

Fire Advisory Committee
Thursday March 28, 2019
Station 85 - East Thompson Fire Department

MINUTES

Present: Kim Austin, Chair
Kyle Cimochoowski, West Thompson
Steve Bodreau, Quinebaug
Matt Grauer, Thompson Hill
Jeff Sheldon, East Thompson
Firefighters - 3 members

Absent: John Sharpe, Community
Community Member, Vacant

1. Call to Order at 19:04
2. Approval of previous minutes
 - a. Motion to approve by Kyle Cimochoowski
 - b. Second by Matt Grauer
 - c. Aye - 5 Nay - 0
3. BOS Update
 - a. Tax Abatements - volunteers have some trouble getting to the town hall to fill out the I-9 forms for the tax abatements. The committee has reached out to the First Selectman and Town Clerk to find out who is eligible to verify the I-9 form and if we can schedule something outside office hours for the firefighters to turn in their paperwork. There is also a concern over being taxed on the abatement as the state considers abatements as taxable income. The volunteers feel like they are being double taxed and would like this to be looked into.
 - b. Physicals - Currently there is no standard for physicals to be conducted in the town. The chiefs have stated that their used to be a form to have filled out but they have not seen the form in many years. Physicals are required for firefighters on probation as well as when they attend the Firefighter 1 training. These firefighters are told to go to Putnam Medical and given a basic OSHA form to be completed and the bill is sent to the Selectman. Annual physicals may be conducted by their personal physician as long as they let their physician know to complete an EKG and a breathing test that allows the firefighter to be compliant. The chiefs have asked for an

updated form from the town (not just the basic OSHA form) to give the volunteers as well as a process that they should be going through to get the physicals conducted. Once a policy and procedure can be updated with the proper forms from the town, the chiefs will work on getting their volunteers to be compliant. There is a concern to get the volunteers all to Putnam Medical during their business hours as most volunteers work at those times. It is asked to give the departments one year to get all volunteers compliant or to offer an evening or a Saturday for the physical exams to be conducted. This information was emailed to the selectman's office.

- c. Safety Awareness Training - Previously the town has scheduled the safety awareness trainings through our insurance company. This has not happened in some time. Currently the fire chiefs and training officers will bring up a safety moment during their monthly meetings and when reminders are needed for a specific situation. All safety techniques are refreshed during recertifications and department trainings. The fire chiefs have asked that the Town contact the insurance company to provide a safety training during the evening or weekend for the volunteers to attend in order to be compliant with the insurance companies requirements. This was emailed to the selectman's office.
 - d. VFIS Newsletter and sign-up - All departments are aware and either have signed up for the training or will be addressing with the training officer over the next week.
 - e. John Sharpe, First Selectman, and Jamie Seney have been contacted in regards to the Firehouse Software. We are hoping to get Jamie as an user as well as find out details on cancelling the contract early soon.
 - f. Voting Fax Line Costs - Thompson Hill fax is being paid for by the town. East Thompson pays \$30/month. Quinebaug is waiting for their next bill to get an amount. This information was sent to Orla and First Selectman.
 - g. Workers Comp Claims - All fire chiefs in attendance received the updates on the Workman's Comp Claim Protocol.
4. BOF Update - No updates at this time
5. Review of Recommendations Synopsis - The future of the FAC was discussed. All were in favor for continuing the committee as it seems to be helpful with communication between the town and the departments. Most items on the recommendations synopsis are being taken care of by the departments at the officer meetings. They are asked to give it time before the changes can be seen. They have given an example of the time that is needed by explaining that they have spent the last 4 meetings to update 1 SOP and will need another 1-2 to

finalize it. The FAC, at this point, will be focused on the budget as well as community outreach and education.

6. Other Business -

- a. New Alternative member for QVFD will be Justine Gendreau
- b. Matt Grauer suggested a hands on table at the Community Day in October 2019. Recommendations from the chiefs included an obstacle course, a walk through house for younger kids, gear demonstrations, etc. It was also mentioned to do something similar in the high school as a recruitment tool. Justine Gendreau was going to reach out to the school and see if they would be interested the week before prom instead of the mock car crash.
- c. Live Burn is on Saturday March 30 at 7am.
- d. After budgets are finalized it is discussed to have someone from Woodstock come and discuss their volunteer fire department model to the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen before the FAC does their presentation.
- e. Eversource is still planning on meeting with the volunteer firefighters. A date and time will be discussed with the training officers at the next officers meeting.
- f. Next meeting is Thursday April 25th at 7:00pm at Community Fire Department

7. Adjourn at 20:22

- a. Motion to Adjourn by Steve Bodreau
- b. Second by Kyle Cimochoowski
- c. Aye - 5 Nay - 0