

# ***Board of Fire Commissioners***

Greenfield Fire District  
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## **March 23, 2010 Commissioners Workshop**

Workshop began at 7:05 pm.

Present were: Commissioners B. Chouinard, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite, Secretary Petkus, P/A J. Chouinard, Treasurer J. Bishop; Chief Lant, D/C's Davis, Ellsworth; A/C Jason Gibbins, Captain J. Burwell, FF R. Bishop.

Flag salute and moment of silence recognized for our fallen comrades and troops overseas.

### **1. Special Guest: Jama Peacock-Birsett, M.D.; discussion of firefighter classifications:**

Thanked everyone for the way they are scheduling their physicals, her practice has filled up and she has had to close to new patients, everybody has been great. She noted over the past couple of years she has really gotten a good feel for what it takes to be interior/exterior firefighter. What she has repeatedly seen come up over the years is that there are individuals that are being barred from positions of leadership due to the fact that they are not interior qualified. We look to use knowledge, wisdom and skills to mentor the younger generation and that this is not always necessarily found in interior firefighters. Some firefighters may not be physically capable of being interior qualified, but still have much to give. She cannot compromise in any sense her assessment or judgment, but it is heartbreaking for her to see individuals who would like to be able to make decisions and participate in leadership roles because they are not interior, in some cases to the detriment and on purpose to that individual. These things have been told to her in confidence and will stay in confidence. She is here this evening to advocate for a change in the by-laws and would like to see leadership roles opened to those other than interior qualified. She also stressed that she sees many capable women that she sees in office, she is not a feminist, but some who feel that that they could be in positions of leadership but it is kind of deemed not for them. She would like to see the group as a whole foster a more supportive environment for those who have skills to bring to the table. Discussion continued; Commissioner Waite noted he is on the by-law committee and would bring it up to the committee, he thinks she is 100% right. Commissioner B. Chouinard noted that it should be something that should be brought up to the by-law committee, let them hash it out and bring it back to the general membership. Chief Lant noted that the older members have fought a lot of fires, but the members today do not have that luxury, but he feels it should be looked at. D/C Ellsworth noted that it should be looked at as well, but that the classifications for the Captains and Lieutenants should not change at all, but it takes so long to get to the Chief or Assistant Chief's position and it is not their role to go interior. Dr. Peacock added that there is such a great pool of people, that she would hate to see them underutilized, and she would hate to see that her assessment be the limiting factor, when in fact it really should be the base of knowledge, skills and leadership that is brought to the table. Commissioner Spackmann noted that there were a couple of things

that she touched on that bothered him; that she has been given the impression that people have been held from office on purpose, he feels that is not true, he has not heard that and he is sorry people feel that way, there certainly are avenues in this organization that they can use to affect change, and this is not the first time this exact topic has been discussed. If someone feels they are being treated unfairly or maliciously they need to step up and bring it to the Board and not complain to the doctor. Commissioner Spackmann further noted that there are plenty of ways that people in this organization can benefit other members and serve leadership roles without wearing a white helmet.

Discussion moved on to the firefighter classifications. Dr. Peacock noted that we have become so intricate in how we assign those classes, and there are some classes she never uses. She noted it has become more complex than it really needs to be. She noted that the one tank classification is no longer really useful, she likes the D classification, but she wonders if the level of complexity has gone beyond and can we go back to a simpler classification as noted in the Firefighter Classification system. Brief discussion continued including the D2 classification. Dr. Peacock noted that she does not use D2, feels it is more of a jurisdictional classification rather than a medical classification. Firefighter Classification system to go back to the officers for review/recommendations. Tabled to the April meeting.

Session with Dr. Peacock ended at 7:32 PM.

