

BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
October 6, 2020

Minutes of October 6, 2020 Meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission. The meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission convened at 08:32 hours via Zoom meeting with Commissioners Bond, Perkinson, Sheehey, McLaughlin, and Hills. Chief Locke, BC Libby, Fire Marshal Barry Simays, Assistant Fire Marshal Chris Franzen, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney were also present.

Meeting End Time

Meeting end time set for 09:00 by motion from Commissioner Perkinson and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey.

Public Comment

No members of general public present.

Review and Accept Minutes from July Meeting

With no comments or corrections a movement to accept minutes as written was made by Commissioner McLaughlin seconded by Commissioner Sheehey.

Chief's Oral Report

Chief Locke started by welcoming back Commissioner McLaughlin who has been reappointed following Commissioner Sweeney's resignation.

The following was an update sent by Chief Locke to the Commission prior to the meeting:

Fleet – The new Ambulance 1 has been placed into service and the former truck has been rebranded as Ambulance 4 at Station 4. We will be selling the former reserve ambulance shortly. We also placed into service a new, electric car for the Fire Marshal's office. This is a new capability and allows our staff to travel to inspections in a City branded vehicle instead of a personal car. We are still awaiting the arrival of a new utility truck as well as a truck for the Fire Marshal.

Personnel – We currently have seven vacancies and several more out on long term injury. Four of the vacancies are due to retirements, one is a long term leave of absence and two are resignations. We have made offers of employment to seven individuals who will begin the recruit class on October 5, 2020. As you know, DC Collette recently retired and we cannot fill his position permanently due to budget concerns. I have appointed BC Ruggles as the interim Operations Chief until we are allowed to fill the position. Having this number of vacancies is challenging for the staff.

Budget – We are about to close on the first quarter of FY21. This is a very lean year and we are monitoring both revenues and expenses closely. I fear the remainder of the year is going to be a challenge. Our overtime for staffing is being hit hard with the vacancies as well as COVID emergency leave.

Grant – The new Plymo-Vent exhaust system is currently being installed. Work has been completed at two of the stations and the remaining work will be completed in the coming week. A federal grant paid for 90% of the project.

3rd Ambulance – The plan remains to hire six additional personnel in March of 2021 for the third ambulance. We are currently focusing on purchasing the equipment and supplies to make this happen. We expect the new ambulance to be in service in July/August of 2021.

Paramedic Class – We have three members enrolled in the VTC paramedic class. This is exciting as we found federal money to cover almost the entire tuition. This is a \$54,000 grant.

Training Site – Bids closed this week on an RFP to construct a small training site at McNeil using conex boxes. We anticipate having this completed later this fall. This is an exciting opportunity for us.

Chief Locke clarified for Commissioner McLaughlin our current staffing count is 83 members and with the additional 6 in March for the new ambulance we will be at 89 members. Following the March hire there will be 3 more members hired in September 2021 to help fulfill the numbers passed by voters to create 9 new positions making a grand total of 92.

Monday, October 5th City Council met to discuss the open burning ordinances. While a decision has not yet been made to change the ordinance, the department is trying to prepare for what the process would be if the change is moved forth. Chief Locke has different ideas and he will work with command staff to create a plan. Commissioners discussed pros and cons to the requirements and processes.

Old Business/New Business

- Review of the 406 S Winooski Avenue Appeal- A Time of Sale on a multi-unit dwelling that was intended to become single family again. Violation appeal was settled between Chief and City Attorney before it had to become a Commission appeal. Commissioner Perkinson wanted to remind the Commission and staff that violations can fall through the cracks if the Commission doesn't act quickly with responding to appeals.
- Commissioners Bond followed up to confirm the public meeting guidelines were received by everyone. Commissioner McLaughlin asked for a copy to be sent to him.

Adjourn

With nothing further the meeting adjourned 08:55 by motion of Commissioner Bond and seconded by Commissioner McLaughlin.