

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 31, 2014
FINAL MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Board members present: John Kieley, Gail Cromwell, George Willard

Also present: George Clark, Fire Chief; Mark Salisbury, Will Wildes, Fire Engineers; Ken Caisse, Fire Captain;
Public: Dick Benotti; Sandy Benotti; Connie Kieley; Ted Petro

Call to order by Cromwell at 7:00 p.m.

Special Meeting regarding EMT coverage of the Town: Cromwell stated that this special meeting had been called to discuss EMT coverage of the Town and insurance issues regarding the response of Firefighters and EMTs.

Cromwell explained that both Clark and Kieley had contacted Property-Liability Insurance Trust (PLIT), the town's liability insurance carrier and spoken to Ron O'Keefe. O'Keefe had informed both that the firefighters and EMTs personal vehicle insurance would cover the Firefighter vehicles in case of an accident when responding to a call and that PLIT would cover \$500.00 of the Firefighters/EMTs deductible as long as an accident had not been caused by "willful misconduct, gross negligence or operation of vehicles under the influence of drugs or alcohol". Clark informed the Board that he has had reports of a responder doing 90 miles/hour on RT 45 and running stop signs. The law allows a maximum of 15 mph over the speed limit and requires a responder to drive "with due care". Clark stated that in his opinion this type of action is "willful misconduct" and asked if the Board would agree with that. Kieley agreed that that type of response is misconduct.

There was discussion of the Fire Department by-laws and standard operating guidelines (SOG). Cromwell stated that she had reviewed a set of by-laws and standard operating procedures. Cromwell asked if there had been any changes to by-laws. Kieley clarified that the Board is not interested in being involved in the organizational business of the FD. Clark explained that there have been minor changes to the by-laws. The standard operating procedures were changed to standard operating guidelines and are promulgated by the Chief. One of the guidelines requires that responders report to the fire station to obtain personal protective equipment (PPE) and apparatus.

Discussion started about an individual who has recently been put on probation by the Fire Department's Professional Standards Committee. Clark explained that the individual had been spoken to several times about following the "SOG"s, particularly about responding to the station and continued to ignore them. Clark presented the information to the PSC and after meeting they made the decision for probation. Will Wildes explained that the Fire Engineers looked into the decision, and after a meeting with the PSC, which could give limited information due to the confidential nature of their meeting (per FD by-laws), the Fire Engineers determined that the decision for probation was valid. Wildes then stated that that was all the information they could give. Kieley stated that the FD, Rescue Squad and BOS all have an interest in getting EMTs to a scene as quickly as possible, this action removes an EMT from responding. Clark told the Board that there are currently two people who will be taking the National Registry written exam, 3 people who have completed an EMT class and need to take the practical exam and the registry exam and 2 people who are currently taking an EMT class. Ken Caisse told the Board that the FD has spoken to the other EMTs and asked them to pick up the

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slack. The Board was concerned about responses to medical calls with the individual out on probation. Mark Salisbury asked the Board if they were suggesting putting one person above the rules and stated that if that is the case the FD might as well throw out the rules. The Board members were in agreement that they were not trying to put one person above the rules and Kieley stated that the Board does not intend to micro-manage the Fire Department. There were comments from members of the public and Salisbury re-iterated his statement about putting one person above the rules. Kieley then said that Salisbury made a good point, if you don't have discipline you don't have anything. The Board is not advocating a change in the decision, but a determination needs to be made on what can be done in the short term. Kieley also stated that the Board feels it has a responsibility to provide the best safety experience possible for Towns people. Kieley asked if Clark and the Fire Engineers could speak to other towns about responding mutual aid and asked about the possibility of finding EMTs who could cover Temple on a temporary basis for a fee. Salisbury asked where the funds would come from and then stated that if the Town could afford to pay EMTs during the period of one individual's probation they may find that the EMTs in town would want to be paid. Clark reminded everyone that the ambulance is taxed at the same time as the Rescue Squad.

D. Benotti suggested that the Forestry Truck be used for the rescue instead of the "bread" truck. Clark said he is planning on re-configuring the trucks to put the EMT gear on the Forestry. Clark also reminded the Board that the Forestry was purchased with grant funds as a "wild fire" water resource so the department has to be careful about the primary usage.

Clark and the Fire Engineers agreed to look into mutual aid for rescue calls and keep the Board informed. They will also provide the office with updated by-laws. They were asked to present a plan about EMT coverage. There were comments from members of the public that they appreciated the fast response from our EMTs and were concerned about the new rule.

Move by Kieley to adjourn, second by Cromwell, and so voted at 8:20 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Debra Harling

~ Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2014 at 5:30 pm ~