

Board of Fire Commissioners

Greenfield Fire District
P.O. Box 103
Greenfield Center, NY 12833

Workshop – April 4, 2007

Present were: Commissioners Kugler, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite, and later Commissioner King; Secretary Petkus, Jean Bishop, Ron Bishop, Mike LaGalles, Brian Bunnell, Jay Ellsworth.

1. Update on Butler, Rowland and Mays: Commissioner Robarge had gotten a voicemail from Dick Butler; Commissioner Kugler feels we still need a meeting with them. Secretary Petkus explained she had gotten a call from Steve yesterday apologizing for not being able to attend the meeting as Dick was out of town until Thursday and he himself had 2 meetings scheduled for tonight. He did say that there was some unfinished business that had to be resolved.
2. Physicals: Secretary Petkus has been working with Dr. Peacock to arrange for firefighter physicals at her office. She handed out a sheet with pricing from Dr. Peacock and explained in detail how the physicals would work. The fees were not significantly less than Wilton Medical Arts, but included more, including blood work (lipid profile and blood sugar testing) and hearing screening. She also noted that beginning January 1, 2007 that all interior firefighters were to receive physicals on a yearly basis regardless of their age, this was the information she had gotten when they went to the conference at the Nevele. Dr. Peacock also had extended hours as follows: M/W/F 8 am to 6 pm, T/TH 8 am to 8 pm. She would also be willing to open on a Saturday to accommodate firefighter physicals. Based on the list she had gotten from the Chiefs, Secretary Petkus figures there were 106 interior firefighters. More discussion followed. Commissioner Robarge voiced concern that firefighters will not go to get their physicals. Commissioner Kugler noted that they had discussed this previously and it was stated that if these guys don't get their physicals in a certain time period, they were on vacation until such time they got their physicals. Commissioner Kugler also felt that it was important to have their blood sugar checked, that we may actually help somebody. Secretary Petkus felt that when all was said and done, that she thought the physicals were going to cost the District about \$18,000.00 this year. After physicals were done, she would try to calculate how much it would be for next year. Commissioner Kugler asked if anyone had any problems with it, otherwise they would make a resolution next week. Commissioner Waite noted that he liked it. Commissioner Robarge felt that we should write a letter to Wilton Medical Arts. Secretary Petkus said she has asked Bill Young what the procedure would be to have the records forwarded to Dr. Peacock, and he advised that the District should write a letter to Wilton Medical Arts giving them permission to forward any records that Dr. Peacock might request on our firefighters.
3. Commissioner Spackmann emailed Bill Young about web conferencing because Spitzer passed a law that says that every government who has internet needs to videotape their meeting and broadcast it. Bill Young responded that he did not know yet and that he is asking for an official opinion from the Comptroller's office and is waiting on an answer. Commissioner Robarge noted he had cut out an article from the Times Union regarding open government, which was addressed to the taxpayer and that they should go to meetings because they are losing a voice.
4. Commissioner Kugler noted that about 2 years ago he had written to Senator Farley asking for money for generators and we had ultimately gotten \$25,000.00. Then Secretary Petkus had called and spoken to Robin Quentin, who told her that it wouldn't hurt to ask for more money, which Commissioner Kugler did. Received a letter the other day that we should be getting

another \$17,500.00 for generators. Secretary Petkus has a call in to Robin to get the rest of the money. Received \$6250.00 from the original \$25,000.00 and now we are asking for the other \$18,750.00. Commissioner Kugler noted that out of the new grant money, he is willing to split that again, but he wants half to go to portable generators. Commissioner Spackmann noted that they should be able to look into getting a generator for Porters this year. Discussion continued regarding the size of the portable generators to buy and what they would be used to run; the Commissioners asked Secretary Petkus to get in touch with P/A Howe and have her research out 3500 and 4000 KW portable generators.