**2. Approve Minutes:** February 23, 2010 Workshop Minutes.

**RESOLUTION #78 TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 23, 2010 WORKSHOP MINUTES AS WRITTEN.**

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: Waite

RESOLVED to approve the February 23, 2010 workshop minutes as written.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

**3. Secretary Update – Joyce Petkus:**

- Never received a consensus regarding what to do with Kayla Davis' missing access card. Discussion continued, including whether or not to charge for lost or misplaced cards, cost of the card not being the issue, but rather being responsible for district property. Joyce directed to replace card at no charge.
- By-law committee recently changed the title of 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Chief to Deputy Chief; she went to update the by-laws with this change, but is not sure that anyone actually read all the by-laws and the implication of the name change. She noted as an example that under the qualifications of District Chief, if you make the change, it alters the qualifications of District Chief. She further noted that she is not comfortable being the one to make the judgment call when making the changes, and that it should be someone on the by-law committee who makes the changes and then she will update the by-laws accordingly. Commissioner Waite to handle.
- 2009 District Manual updates: there are still some people who have not received their 2009 updates, but they are mostly non-active members. Letters to be sent to those members regarding active status and then if change forms need to be done, they can. Tabled to the April workshop.

- Letter received from Department of State regarding incident data previously submitted. She had five pages of reports with errors on them. She noted it did not look like it was an error on the part of the people entering in the fire reports but rather a change in the way the State wants to receive certain information. Unfortunately by the time the changes make their way back to us, months have gone by and they want us to go back and correct them. Brief discussion continued; Joyce felt the letter should go to the data entry people, who would probably understand it better than her since they actually do the fire reports, but she does not feel they should have to go back and make all those corrections. Joyce to send copies to data entry people.
- LOSAP: still a little snafu with Firetracker as it relates to LOSAP; they misunderstood some of our qualifications and they are currently trying to fix it in the system so the points are calculated correctly. Will keep everyone posted.
- Annual meeting coming up in April; Vanessa signed up for the Treasurer training. Commissioners Spackmann and Kugler are going; Joyce to register.
- Noted several upcoming seminars and banquets.
- April Defensive Driver course dates filling up, email Joyce or call the office to sign up.
- Jessica Bullard has started volunteering and she has been very helpful.
- Received a flier from Co #2 for their comedy night fundraiser with a request to forward it on; requesting permission to do so. Board approved to forward it.
- Received a call and flier regarding the Adirondack Phantoms 911 Memorial Fundraiser on April 9th. It is a charity hockey game with \$5 from each ticket sold going to the 911 Memorial fund. Requested permission to forward it on as well. Permission granted.
- Reminder that she will be on vacation April 6 – 13th<sup>th</sup>, Jill will be taking over.

#### 4. Purchasing Update – Jill Chouinard:

- Gear handout went very well, only 2 left – Ed Ackley and Richard Huestis.
- Deputy Chief shields: asked what colors they wanted. Lengthy discussion continued; Deputy Chiefs are 4 bugles and colors to stay specific to each company.
- Voice amps ordered: 6 each to go to Co #1 and Co #2 and 4 to go to Co #3.
- Stickers: shopped around, stickers will cost \$3 each.

#### 5. Treasurer Update – Jean Bishop:

- She will be on vacation from 4/3 and returning around 4/10. The abstract will be late, but she will make sure the Board has it to review by the Tuesday before the meeting.

#### 6. Commissioner Updates:

##### • **Bryan Chouinard:**

- Incident/Accident report: Handed out draft of report. Thought that maybe the Safety Officers should be in charge of it. D/C Davis commented that the Deputy Chiefs should handle it. More discussion continued; Deputy Chiefs in charge of making sure form is completed within 24 hours and sent to the District office.

##### • **Ken Waite:**

- Received the specs tonight; noted he and Jon need to go over them and then Jill can take them to have 6 copies made. Joyce reminded them she will be going on vacation and so will need the information for the legal ad before she leaves on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Waite and D/C Davis to meet tomorrow evening.
- Fire Police is having problems with the Maxon radios and they would like to see if 4 portable radios can be ordered. Jill noted that she just ordered 4 Maxon radio

batteries. Chief Lant noted that maybe we should start replacing those radios and get them some decent radios. Commissioner Waite noted that we are stuck with low band, the fire police would like 4. Commissioner Spackmann noted he would rather not order any; he would prefer a listing of the radios, how old they are and then come up with a plan/replacement schedule. Commissioner Waite to work with Jack Atwell on it.

