

Board of Fire Commissioners

Greenfield Fire District
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Greenfield Center, NY 12833
(518) 893-0723

May 16, 2007 Workshop

Workshop began at 7:02 pm.

Present were: Commissioners King, Kugler, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite, Chief McConkey, Secretary Petkus and FF Mike Lagalles.

Conservation Grant: Chairman Kugler explained that they had the opportunity to go for the conservation grant again this year, although they lowered the matching amount to \$1000.00. Last year we were turned down for the grant. He had asked A/C Gibbins about a week or two ago to get a list of what he wanted, but never heard back from him. The deadline for the grant was yesterday and he had not heard back from him so he and Andrea decided to go for about 11 collapsible water back packs, which are about \$150 each and about 40 pairs of gloves. That comes out to \$2000.00; the grant is for \$1000.00 and we come up with the other \$1000.00. Hopefully we will have a better chance at getting the grant this year since it was denied last year.

Maple Avenue Renovations: Chairman Kugler asked if everyone had a chance to look at their proposal. Commissioner King thought they had a lot of good ideas; he does have a couple of questions though. Felt we need to look at all the stations, look at the issue regarding Porter Corners floor. Commissioner Kugler noted that the issue was being addressed and taken care of. Commissioner Waite noted that they screwed the existing floor to the joists and then they are going to put plywood down before they put the new floor down. Commissioner Kugler asked everyone to look over Maple Avenue's proposal as they would like to get some of it done this year. The countertop in the radio room was donated; it is a beautiful countertop.

Water softeners: There are some problems. Commissioner Kugler said he spoke to Toby, who was getting the water tested between the well and the firehouses at Co #1 and Co #2. It cost about \$36 to test each one. He also noted that Co #4 water softener has been out of commission for at least 2 years, ever since the leak in the ceiling. Toby says he has a new system he can put in there, potassium permanganate, he believed it was called. The cost would be approximately \$1800.00. Previous quote from Hawk was \$3000.00 and Toby came in at \$2600.00, but now he's down to \$1800.00 with the new system. Commissioner King asked for some information on it. Chief McConkey suggested that maybe they should call in someone like Culligan, nothing against Toby, but he's more of a plumber, not a water softener guy. Felt that we might have better luck if we called someone in who specialized in this, as this has been an issue for 10 years. Further detailed discussion was held. Each station may need different systems. Chief McConkey said the water is so bad at Co #1 the windshields are terrible. Several different attempts were made to clean the windshield but they would not come clean. FF Lagalles suggested trying Rid Lyme, but it's a lot stronger than CLR, you should try it in 1 spot first. Commissioner Robarge felt maybe we should do one station at a time. Co #1 and Co #2 seem to have the worst problems right now; it was decided Commissioner Robarge would look into it for Co #1 and get 3 quotes; the money would come out of the Building Maintenance Fund.

Greenfield Center Furnace/Oil Tank Issue: Commissioner Kugler asked what the status was on that. Commissioner Robarge suggested that we get the generator behind us before we start another project, since the spring is here and oil should not be a big issue.

Fire Prevention: Commissioner Kugler spoke to the Chief about it already; and he is the Commissioner in charge of fire prevention this year. He thinks fire prevention should be handled by all four companies. He already spoke to Duane about it, wants to get a representative from each company involved. Commissioner Robarge noted that this was discussed previously as well. Commissioner King added that they should come up with a plan as to how they intend to do fire prevention and then have the Chief review it first before it goes to the Board. Commissioner Kugler noted the budget is \$6000.00 and what are they buying and where is it all going to? More discussion followed. Commissioner Spackmann noted that Dorothy Nolan and Greenfield Elementary are the cornerstones to fire prevention but they also do various other events to include Stewarts, cub scouts, exit 15 and Prestwick Chase, among other things, which require funds as well. Not sure it is possible to include those things. Commissioner Kugler felt that there should be a meeting with representatives from the other 2 companies, not just Duane and Gary, and the Chief added that he would be there as well. He would also bring it up at the officers meeting and ease them into it.