5. The Commissioners asked Secretary Petkus to contact Gary Gibbins and Karen Gibbins and have them send invitations to the 60th Anniversary party to Senator Farley and Bill Young.
6. Tentative date for the website is for sometime in April hopefully. If we want to see it the web address is www.greenfieldfd.com/site. MWH is putting information on the site, commissioner Spackmann noted it was about 80% done, although the guy is getting a little jerky with him. Seems his company has expanded and is going through growing pains right now. Discussion continued on who was going to be responsible for deciding what information was to go on the website and who would actually be putting the information on the website. Commissioner Spackmann explained in detail that either he or Secretary Petkus could put the information on the website and how it could be done; they would just have to log in to a secure website and take care of it ourselves. He felt the maybe the Chief should do the firematic stuff and the organizational stuff could be done by either himself or Joyce. Commissioner Spackmann also noted he was going to try to meet with the communication committee to talk about the newsletter. Commissioner Robarge asked if the public could respond to it. Commissioner Spackmann noted that his one concern about the website is that it is a legal form of FOIL requests and if they choose to submit a foil request through the website we have to honor it. More discussion followed, including what information about the commissioners was on the website, and Commissioner Waite wanted anything on him taken off. Commissioner King said that anything about the police department could not be put on there.
7. By-laws: Commissioner Kugler asked where we stood with the by-laws. Commissioner Waite noted that each company has them and are supposed to come back at our next meeting, which is April 11th. Commissioner Spackmann noted he wants to be very firm with that. Commissioner Kugler said he had a few things he wants the Board to consider and possibly put in the by-laws. His biggest concern is term limits. Commissioner King noted that if it were to be imposed on officers then it would have to be imposed on commissioners to be fair. He also noted it may limit the pool of volunteers. Discussion was held regarding term limits. Commissioner Robarge felt they were trying to make rules to solve other problems, we should solve the problems if they so exist. Commissioner Kugler also brought up the issue of living in the District in order to be a member of the district. Commissioner Robarge always felt that a member should live in the District because it takes away from another district. Commissioner King felt that a lot could be solved by a better background check. Secretary Petkus noted that the Sheriff's will not do a criminal background check. Commissioner King added that we could get finger prints and send them to the state, but it will cost about \$75, who will then send a card to the FBI and get a full blown criminal history check. More discussion followed. Commissioner Robarge felt that as a Board, they should have a big say in who becomes a member. Secretary Petkus added that she had spoken to Bill Young about this and he advised that the Board can reject an applicant as long as it is not based on discrimination, and not give a reason. The question came up if we asked on the application if someone was ever convicted of a crime; Secretary Petkus pulled out an application form. Discussion followed and it was decided Secretary Petkus would fax our application to Bill Young and ask him about question #9. Commissioner Spackmann suggested that it is possible to revamp the application process internally, and if we do a thorough investigation we should be able to weed out those people we do not want anyway. Commissioner King noted that most of the new

members coming in are already known. Commissioner Spackmann added that he has a problem with signing off on a new member and not even meeting the person, and felt the whole application process is flawed. More discussion followed. Secretary Petkus brought up that Bill Young has offered to come and speak to the Board and maybe this would be a good time to do it. Discussion followed and it was decided that Secretary Petkus would ask Bill Young about it.

8. Secretary Petkus asked about the application she has been holding from Co#1, as she has done nothing with it and is not sure what she should do with it. Commissioner Spackmann said Gary had told him the other day the company was still investigating it and to do nothing at this time. He also said he did not have problem with making a hard decision as a Commissioner, but he felt that Gary was dodging this. Commissioner Robarge disagreed. Discussion followed. The Board decided to do nothing right now but Commissioner Spackmann said they should go into executive session next week on this.

Commissioner Kugler then asked if anyone had anything else:

Commissioner Waite:

- Noted that the 30 days has gone by on the radios and has anybody heard anything or get any petitions, can we order the radios? Discussion was held regarding permission referendums and wording it so that Bill Young knows we do advertise them.
- Needs to get a hold of Jill for a PO to buy paint and other stuff. Needs to get a PO for the tiles too.
- On the purchasing, they had a hose break and the last time he went to get a hose connector, the way the purchasing is set up he went through hell trying to get it charged through the District. Ended up using the credit card and Jill said he couldn't do that because he didn't have a PO. How are we going to handle this, so he can run down to Allerdice and get a hose connector to wash the trucks? Needed to get mitts because they said not to use brushes on the truck. Commissioner Spackmann asked if these things needed to happen right away or couldn't they have waited for a PO? Discussion followed. Commissioner King added that he thinks we are headed to where we are trying to circumvent the purchasing system. Commissioner Spackmann agreed. Lengthy discussion followed with input from FF LaGalles and A/C Ellsworth. Commissioner Kugler suggested they maybe each commissioner should have their own PO# and use it along with the credit card. Commissioner King suggested that you get issued a PO and when you use that PO you are then issued a new one. More discussion followed. Commissioner King noted that purchases should be made on the credit card only. It was agreed that Joyce would speak to Jill and have her issue each Commissioner a unique PO# for the year and the commissioners would use that number and make purchases on their credit cards only.
- Brought up the electrical problems at Porters during the inspection with some exit lights and some outside lights over the doors. He called 3 or 4 electricians and only one got back to him and that was the one that Gary works for, Total Electric. He will charge \$40 an hour and he will go around to all the firehouses, let him know what the problems are and he will fix them. Commissioner Kugler said that if he is going to do it he wants a certificate of insurance from him. Skip never called back.