- **Tom Robarge:**

- Water softener: Aqua Science was at Co #1 and took a water sample. Joyce noted that Steve from Aqua Science called back this afternoon with the results. The water is soft, the softener is doing exactly what it is supposed to do, the total dissolved solids was in the fairly normal range, but we do have some mineral content, <300, which is nothing really. Could go with a reverse osmosis system to get rid of the minerals and hope that solves the water spotting problems, but he told her it was very expensive and he understands budgets are very tight and was not sure it was really even necessary. He had also explained that it could be the type of soap being used and/or the amount of the soap used. You do not need to use as much soap with soft water. He also said to try a basic soap that has wax in it already, similar to using Jet Dry in a dishwasher, and to shammy or squeegee the vehicles after each wash. He also offered to come to the district sometime next week for free to look at all the water softeners and to test all the water at each firehouse. Brief discussion; the board requested that he just test the water at Co #2. Commissioner Robarge noted that is all he has at the moment.

- **Richard Spackmann:**

- Nothing to report.

- **Don Kugler:**

- Not present.

## 7. District Guideline Review:

- Discipline Policy: no changes made.
- DMV/LENS Policy: no changes made.
- Membership Application Policy: Joyce made some minor changes to both the policy and the application process, which she previously emailed to the Board for their review. She gave a brief explanation of the new process.

## RESOLUTION #79 TO APPROVE THE AMENDED MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION POLICY.

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: B. Chouinard

RESOLVED to approve the amended Membership Application Policy.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Joyce also noted she updated the Change in Membership form as previously requested. Brief discussion; draft to go to officers for their review and to make any recommendations. New forms to be printed when the old forms run out.

## 8. District Projects

- Current Projects:
  - None.
- Future Projects:
  - None.

## 9. Special Topics of Discussion:

- Commissioner Spackmann noted that a letter was received from resident George Habig requesting that we look into the Galway Co-op. He further noted he had already looked into it and they do not have Porter Corners and Greenfield Center listed as areas they deliver to but it is food for thought for next year.
- Co #3 carpet: Received a quote for \$3446.28 for carpet and baseboard, with carpet going up the stairs. Also have a price of \$4139 with vinyl on the stairway instead of carpet, which they felt was a better way to go. Brief discussion; uniform room also to get vinyl tile.

## RESOLUTION #80 TO ADVERTISE A PERMISSIVE REFERENDUM TO WITHDRAW AND EXPEND \$5000.00 FROM THE BUILDING RESERVE FUND FOR VINYL TILE AND CARPETING AT MIDDLE GROVE CO #3.

MOTION: Spackmann

SECOND: Robarge

RESOLVED to advertise a permissive referendum to withdraw and expend \$5000.00 from the Building Reserve Fund for vinyl tile and carpeting at Middle Grove Co #3.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

- **Chief Lant presented his report:**

- 281 and 291 have come back and everyone seems to be satisfied with them.
- Spoke to John Cameron and he is going to contact Chief Gibbins so he can be shown exactly what they want done.
- Stuff has been ordered for Co #2 tanker.
- Dress uniform meeting is tomorrow night just to try to get rid of stuff.
- By-law committee meeting is Thursday night.
- Last month he noted the Saratoga parade was on June 12<sup>th</sup>, but it is June 19<sup>th</sup>.

## RESOLUTION #81 GIVING PERMISSION FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SARATOGA SPRINGS PARADE ON JUNE 19, 2010.

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: Waite

RESOLVED to give permission for the department to participate in the Saratoga Springs Parade on June 19, 2010.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

- Risk assessment for the escape ropes should be done in about a week.
- Next Tuesday there will be a drill at Maple Avenue School for Hazmat. The main goal is going to be to work our Incident Command so it jibes with theirs.