Internet Service: Commissioner Kugler wants the Board to give some thought to the internet for here and possibly down the road to all four companies. Would like to try to work it into the access system as well as LOSAP. Commissioner Robarge asked if we can use the access system to help with LOSAP. Detailed discussion followed. Commissioner Spackmann explained that although the access system can help with LOSAP, for example, down at the Avenue with all the calls, it will become very tedious to go through it. Explained that he spoke to Ed Petkus and East Meadow uses a hand print system strictly for LOSAP; he thought Corinth uses the same system as well. Had been talking to several other members and they want to possibly schedule a time to go to Corinth to check it out. Possibly use this year's access system money to try to get that LOSAP system. This would also help to get away from paperwork, which is something the officers have been talking about. More discussion followed on the access system, including who has access and how it works. Commissioner Kugler again asked about getting internet access in the office, it would help Karen to do fire reports, and Joyce would not have to go home to use the internet. Secretary Petkus did request that they go with hi speed internet access, especially to be able to do fire reports. Commissioner Kugler noted there was something called Roadrunner light; discussion followed. Commissioner Spackmann noted they were probably looking at about \$4000.00 per year for internet access for all four companies. Possible hidden costs were also discussed. The Commissioners agreed to go with hi speed and start with the District office, and Secretary Petkus would have P/A Howe start researching it out. Commissioner Kugler said he also had Dale from Tek II down at the Avenue looking at integrated systems and he offered to come and talk to the Board. Commissioner Spackmann added that down at Maple Avenue there is still a big problem with the fax machine, and that in fact it is not a fax machine problem, but a problem with Verizon. Seems that a lot of phone lines along Maple Avenue would have to be replaced for the fax to work, and that is not going to happen. Discussion followed; Commissioner King suggested filing a complaint with the public service commission. Chief McConkey noted that if you just went with Road Runner you could just get digital phone. The problem with that though is if the power goes out, you lose phone service. Secretary Petkus said she would contact Jill tomorrow and have her look into hi speed internet access. She would also schedule appointments to have those companies come and look at the office to see what would be needed to wire the office for internet access. Commissioner Kugler said he would get in touch with Dale.

Budget: Commissioner Kugler asked everyone to start thinking about the budget and to get some figures together. Will need to have a public hearing on it in October and the budget needs to be in by November. Secretary Petkus said she would get the specifics on all that. Commissioner Waite added that fire police coats and helmets ought to come out of the gear budget, even if we have to raise the amount. Most of that eats up the fire police budget. Chief McConkey noted that Bob keeps good track of his inventory. Commissioner Spackmann felt it was perfectly reasonable. Commissioner Kugler added that fire police have been overlooked for years on good equipment. Commissioner Kugler also explained that he and the Treasurer had spoken about possibly combining accounts to decrease redundancy, for example office supplies and operations account. Commissioner King said before they make any changes maybe they should wait until they hear back from the auditor, which should be sometime in June. Commissioner Kugler noted there were only a couple of things they would come back with; the only big thing was inventory. Some discussion followed, including what would happen if something was broken and need to be destroyed. Secretary Petkus noted that Jill had a phrase for it at work (Dispose or Destruct and Destroy).

Association of Fire Districts Workshop: This Saturday. Commissioners Kugler and Spackmann, Jill and Joyce are going. Meet no later than 7:15 am at Maple Avenue and Don will drive. Joyce noted that George Person and Bill Young would be speaking on Saturday.

There was also brief discussion about the EVOC course.

Commissioner Kugler went around and asked if anyone had anything to add to the meeting:

Commissioner Waite: Got a call from Duane from the Town today and he wanted to know if it's okay with the Board to combine his fuel bill for two months as he is going on vacation. The Board had no problem with it. Also got a call from Chet Garrison, who wanted to know if the Board would okay taking Porter Corners new truck to the Chief's show at Lake George this year. The Chief said he spoke to Scott yesterday, and left it up to Porter Corners, as he had no problem with it. Commissioner King asked what we or Porters get out of it. Commissioner Waite said he was going to ask for them to supply us with something to really make it shine. Commissioner King also asked how it would be insured. Discussion followed. The Chief noted the equipment would probably have to be stripped off the truck before it went and a truck from another company may have to pulled to go up to Porter Corners.

Chief McConkey: Just wanted to make sure that when gas and oil are bought it comes out of the Gas and Oil Account for the chain saws and stuff and not the allotments. Commissioner Kugler said if not out of that account, it should come out of the Equipment Repair Account.

Commissioner Spackmann brought up the new bill that we just received from Garrison for last year. This bill is over 6 months old. He thought it was for hose. She just got the bill and is still working on it. Commissioner King asked why this seemed like the only vender we are having problems with. Commissioner Spackmann said we have problems with other vendors as well, this just seemed to be in our faces right now. Chief McConkey added that he thought that this billing issue should be resolved before we let Garrison take Porters truck. Commissioner Kugler said to give Jill time to get to the bottom of it before we jump to any conclusions. Lengthy discussion followed about the billing issues with Garrison. Commissioner Spackmann noted that maybe we should have a meeting with Garrison. Chief McConkey asked if we got the aerial inspection yet. Joyce was not sure. Also asked if we ever got a form for lost or destroyed equipment. One was made up for radios, but there should be one for all equipment. The Chief noted Gary had a FAST team portable radio

missing; they were going to wait a couple of weeks to see if it shows up. The Chief would like a form for them to fill out. Discussion followed about the amount of radios in the District and how too many people are talking on the radios. The Chief noted they have been using the Nextels a lot. Commissioner Spackmann noted the problem is not with the radios but is a personnel matter. Chief McConkey said he would address that issue as well. Regarding the missing radio, they are not sure if they lost it in Corinth, but the paperwork should be filled out anyway. He also spoke to Kevin Veitch from Middle Grove about code enforcement, and he felt that it was a very good idea to have at least one person from each company have a code enforcement officer. He himself could not do it though because he works for Saratoga. Commissioner Robarge added that Tom Mitchell is taking an arson course at Montour Falls. He filled out a requisition form although he is paying for the course himself. Will be under his training record for the District, but Commissioner Spackmann noted that it can not be counted towards his LOSAP.

