Burlington Fire Department

136 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont 05401-8378
(802) 864-4554 • (802) 658-2700 (TTY)
Business Fax (802) 864-5945 • Central Station Fax (802) 865-5387

MEETING OF THE BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION

AGENDA

Wednesday, May 25, 2022
8:15 am

Conference Room
Fire Station #1
Join Via Zoom Option:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86481799430?pwd=NjdCQ0VOKzlwQTVvT1dWRkx0VU5nUT09

Call in for audio:
Dial: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 864 8179 9430
Passcode: 476865

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1) Public Comment

2) Review and Accept Minutes from April Commission Meetings.

3) Chief's Oral Report

4) Old Business/New Business

5) Executive Session- Annual Review of Chief Engineer

Steven Locke
Chief Engineer

cc: Fire Commission, All Stations, Union President, Clerk/Treas. Office, Command Staff

AGENDA AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE MEDIA FORMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. FOR DISABILITY ACCESS INFORMATION CALL THE BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT AT 864-4552 (TTY # 865-7142).

BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
May 25, 2022

Minutes of May 25, 2022 Meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission. The meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission convened at 08:16 hours via Zoom and in person with Commissioners Bond, McLaughlin, Sheehey, Perkinson, and Chapman. Chief Locke, Deputy Chief Libby, Deputy Chief Lachance, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney were also present.

Public Comment
No members of public to comment.

Review and Accept Minutes April Commission Meetings
Movement to accept minutes as written by Commissioner Sheehey and seconded by Commissioner Chapman.

Chief's Oral Report
The following was an update sent by Chief Locke to the Commission prior to the meeting:

Awards Night – Thank you for your support of the awards night. It was a very nice way to recognize the staff and I expect that type of event will be the new norm when it comes to, "commissioning" our members. It was so nice to see families be able to share in the experience. Many thanks to the staff involved in planning this event.

Personnel – Recruit class 22-1 started in early April and are progressing well. Unfortunately one of the candidates resigned the first week, but sometimes it is better to realize this is not the right job before a significant invest is made. This is the second class being conducted in a more strenuous format, and we appreciate the efforts being made to raise the bar. Nice job by FF Bake and FF Carson for leading these efforts. In April Tyler Mitchell transitioned to disability retirement and Michael LaBombard was promoted to Lieutenant.

Retirement – On May 27, Battalion Chief Grenon will work his last shift and then transition into retirement. Jared has spent almost 23 years with Department including the last seven as a chief officer. Jared has led many of our recent technology upgrades including the scheduling software and new RMS system. We wish Jared the best of luck.

Hiring/Promotions – We have opened the application process with the intention of starting another recruit class in the fall. At this point we have three open positions. We will be holding interviews for two Battalion Chief position's on May 24. We have posted the reading list for a November Lieutenant test and expect to run a captains process in March of 2023. BC Ruggles is hosting a promotional preparation program that will last several months.

COVID/Injuries – The following two sentences are identical to my last report; unfortunately these are still the same. We continue to struggle with several employees out on injury or emergency leave. As you can imagine this impacts all of our other employees who have had to work a tremendous amount of overtime. We appreciate everyone's efforts to fill these vacant shifts.

EMS Chief – We expect our new EMS Chief to begin in mid to late July. While we had hoped he would begin earlier, we are waiting for the FY 23 budget to be finalized before a start date is set.

Overtime – Overtime continues to be a major challenge within the Department and on the staff. In a normal year employees work on average 12,000 hours of overtime. However, in FY 22 that number will top 25,000 hours. This has been a major frustration among the members who are often required to work mandatory shifts during their normal days off. We appreciate these efforts and understand this rate is not sustainable.

Fleet – We have certainly had our challenges keeping the fleet in service as well. While our Public Works staff is working hard to keep the fleet on the road. Staffing shortages and the delay getting parts, often means a unit is out of service much

longer than it would have been previously. We have been able to keep companies in service with the exception of a couple times where we were down to two ambulances in service.