- Bonesteel called, Dave Kenyon has apparently spoken with them about 292 and the low pressure switch that he cannot fix; Chief to call Bonesteel.
- Asked where all the flags are; Jill noted she has the cemetery flags and markers stored in the uniform room and there are enough for this year.
- Asked Commissioner B. Chouinard about the badges; they have not been ordered yet. Commissioner B. Chouinard to speak to Chief Lant after workshop.
- Thanked the Board for the gear order.
- D/C Ellsworth noted he has a 17 year old who would like to join, he is the brother of a current member but lives outside the District in the Geyser Crest area.

## RESOLUTION #82 GIVING CO #3 PERMISSION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH OUT OF DISTRICT RESIDENT BLAKE MACWHINNIE.

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: B. Chouinard

RESOLVED to give Co #3 permission to move forward with out of district resident Blake MacWhinnie.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

- D/C Davis asked about the radio/light that was lost: Joyce noted that Jill is still fighting with the vendor on it. D/C Davis noted he needs a radio and light and can he get it out of the radio account for his Captain? Has 2 off the truck now. Brief discussion; Jill to order a PR860 low band for Captain Burwell.
- D/C Davis noted that he will have a bunch of bottles go out of service in May. Has 1 bottle that is out of service because it is leaking around the gauges. Commissioner Spackmann asked if he has spoken to Commissioner Kugler, the Commissioner in charge of SCBA bottles. D/C Ellsworth noted that he did not think it was the officers responsibility to call the Commissioner who is in charge of the bottles who is on vacation in Florida, when Commissioner Spackmann is the acting chairman and is in charge and so he should be the one calling Florida. Commissioner Spackmann commented that a few corrections need to be made; he is not in charge, the Chairman is not in charge of this District, all the chairman does is run meetings. The Chairman is elected by the Board to oversee the meetings, but does not give him any additional power outside of being a single Commissioner, the District is run by all Commissioners and three Commissioners are needed to affect change in this District. He also noted the Commissioners are assigned responsibilities on behalf of the Board, and the SCBA account is assigned to Commissioner Kugler. Lengthy discussion continued; Commissioner Robarge noted that Commissioner Kugler is online and has a district cell phone and so you can communicate with him and it can't all be blamed on the fact that he is in Florida. Chief Lant to call Commissioner Kugler. D/C Ellsworth noted that he was given a list several months ago of all the bottles that are going to expire. Lists to be forwarded to purchasing agent. Commissioner B. Chouinard noted that if you order all the bottles at once, they will all come due at once, and that is what they are trying to get away from, and to instead stagger the bottles. Chief Lant noted that the bottles should be ordered tomorrow and not two weeks from now when he gets home.

**RESOLUTION #83 TO ORDER SCBA BOTTLES AS SOON AS LISTS ARE RECEIVED BY THE PURCHASING AGENT.**

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: B. Chouinard

RESOLVED to order SCBA bottles as soon as lists are received by the Purchasing Agent.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Discussion continued regarding the additional striping that is being put on the bottles for each company. Co #1 is orange, Co #2 is red, Co #3 is yellow and Co #4 is green.

**RESOLUTION #84 TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:55 PM IN REFERENCE TO PROPOSED LITIGATION.**

MOTION: Waite

SECOND: B. Chouinard

RESOLVED to go into executive session at 8:55 PM in reference to proposed litigation.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

**RESOLUTION #85 TO RECONVENE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:11 PM.**

MOTION: Robarge

SECOND: Waite

RESOLVED to reconvene from executive session at 9:11 PM.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Motion made by Commissioner Waite with a second from Commissioner Spackmann to dispense with the reading of the minutes. All in favor.

Motion made by Commissioner Robarge with a second from Commissioner B. Chouinard to adjourn the workshop at 9:15 PM. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Petkus  
District Secretary