Commissioner King:

- Has the letter to Rabideau gone out? Commissioner Kugler noted that a letter had not gone out and that the President of Co #3 went to talk to her and she said she would have them out

of there in 2 days. If it isn't out of there Commissioners King and Kugler will make another visit, along with Jay.

- Asked where we stood on the audit: Treasurer Bishop explained that they were meeting Monday at noon. Commissioner Kugler added that he and Secretary Petkus would also be there.
- Regarding workplace violence and sexual harassment, he has a card from the girl that did it for the City, and the City's recommendation is that we don't do it ourselves because of a liability issue. It's about \$375 for the 1 class. Commissioner King to make a resolution on it. Another thing that came up was a new law on the books from the labor department that requires that we have a violence in the workplace plan.

Commissioner Kugler:

- Got an article off email about arrests made on LI of fire officials. Read part of the article.

Commissioner Robarge:

- Created a training requisition form. Asked if we ever got a bill from the blood born pathogen class. Treasurer Bishop noted it was \$60 for each class. Commissioner King noted that the girl from Saratoga Hospital does the class for free. Treasurer Bishop noted that people told her it was the most boring class ever. Created the form in order to keep better track of training. Wondered about possibly making a training completion form as well, just because a person filling out the training requisition form doesn't necessarily ever take the course. Commissioner Spackmann thought it was great idea, at work he has to fill out a 3 page form, except that he felt our firefighters would not complete it. FF Ron Bishop added that if they don't complete the form then they don't qualify for any more courses. Secretary Petkus suggested that maybe we could condense it down to a 1 page form, like a check off sheet or something and she would type one up. Commissioner King thought it was a great idea as well, but it needs to be kept to 1 page even if it's on both sides. Commissioner King said he would get one from work to reference. More discussion followed. Secretary Petkus to add something for the firefighter to sign about failure to complete the course. Commissioner Robarge would like to make this official at the next meeting and they could hash out the completion form at a later date. He also added that the Chief was all for this.
- Spoke to K & J Electric and they are going to call sometime next week and come and take a look around at the generator site. When the weather breaks they will start. Commissioner Spackmann asked if they were going to push to have Porters done this year. Commissioner King said let's get one done first.
- Commissioner Robarge asked what they wanted to do about the extra bill from Butler, Rowland and Mays. Commissioner Kugler noted he was against paying them until they get the rest of the information. Commissioner Spackmann was indifferent at this point. Felt the Greenfield Center report was not sufficient; at the very least he felt they wouldn't be out of line asking BRM to re-write the Greenfield Center report as per our letter and then maybe they will get paid the \$2000.00. BRM is saying that part was done, and it was not done to Commissioner Spackmann's satisfaction. Discussion followed.

Miscellaneous:

- Commissioner Waite noted that the day they did the radios down at Maple Avenue, Jill had to add the batteries. One is completely dead, Commissioner Waite said he would take them right up to Adirondack and let them handle it.

- Commissioner Kugler noted that we would be going to the Nevele again and could Treasurer Bishop make arrangements to come with us this November. Commissioner Spackmann said he didn't want to stay with Commissioner Kugler again. Commissioner Robarge noted he would be reserving two rooms in case the first one falls through like last year. Conference at the Nevele will be held Nov 1-4, 2007.
- Joyce asked if anyone had heard anything about the sale of the Chief's tires as she has heard nothing. Commissioner Spackmann said she will probably hear something at the last minute.
- FF LaGalles recommended that we purchase a pigtail for each portable generator.
- Commissioner Robarge asked if there was a precedent that if you do not have the EVOC course you do not drive. Commissioner Waite noted it was talked about last year but nothing was done. Commissioner King noted that the reason it was put on hold because there are not enough drivers yet. Commissioner Robarge said it is not fair to the people who take the course, to continue to let people that could take it but just don't want to and let them continue to drive to fires. Commissioner Kugler agreed. Commissioner King added that you need the EVOC course to take a lot of other courses now. Commissioner Kugler noted that here is a resolution on the books that states that you can no longer drive a fire truck in this District after age 69. Commissioner Spackmann felt it was a bogus resolution.

Commissioner Spackmann requested to go into executive session regarding Mike Smith.
Commissioner Robarge made a motion to go into executive session at 9:30 pm. All in favor.

Executive session ended at 10 pm.

Regarding the defensive driver course the Commissioners agreed that immediate family could take the course, and that included mother, father, sibling, spouse or step children.

Workshop was adjourned at 10:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Petkus
District Secretary