

**Town of Ridgefield
Fire Commission Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2011
Unrevised/Unapproved**

Commissioners Attending:

Rudy Marconi
Barbara Manners
Di Masters
Andrew Bodner
Maureen Kozlark

Representing RFD:

Chief Heather Burford
Assistant Chief Kevin Tappe
Deputy Emergency Manager Dick Aarons
RVFD Chief Tim Pambianchi
RVFD Assist. Chief Mike Gabbianelli

Meeting Called to order by Commission Chair Rudy Marconi at 6:00 pm.

NOTE: This meeting was conducted at Town Hall, 400 Main Street, for the convenience of the BOS that had a scheduled meeting there at 7:30 pm. Fire Commission Meetings in 2012 will be convened quarterly at the Catoonah Street Fire House. It is the express intention of the Fire Commission and the Fire Chiefs that the meetings feature discussions of critical public safety issues and present opportunities for the Commissioners to familiarize themselves with Fire/EMS/EM equipment, personnel and technologies.

Additional Agenda Item

Mrs. Masters moved to add an agenda item to consider a request from a Ridgefield resident for a tax credit recognizing his volunteer activity with the Newtown Dive Rescue Team. Mrs. Manners seconded. The motion to add the agenda item carried unanimously.

Fire Department Capital Budget

Chief Burford presented to the Commission proposed Five Year Capital Budget Plan and Operating Budget preview for FY 2012. (See attachments.)

In general discussion:

Chief Burford said **Car 6** (a Jeep Cherokee used as a medic fly car and fire marshal support vehicle) is scheduled for replacement. The need is for a large cab pickup type vehicle that can move equipment as well as provide the transportation tasks above. At Mr. Marconi's suggestion, Chief Burford said she would have Chief Tappe look into the possibility of a military surplus vehicle. The budgeted cost is \$36,500.

The department is in the final stage of its four-year **SCBA upgrade**. The budgeted cost is \$62,285. The department will have a total of 41 NFPA compliant packs as the program concludes.

An current-generation **EMS Cardiac Monitor** budgeted at \$35,00 will replace an older, less capable, less reliable unit. The new monitor includes the latest cardiac response protocols.

Firefighting Equipment budgeted at \$21,700 includes two hose nozzles, turnout gear and replacement of five-inch hose line. Chief Burford, in response to questions, said that hose is replaced when it fails proscribed NFPA pressure tests.

Computer Aided Dispatch software, hardware and system engineering is budgeted at \$59,500. This project improves medical dispatch services and optimizes real time dispatch operations relative to call location, and equipment/staff availability. In general discussion the desirability of unified police/fire dispatch was explored. Chief Burford said the Fire Department continues to be willing to explore the concept with the Police Department and other interested parties. She also stated that out-year communication needs-planning is vitally important to the town in light of rapidly changing technologies and frequency congestion. The need for intra agency interoperability will become a large issue while the state attempts to cut back on the number of PSAPs in Connecticut.

The 30-year-old **Station 2 in-building generator** must be replaced for the safety of the assigned firefighters. During recent power outages, the existing generator pushed carbon monoxide levels to the danger point inside the building. \$27,500 is budgeted for the replacement.

Station 2 Unfinished Second Floor is budgeted for a \$38,000 completion to provide sleeping, study and storage space. The improvement includes sheet rock, electrical wiring, and HVAC.

Operating Budget

Chief Burford said this year's operating budget is largely on track. The internal training program led by Chief Tappe and the Fire Marshal inspection fee program are both saving money for the department. (See Attached.)

Emergency Management Capital Budget

Chief Burford and DEMD Aarons discussed the need to make improvements to the Parks & Recreation Facility at 195 Danbury Road so it can serve as the primary reception center/emergency shelter for town residents. Two recent town-wide, eight-day power outages demonstrated the need for a facility that can provide showers for over 1,000 persons daily and overnight sheltering for at least 200 persons. To be approved by the Red Cross as an emergency shelter, a facility must meet structural, sanitation, food preparation/storage, HVAC and continuous electrical power requirements. Currently, no town building meets all these requirements. The town facility that can be upgraded most economically and provide the best access for federal/state emergency support services and central access to residents and town employees is the 195 Danbury Road, P&R facility.

The Emergency Management Capital Budget will include a request for installation of a generator, automatic switch, fuel tank, pad, sound/environmental enclosure, and internal building wiring. Currently a generator committee is consulting with town engineers, equipment vendors, CL&P and the Red Cross to develop the final specification. Details will be available in January.

Currently, there is no working kitchen at 195 Danbury Road, although kitchen-space is available. A study for installation of hardware for the shelter kitchen at 195 Danbury Road is complete. The capital request will be for \$26,000 for the installation of a range/oven, fire hood, preparation table and 48 cubic foot refrigerator. The proposed shelter kitchen design has been approved by Health

Director Ed Briggs and meets Red Cross standards. Town engineer Charlie Fisher will review the specifications and prepare the RFPs.

Mr. Bodner urged that the generator acquisition and installation costs be carefully scrutinized. Chief Burford and DEMD Aarons assured Mr. Bodner that the specification would ultimately be prepared by the Town Engineer and put out to bid in the usual manner. DEMD Aarons suggested that the Generator committee would present a technical briefing for the Commission if the Commission desires.

Tax Assistance Request

RVFD Chiefs Pambianchi and Gabbianelli, in response to questions from the Commissioners, explained that the current tax credit is granted to members of the RVFD based on completion of mandated levels of training and participation in the department activities including emergency response. They stated there is no practical way for a member of another department to meet the RVFD participation requirements other than to join the Ridgefield Department.

The Commissioners voted unanimously to decline the request for tax credit.

Approval of 2012 Calendar

Mr. Bodner moved to accept the 2012 Commission Calendar (see attached). Mrs. Masters seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bodner moved to approve the minutes of the 13 July 2011 Commission meeting. Mrs. Masters seconded the motion. The motion carried. Mr. Marconi, Mr. Bodner and Mrs. Manners voted aye; Mrs. Manners and Mrs. Kozlark abstained.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard N. Aarons,
Deputy Emergency Manager
Fire Commission Secretary