Commissioner Spackmann: Regarding Mr. Young's comment about the flowers, he felt that although he understood where Mr. Young was coming from, they should still send flowers for someone who died as it was the right thing to do. Commissioner Spackmann noted that Jill and Joyce would be getting their pictures taken for the website, he hasn't spoken to Jean about it yet. He also asked the Chief to have a picture taken. Website is moving forward, expected to go live mid June. He will be setting up a time with MWH to do some training, as it was part of the contract. Discussion was held on where to have the training session as there is no internet service here yet. Brought up the article in the Times Union today that talked about the Saratoga Springs website and they spent \$80K on their website and it has an events calendar, allows them to post meeting minutes and agendas, contact information and a couple of other things, and our website does exactly the same thing and it cost a fraction of that. More discussion followed including whether or not the home page was too plain or should be more flashy.

Commissioner King: Asked Joyce how many copies of the minutes she sends to the town each month. She noted she sends a copy to each Supervisor, Al Janik and Art Johnson. Commissioner King noted that they are apparently not sharing them with the council members. Commissioner King asked if it would be possible to email them to the other council members; Commissioner Spackmann disagreed with that, noting that they are going to be posted on our website each month beginning very soon. He also added that on the Town of Greenfield website there is a notation that we will have a new website soon. Further discussion followed. Commissioner Spackmann also explained that part of the website functionality was that people can register to be notified of website updates, so that when we post minutes, they will automatically get a notice saying that there are updates. Commissioner King asked when this would be up and running so they can access this; Commissioner Spackmann explained that it will be June 15th.

Secretary Petkus: Noted Bill Young's letter regarding firefighter physicals and new applicants getting physicals before they are accepted into the District; did the Commissioners want to discuss it now? She noted that she and Dr. Peacock will be sitting down sometime in August after the physicals are completed to go over them and to discuss strategy for next year and what it may cost so Joyce can give a figure for the budget. Commissioner Spackmann felt it was all part of a bigger issue, which is the by-laws. Commissioner King added that if you are going to do the physicals you have to make a tentative offer of employment in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act before we require the physical. Commissioner Robarge asked if Dr. Peacock had some sort of protocol to go by in order to be able to make a recommendation. Joyce noted she had thoroughly read through NFPA 1581, which really gave her a great idea of what to look for. She also noted that she has been emailing the

names of new members accepted into the department to Dr. Peacock, and also that with the membership application she could add in the physicals forms because there were about 7 pages to be filled out, and include a letter that the applicant would take to Dr. Peacock explaining that they were applying for membership and needed a physical. More discussion followed. Secretary Petkus said she would have to check with Bill Young regarding the ADA. She also revamped the new member application after researching out some applications; South Schenectady had the best application, which most of what they used was already on our application. Regarding the question about criminal background, she had checked with Bill Young and he said you can ask that question exactly as it is, and she has seen the same question on other applications as well, including South Schenectady's. Commissioner Robarge brought up the subject of a protocol for the investigation committees; discussion followed. Joyce asked if anyone had looked at the new application and noted that she again updated page 1. The Chief suggested that maybe the Board could check the references themselves with new members. It was decided adding physicals to the application process would be put on hold for now. Joyce also handed out a flyer given to her by Dr. Peacock regarding the Wellness Program blood screening and explained that for \$35 someone could get a lot of blood tests done, which would normally cost hundreds of dollars. She also suggested that in the future the Board may want to include this in the physicals and she would have the company come to do it. Even if the Board did not want to pay for it, she would like to post it for the firefighters to do it on their own if they want. Commissioner Kugler noted it would be something worthwhile to think about for the future. They agreed she could post it, just let everyone know this is optional. Joyce said she would explain it at the next Commissioner meeting. Regarding the membership to the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs; she had called and the Chief should join as an individual as it would only cost him \$25 and the District would join for \$100. Commissioners agreed to this. Motion was already made to join; she will give this to Jean to pay.

Commissioner Spackmann quickly brought up the possibility of putting stickers on the trucks with the website; discussion followed. Chief McConkey asked why they needed to be all different, why couldn't we just put Greenfield Fire District? Talked about putting something about the Fire District in a new member packet for all the new people moving into the area, Wilton does it, but he is not sure of Greenfield. More discussion followed. The Chief suggested when the coin drops are being done, the website can also go on the coin drop bags.

Chief McConkey explained in detail regarding a contract with NY Fire and Signal and the dialers. Total contract cost would be about \$12,000.00, but it would be for a four year term for all four firehouses and include new dialers. More discussion followed. The Chief noted that we almost lost a firehouse; it was well worth it. He also noted he would try to get more bids including Stano. He gave Joyce a contract; she will photocopy the contract for each of the Commissioners and give the original back to the Don on Saturday.

Workshop adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully,

Joyce a. Petkus
District Secretary