

Board of Fire Commissioners

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

Workshop – January 17, 2007

Present were: Commissioners King, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite; Secretary Petkus and FF Michael LaGalles.

Acting Chairman Spackmann opened the workshop 7:06 pm. Workshop Agenda attached.

The following issues were discussed:

1. Follow up to the “30 day resolution”: Commissioner Spackmann felt it was a wonderful idea, but it needs to be fine tuned a little bit. Felt the limit needed to be raised a little bit in addition to having to file in writing. Copies given to all the Commissioners. Commissioner King added that it is not just for purchasing but may also be used for changing the way we do business. Gives the Commissioners 30 days to look over the proposal and think about it. The issue was brought up of purchases coming out of allotments and are they subject to the 30 day rule? More discussion was held. Commissioner King brought up the subject of the special accounts, SCBA, HAZMAT, fire prevention, fire police, etc., and felt that if they were to go over budget it would fall under the 30 day rule. Secretary Petkus asked how often anyone ever went over budget. Commissioner Robarge explained that they transfer money from one account and move it to another if that happens. Commissioner Spackmann added that it is discussed before that happens. More discussion followed. Commissioner King noted that even if they think, but are not sure, they are going to go over budget they should be contacting the Commissioners on it. Commissioner Spackmann felt that was the responsibility of the Commissioner in charge of that account. Commissioner King noted that last year, with Hazmat, there were 4 Officers and 1 Commissioner in charge, but a lot of times stuff got bought but the Hazmat Commissioner had no idea what was going on because they went to another Commissioner to sign off on it instead of the Commissioner in charge. Commissioner Spackmann felt that this could be taken care of in house, that it didn't need a proposal or resolution. Commissioner Spackmann also asked about having some type of uniform proposal form to complete; Commissioner Spackmann created a template (attached) that could be used to make the process easier. Commissioner Waite said just as long as it doesn't get too complicated. Commissioner Robarge felt it would just help them. The idea behind the proposal was to make it non-complicated but also ensure that the right information is getting to the Commissioners in order for them to make a decision, as well as to justify it to the taxpayers. Form does not address if a policy or procedure is in question. Commissioner Robarge felt the template should go to the Officers for review and any ideas. Discussion followed. Commissioner Spackmann asked about the \$1000.00 limit and is it maybe too low, and possibly raise the amount to \$3000.00. Commissioners Waite and King noted that they wanted to stay at \$1000.00.

The following decisions were made:

- It was agreed that allotments were excluded from the 30 day rule.
- Special accounts excluded unless there is the possibility of going over budget.

- The Commissioner in charge of a particular special account is the one responsible to sign off on purchases; the other Commissioners should defer to the Commissioner in charge if asked to sign off on a special account purchase.
 - Joyce to email template over to the Officers for review. Commissioners will then meet with the Officers for discussion at the Officer meeting on Feb. 7th, after the insurance meeting with Dave Meager, at 6 pm.
 - When the website is complete, there will be a place for forms that can be accessed and downloaded when they are needed.
2. Sexual harassment policy: Commissioner Spackmann asked if Commissioner King had gotten his email and he responded yes. Commissioner King explained that there is workplace violence under the labor law that includes sexual harassment and all employees are required to take it. Commissioner Robarge thought that the sooner the better to get this taken care of. Commissioner King is qualified to teach the class. Discussion followed. Commissioner King noted he just found out about a new labor law that was supposed to go into effect in March. Commissioner Spackmann asked what would be a realistic time frame to teach the class. Commissioner King explained that the policy needs to be put together and then should be sent to our attorney for review. Commissioner Spackmann asked if Commissioner King had seen the sexual harassment policy Bill Young had sent us; he noted he did but it needed to be tailored to the Fire District. Each class would be about 4 hours and would cover workplace violence and sexual harassment and would have to be taken once a year. Commissioner Robarge added that it should be run by Bill Young if it would be okay for Commissioner King to teach the class or would that be considered a conflict of interest.

The following decisions were made:

- Commissioner King to get policy together, get it to Joyce and she will get it to Bill Young for review.
 - Joyce to contact Bill Young and ask if it is okay for Commissioner King to teach the class or would it be a conflict of interest, as he is a state instructor already.
 - Shoot for March to begin classes and give out hand outs.
3. Generator: Commissioner Robarge still wanted to meet with Mr. Kardash, but Commissioner Waite noted that he had spoken to him earlier and Mr. Kardash would not be able to make it tonight as he was still out on a job. FF Mike Lagalles and Skip had already met and looked at the current installation area. In depth discussion followed, including the possibility of putting the generator out front by the sign. FF Lagalles felt this would be the best and cheapest location and would not affect the visibility of the sign. It would be a deeper set back than the sign and would be the cheapest and most efficient way to wire it. Would not have to mount anything in the room, rather would be skid contained. Then it could be disguised by shrubs/landscaping. Commissioner Spackmann asked Commissioner Robarge what he thought about that idea in general; Commissioner Robarge said he didn't really care where it went, although he did have a concern about it being in a hazardous area. More discussion continued. Issue of Town code/set back rules came up. Discussion followed regarding the size of the generator needed; FF Lagalles noted that Gary wanted a generator to run the whole building but as an electrician putting in a standby generator for emergency use, he personally didn't think it was necessary to have every circuit in the building energized under those emergency conditions. Discussion continued including the size of the generator needed, the fuel usage, and the monetary savings, if any, of putting the generator out front instead of out back as Butler, Rowland and Mays had designed. Issue of the District buying the materials separately came up as well. Commissioner Spackmann asked if it was possible

