION approved unanimously (ALEXIADES/HORTON/SOUFRINE/BALDWIN-KRAVETZ).

**Next Meeting Date:**

The next Regular Meeting will be May 14, 2018.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** (HORTON/SOUFRINE) to adjourn. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary Michael Soufrine  
Board of Fire Commissioners

Aimee Cotton Bogush, Clerk  
Board of Fire Commissioners