New Apparatus – We have signed the contract to purchase three new fire trucks which will replace Engine 3, Engine 6 and Ladder 4. The current Engine 1 will become Engine 6 and one of the new pumps will become Engine 1. The delivery time is approximately 18 months. We also have a new ambulance on order which is expect later this year. Once in-service we will retain two spare ambulances.

Radio System – The recently passed capital bond included approximately 3.5 million for an upgraded public safety radio system. Lieutenant Wilson is leading this project which is complex, but will increase our radio coverage once completed.

Station Alerting – Also in the capital bond is approximately $500,000 for new station alerting software. DC LaChance is leading the project and we are working with a vendor on the design. The new system will include the ability to notify personnel by assignment (wouldn't alarm in an individual bedroom if company not on the run) and would have a computerized voice making the initial dispatch. This saves time for the dispatcher and allow for greater consistency of the message.

Budget – We are approaching the end of the FY 22 fiscal year and we are working hard not to end in deficit. I have met with the CAO to warn her that this may not be possible, but that we are making every effort to balance the budget. Approximately 150k of unexpected expenditures are the cause of the potential overage.

FY 23 Budget – We have submitted our FY 23 budget and had our budget hearing with council last week. This will be another very lean budget year.

Regional Dispatch – We continue to participate with the regional dispatch project and believe the project that has been discussed for the past 53 years could be operational next summer! The CCPSA needs approximately 3 million in monies to fund capital costs before we can launch. Currently we have about half this amount, but the Vermont legislature just earmarked 6.5 million to be used through a competitive grant process to support the creation of regional communications centers. We are hopeful our project will receive the remaining funding.

DC Libby gave additional details on how the department tried to save money on our purchases of Engine 1 and Engine 3. Costs have continuously gone up since initial pricing last July and when our funding was approved in March. Prepayment discounts and the sale price of current trucks were factored in to the saving possibilities.

Commissioner Perkinson asked what other communities are participating in the regional dispatch effort. Chief Locke answered South Burlington where it would be located, along with Colchester, Williston, Winooski, and Burlington.

Commissioner Chapman asked if Chief Locke thought it would help if the fire department would have any relief with staffing if there was help from volunteers. Chief Locke didn't think so, and explained we even had additional staffing positions created a few years ago to help alleviate some of the overtime. It temporarily helped, but the overall trend is up and he is trying to research what some of the causes may be.

Old Business/New Business

- Commissioner Bond asked if the new 08:15 time worked or if we should go back to 08:30 Commissioners agreed to go back to 08:30 start time.
- Next year plan for the Chief's annual review either during April meeting, or a late May meeting instead or in addition to June meeting. Meghan will make note in drafted 2023 schedule.

Executive Session

Pursuant to Title 1, Section 313 of the Vermont Statues, upon the affirmative vote a majority of the members present, a motion to go into executive session is carried to discuss matters where general public knowledge would place the Department at a substantial disadvantage. Motion was made by Commissioner McLaughlin,

seconded by Commissioner Sheehey with all in favor. The Commission went into executive session at 08:44 to discuss personnel matters and the review of Chief Engineer.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 09:45 am.

DRAFT

Burlington Fire Commission
Wednesday, May 25, 2022 08:15 AM
136 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME	EMAIL
Linda Sheehey	Lsheehey@gmail.com
[illegible] Dick Libby	dlibby@burlingtonvt.gov
Monica Chapman	monica.puro@gmail.com
Ashley Bond	~~Ashley~~ abond@burlingtonvt.gov
Steven Locke	
Meghan Sweeney	MSweeney@burlingtonvt.gov
MICHAEL LACHANCE	MLACHANCE@BURLINGTONVT.GOV
KEVIN MCLAUGHLIN	KMclaughlin@BurlingtonVT.GOV
Jake Perkinson	jperkinson@Burlgtonvt.gov

Please note that this sign-in sheet and any information provided on it will be maintained as a public record and may be subject to

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