for FF Lagalles to meet with Skip to discuss all this to get the ball rolling ASAP. Commissioner Waite felt that a 60K generator would be able to run the building, but he would go for the 80. Commissioner King added that he would even go for the 100 and get the bigger switch, and you would be set in case of future expansion. Commissioner Robarge noted that on State Contract, the difference between the 80K and 100K is only about \$2000.00. Discussion continued about going out to bid or buying on State Contract. Commissioner Spackmann explained that if you buy the exact model off State Contract, you are done. If you buy a different vendor that is not on State Contract then you have to bid it, even if they are cheaper than State Contract. Commissioner King noted they had spoken to the State Comptroller and if you go under, in order to waive State Contract and buy it even cheaper you need 4 out of 5 yes votes to waive State Contract. Commissioner Robarge said that no, not according to Bill Young and Commissioner Spackmann added that OGS said no, as he had called OGS. WIC's law was also briefly discussed.

The following decisions were made:

- FF Lagalles to call and set up meeting with Skip Kardash on Saturday, and if he's not available Saturday, to find out what his availability to get together and work out the details and prices. Skip's phone number is 587-4339.
 - Commissioner Robarge to check with the Town any issues regarding putting the generator out front near the sign.
 - Issue of District buying materials and checking that out with Bill Young put on hold for now pending the outcome of the meeting with Skip Kardash.
4. Butler, Rowland and Mays: Commissioner Robarge spoke to Dick Butler and explained that the District didn't really need their services any more, that the District was happy with their services and if we ever do something with any firehouse we would get in touch with them. Mr. Butler would prepare the final documents and we should have them sometime in February.
 5. Cell Tower: Commissioner Spackmann noted it was a very complex issue. The particulars of the layout of Maple Avenue are causing problems. Discussion continued of where the tower could possibly be located. Commissioner Robarge asked if it was worth it. Commissioner Spackmann noted that there would be a great advantage if we could put our antennas on it; however the wire run would be very pricey. He explained the details of the wiring, including conduit on the building, cutting the pavement, etc. Commissioner Spackmann noted the income from that would be \$15,500.00 per year. FF Lagalles noted that the income derived from a fixed asset, does that offset the tax rolls. Commissioner King noted that it should, but we should find that out, and if that is true, why bother doing it. All felt it was another question for Bill Young.

The following decisions were made:

- Joyce to call Bill Young and ask if the income derived from the cell tower must be deducted off the budget.
6. Al Janik meeting: Commissioner Spackmann had a meeting with him last Thursday. He noted that the Town of Greenfield is going to go to 100% eval starting in February and taxes are going up 34%, he believed. Regarding the traffic light situation, Commissioner Spackmann told Supervisor Janik that Gary doesn't want it, he could talk directly with Gary. The impression he got was that Mr. Janik didn't understand and he couldn't believe why we

wouldn't want to do that because we are going to be on their liability insurance and it was public service, etc. Supervisor Janik said he would speak to Gary Gibbins directly about it.

The following decisions were made:

- Supervisor Janik to speak with Gary Gibbins about the generator for the light.
7. Sale of 271: Commissioner Spackmann spoke with John Smith, who has offered \$26,500.00 for it. He then got a hold of Tim Ashworth, who has it listed in his magazine for 70K. Tim suggested we drop it to 50K and he will put it on the front page. Joyce noted that per town law 176-23 if the sale price does not exceed \$10,000.00 a resolution is sufficient. \$10,000.00 to \$49,999.00 you need a permissive referendum (notice in paper and wait 30 days) and over 50K needs a mandatory referendum. Discussion was held about what to do with 271. Commissioner Spackmann spoke with Commissioner Kugler already about it, and Commissioner Kugler doesn't want to sell it that cheap.

The following decisions were made:

- Commissioner Spackmann to reject the current offer from John Smith.
 - 293 taken off being advertised for sale.
8. 501(c)3: Commissioner Spackmann brought this up because there is a potentially 3 month lead time going through the process. Commissioner King asked, why, as a municipality, do we have to do it? Commissioner Spackmann noted that people who give grants don't care if we are a municipality or not, they only want to know if we are 501(c)3 or not. We don't have to do it if we don't want to, but it will open up the possibility of getting more grants and get the not for profit mailing rate. For example, every corporation at Exit 15 requires 501(c)3 status. Commissioner King noted that then we may have to file income taxes depending on the income. Need to do more investigation; discussion followed.

