

**MINUTES**  
**Litchfield Board of Fire Commissioners & EMS**  
**October 12, 2023 – 5:00 PM**  
**Litchfield Fire Department**  
**258 West St ▪ Litchfield CT**

**Members Present:** John Campbell, Sean Fogarty, Jack Hodges, Acting Fire Marshal Dave Rogers.

**Members Absent:** Michael Castelli, Jon Torrant.

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Chairman J. Campbell opened the meeting at 5:01 pm.

**2. Public Requests/Comments**

None.

**3. Appoint Dave Rogers to Fire Marshal**

J. Hodges moved to appoint Acting Fire Marshal Dave Rogers to Fire Marshal effective 11/13/23, S. Fogarty seconded, there was no discussion and vote to approve was unanimous. D. Rogers must also be appointed by the Borough of Bantam.

**4. Appoint Patrick Scully to Deputy Fire Marshal**

J. Campbell read letter dated 10/12/23 stating P. Scully has the full support of this board to be appointed to Deputy Fire Marshal. Letter must be submitted by P. Scully in order to take the Fire Code Inspector Examination and the Fire Investigator Exam. S. Fogarty moved to appoint P. Scully to Deputy Fire Marshal, J. Hodges seconded, there was no discussion and vote to approve was unanimous.

**5. Commission Requests**

None.

**6. Approval of Minutes – September 14, 2023**

J. Hodges moved to approve the 09/14/23 minutes, S. Fogarty seconded, there was no discussion and approval was unanimous.

**7. Budgets – Department, Capital & Operating Budgets**

Capital – LVA has submitted a federal grant application for a new \$2,500,000.00 building. If awarded, building must be constructed on town owned land and a committee will be formed. LVA did 1,435 calls last year and with town's aging population, calls are expected to increase. Building is for capital year 2024-25. J. Campbell noted, in the commission's opinion, building does not belong in capital but they were instructed by two selectmen to place it in capital. With concern on the vehicle being used to do it with, S. Fogarty moved to support a new LVA building, J. Hodges seconded, there was no discussion and approval was unanimous.

a. East Litchfield

J. Campbell read memo from N. Boccio stating two bids were received for the apparatus bay exhaust removal system. Bid was awarded to Air Cleaning Specialist of New England for Technical Specifications stated in the Scope of Work at \$18,260.00 and for Option #1 at \$6,120.00 with a total of \$24,380.00. J. Hodges moved to approve the \$24,380.00 exhaust removal system bid, S. Fogarty seconded, there was no discussion and approval was unanimous.

b. Appoint Capital Committee Member Rep

J. Hodges moved to appoint S. Fogarty as the Capital Committee Rep, J. Campbell seconded, there was no discussion and approval vote was unanimous.

c. Radio Grant Request

R. Litwin submitted a letter to this commission and to the selectmen regarding the \$1,500,000.00 radio grant town is applying for. Radios were original scheduled for 2031-32 but has to be moved up. Radios and SCBAs need to be a priority.

More Capital – Of their five projects, LFD still has two projects left to finish this year. There is \$93,000.00 remaining for the completion. In 2019, LFD 50 KW generator was quoted at \$44,000. It is now \$82,000.00. Bantam will need a 100 KW, three phase generator. Commission discussed federal grants to replace generators that are at least 15 years old available through Emergency Management. P. Gibbs will be contacted. E. Litchfield radio tower project was not completed when the roof was redone. They are currently running off portables. Their base radio tower will include 3 antennas for VHF, UHF and 800 MHz at a cost of \$40,000.00. S. Fogarty moved to support the capital projects for 1<sup>st</sup> priority - LFD building finalization for \$90,000.00, 2<sup>nd</sup> - LFD generator for \$92,000.00, 3<sup>rd</sup> – E. Litchfield radio tower for \$40,000.00 and 4<sup>th</sup> – LVA new building for \$2,500,000.00. J. Hodges seconded. Commission discussion again noted LVA's building does not belong in a capital request. The vote for approval was unanimous.

## **8. Committee Reports**

None.

## **9. Fire Marshal Report**

For the month of September - there were 21 inspection activities, 2 fire investigations, 1 blasting permit, 15 open burning permits and two complaints about open burning. D. Rogers now has Open Burning Certification. FM office is still waiting on quotes for the next Fire Pond. Fire Prevention at Center School on 10/10 and at LIS on 10/12 went very well. At the October Litchfield Fire Company meeting, most of the officers are the same as last year. D. Rogers was reelected as Fire Chief and Geoffrey Houser was welcomed as a new lieutenant and Kathy Van Omer as the new secretary.

## **10. Update on Department Physicals**

- a) Bantam FD due in April
- b) E. Litchfield FD due in May
- c) Northfield FD due in June
- d) Litchfield FD due in November
- e) LVA due in November

D. Rogers will ask L. Bachetti to change department rosters from yes/no to date physical performed.

**11. Any EMS Business that needs to be discussed**

None.

**12. Old Business**

D. Morosani from the Recruiting and Retention Committee gave an overview of the proposed changes to the Litchfield First Responder Incentive Plan. In May, plan was presented to the selectman. Since pensions were implemented in 1990, they have lost half their value due to inflation. Proposed changes are for accrual from \$15/month per year of service to \$35/month with future reevaluations to be done at 5 year intervals. Accruable pension years will increase from 30 to 45 years. Current active First Responders who have already completed more than 30 years of service will be credited with additional years at \$35/year rate and benefits will continue to accrue up to the new 45 year maximum. A new pay-per-call incentive plan will give Officers \$30 /call for up to 100 per year with a \$3,000/year maximum and non-Officers \$25/call for up to 100 per year with a \$2,500/year maximum. First Responders shall elect whether to receive benefits as an annual lump-sum 1099 payment or as a credit against their Town of Litchfield tax bill. Additional privileges will be free Town Beach access for First Responders families, free burn permits, 50% off Town Recycling Center fees and formalized head-of-the line privileges for Town sponsored affordable housing.

Commission discussed there may be legal issues and limits to amount of upvalue allowed for pensions. Plan should move forward to an actuary for an itemized breakdown and then to negotiations for implementation in 2024-25. J. Hodges moved for the commission to support the proposed changes and updates to the pension plan, S. Fogarty seconded, there was no further discussion and vote to approve was unanimous.

**13. New Business**

Only one bid came in for Engine One at slightly more than \$1,000,000.00. There is only \$850,000.00 in capital. Specs can't be updated since a commercial cab will increase the truck length by 4-5 feet. Bid went back out. LFD has two severe roof leaks. The first selectman and two others came last week to see damage. There is a 2 inch gap between two peaks that was filled in with silicone. It has been too many years and neither the builder or manufacture will repair it. They are waiting for an estimate for emergency repair. Cost is expected to be under \$5,000.00.

**14. Adjournment**

J. Hodges moved to adjourn at 6:08 pm, S. Fogarty seconded and vote was unanimous.

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**John Campbell, Chairman**  
**Board of Fire Commissioners & EMS**

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**Date**