The following decisions were made:

- Commissioner Spackmann to look into it.
9. Access System: Commissioner Spackmann and Secretary Petkus have been talking and the plan is to replace the current ID on the gear with a new ID system. Commissioner King asked how it was going to marry up to the County system. Commissioner Spackmann said it's not, the County system is separate. The ID's on the gear would not be swipe enabled. One ID card would be issued that would be enabled for access. An access card will be made up for each truck, which would give firefighters access to another fire house. It would cut down on the number of activated pieces access and potential for security breach. Secretary Petkus explained that she has been in contact with Rock City Falls and Fort Hunter, and they each run an extremely tight ship. Both only issue one card **or** one fob, and if any are lost, they have to pay a \$10 fee for replacement. They also are very selective as to whom they issue vendor cards to and no law enforcement gets any forms of access. If a vendor needs to get in for example, to RCF, they need to call the District Secretary and she will activate the doors as necessary, but she can do that because she has internet access. More discussion followed. Secretary Petkus felt that 1 card and only 1 fob should be issued to each FF, as she has heard on quite a few occasions that people have misplaced one of their fobs but only 1 person has officially asked her shut down their fobs because they were lost. She further explained that she is not against giving out access to certain people; she is just against giving out so many

pieces of access. Felt we need to be more selective, giving out too many forms of access is defeating the purpose of the access system. Commissioner Robarge had no problem with giving out access to law enforcement but he didn't think they should be given out to Sheriffs or State Police. Commissioner Spackmann disagreed. More discussion followed. Commissioner King noted that one time they came down to Middle Grove and established a command post, went down to Stewarts and got all kinds of food and left the mess when they were done; maybe we should canvass more Fire Districts and see what they do. Further discussion continued, including possible internet access.

The following decisions were made:

- Sheriffs to receive 4 or 5 access cards max.
- State Troopers not to exceed 10 access cards.
- Vendors not to exceed 5 access cards, including Toby Middlebrook and Adirondack 2 Way.
- Firefighters to receive 1 access card and 1 fob; the 2nd fob to be returned.
- If a card or fob is lost, the 1st one is replaced free, after that there is a \$20 fee to replace any lost pieces of access.
- Internet service to be researched in the spring (March) in order to hook up the access system to the firehouses.
- Joyce responsible for teaching Commissioner Waite to be computer/internet savvy, especially with the new website going up.


10. Communication Committee: Final report almost completely drafted. Recommended that Board accept the recommendations in full. Commissioner Spackmann would like to talk about it at the next Commissioners meeting, but the March meeting might give everyone more time to review it. One of the recommendations that were made was to put a bulletin board in each firehouse that is only for District information.

The following decisions were made:

- Commissioner Spackmann to finish final draft and email to Secretary Petkus, who will then get copies to each Commissioner.
- Discussion to be held at either the February or March Commissioners meeting.

11. Ladder Truck at Maple Avenue: Commissioner Spackmann wanted to brainstorm a little bit about the ladder truck. Last year the Board met at Maple Avenue and said they do want to put it back out, that the Commissioners would look at it in the spring. Commissioner Spackmann felt that a committee should be formed with someone from the Board and a certain amount of people from Maple Avenue. Commissioner King noted that maybe other members from the other companies should be involved in the process as well. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Waite brought up the issue of financing. Commissioner Spackmann felt that the Board needs to rely on Maple Avenue to sell the truck idea and to do their homework too.

Need good public speakers (Commissioner Robarge volunteered ). Commissioner King felt that people from the rest of the District should be involved in order to get the people outside of Maple Avenue's area to support it. Commissioner Waite felt Commissioner King had a good point. More discussion followed. Commissioner Robarge felt the 1st thing the Board needs to do is to figure how to pay for it. Once that is figured out, then bring other people on board and go from there. Commissioner Spackmann said his timeline is that between March and September do the sales pitch, including Maple Avenue going door to door,

maybe other companies going to places like Prestwick Chase, maybe someone like George Weingarten, getting the facts and figures out there, possibly break the public meetings into different sections. Commissioner King felt that there needed to be research done on both new and used ladder trucks, and felt it needs to be sold as an entire District piece of apparatus. Commissioner Spackmann wanted to see the 2008 budget done in August, have two public meetings; one in September and one in October regarding the ladder truck issue, then have the ladder truck vote **after** the budget is in for the year to show people that we are not raising taxes to pay for the ladder truck.

The following decisions were made:

- Three members from Maple Avenue would be on the committee and the membership at Maple Avenue would pick those three.

12. Miscellaneous:

- Commissioner Spackmann had the crash bar at Middle Grove looked at, taken apart and the spring is too worn out, might need a new bar. It was lubed up and works better than it did. Commissioner King noted that the only time that door gets used is when there is voting over there. Commissioner King will speak to A/C Ellsworth about it.
- Commissioner Waite asked about the money held over for wheel covers. He will go ahead and get that taken care of.
- Commissioner Waite also handed out tile prices to the Commissioners and would like everybody to look at them to talk about it next month.
- Commissioner Robarge heard there was some new work out equipment at Co #1. Concerned about someone injuring themselves while working out and how is it covered. Secretary Petkus noted it would go under Worker's Compensation.

Workshop meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce Petkus
District Secretary