



**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF NEWTOWN**

December 18, 2023
Regular Meeting
Botsford Fire (moved due to Budget Presentation)
315 South Main St.

Meeting Opened By: Pat Reilly, Chairman at 7:00 pm

Commissioners Present: Pat Reilly, Brian Sharnick, Jay Nezvesky, Tim Whelan, Ron Bolmer, & Jeff Dugan
Absent: Tom Fitzgerald
Chiefs –Chief Murphy,
Marshals- Rich Frampton, David Ober & Steve Murphy

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIAENCE

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS: None

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: Ron Bolmer made a motion to accept the Minutes from October 16 and Tim Whelan made a motion to accept the Minutes from 11/27/23 regular meeting and Jeff Dugan seconded both motions, Motions Passed

COMMUNICATIONS- From: Kevin Cragin- Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation INC.- see attached
Pat emailed to all Commissioners and Chiefs.

To: First Selectman- Pat sent an email indicating the issues with the new radio system and equipment. 26 radios that are non-compliant, Radio Function AEP (Fire Fighter Emergency button) not working, Pagers need to be reprogramed etc. He said he would be happy to help and he was going to reach out to Maureen Will to get a project punch list from the project. Pat will follow up with him.

Tim Whelan said he went to a radio meeting the other day with Maureen and Kerry. Tim said they went over a punch list and he conveyed issues with portables, emergency buttons etc. and feels that they will be addressed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- Brian Sharnick asked to add NH&L purchase 1 set of gear to new business-

REPORTS

Fire Marshal – Rich Frampton presented reports for November and December.-See attached

Purchasing Agent – David Ober reported:

- Hose Order has been placed- Failed Hose & Budgeted Hose 2023-2024
- Heating Oil for Hawleyville FD is now delivered by Dime Oil at \$ contracted price of \$2.94 per gallon .79 less than emergency delivery from last month.

Combined Chiefs-

- Steve Murphy reported that the chiefs (and Ambulance) met last week, discussed the frequencies and the changes that will be made at the next reprogramming.
- After the meeting Steve reminded the Chiefs that they were supposed to go back to their company's at their monthly meeting and respond to the board about responding to ambulance calls, lift assists etc. and the unanimous consensus is that they would like to go back to the way it was- unconscious, unresponsive & car accidents.

- Pat will reach out to Ambulance
- Steve said he has noticed a big difference in the amount of calls this past month. Tim and Pat noted that the Ambulance respond to over 3000 calls per year, does a great job and has many new members and seems like they are less dependent on the FD.

STANDING COMMITTEES

PPE & Policy – No Report

Radio/Hydrant – Rich Frampton reported that Mr. Spath on Dusty Lane had voluntarily put a dry hydrant at the end of Dusty Lane, we gave him the fitting and Botsford tested the dry hydrant. It seems the pipe has floated up and needs to be addressed by Mr. Spath. Once the pipe has been rectified the FD can retest it.

Jeff Dugan had no further report.

Truck-

- Tim Whelan reported that 331 was sent out to Tracy's Garage, it was found to have a rotted relief valve and front suction valve need to be rebuilt, this is going to be a very costly repair. (CIP replacement year 2026-2027) Hawleyville is looking at specs and pricing, the BOF truck committee feels this is important to see if CIP numbers are in line with actual apparatus replacement costs.
- Tim Whelan also reported NH&L has modified the 114 refurb spec; the truck committee will review and make a recommendation to the full board at our next meeting.

Budget- Defer to the end of the meeting-

OLD BUSINESS-

New Radio System- Already talked about under communications-

Length of Service Program- Sub Committee –Pat Reilly, Ron Bolmer, Jeff Dugan, Chris Gindraux (NH&L), Steve Murphy. Discussed changes from the town through the provider- (administrative vs firefighting member) Pat Reilly made a motion that after the sub-committee reviewed the changes that were put forward they all feel they do not want to change the parameters of the original documents and want to keep thing the way they are. Tim Whelan seconded.

The Commission feels that administrative members put many hours of time in as well and firefighting members that is just as important in keeping the fire company's running as the firefighters do at fire scenes and training.

The motion passed unanimously.

Pat Reilly sent an email to Patrice Fahey- explaining reasoning in keeping documents as is.

Capital Item Change- Steve Murphy (Dodgingtown) is requesting a change to capital item \$9000.00 to Refurb light tower –upgrade to LED- This light tower is not eligible for the upgrade(still in working condition but not LED) so they would like to use the funds for a Thermal Imaging Camera, a thermal imaging Scott face mask and a Command Board.

Tim Whelan made a motion to allow Dodgingtown to change their budget item request, Jeff Dugan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Brian Sharnick requested to purchase one set of gear for a fully certified member. He had borrowed a set of gear from a member that went on leave and is coming back. Brian made a motion to approve NH&L to purchase 1 set of gear, Jeff Dugan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NOTED: Brian also noted that in about 18- 20 months the 26 sets of gear NH&L purchased 10 years through a grant is coming to expire in 2025.

Jay Nezvesky presented (Power Point) the 2024-2025 Budget.

Jay Nezvesky made a motion to accept the 2024-2025 Budget as presented \$1,706,912.00 (14% increase) due to additional budget items needing to be added back into budget. Pat Reilly seconded the motion.

Jay went item by item, department by department and explained different aspects of the budget.

Jay and the budget committee needed to increase many items since there have not been increases in several years such as hose testing, maintenance of stations, software and such.

Everyone reviewed the presented budget, asked their questions and agreed it should go forward as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

Pat thanked the budget committee for their hard work.

David Ober, Purchasing Agent for the BOFC wanted to touch on several issues he sees going forward.

- Response Improvement Plan- The budget has \$52,000.00 to reimburse members for responses for the year (calls, work details & drills). Last quarter just over \$24,000.00 was paid out just for one quarter. This is no different than last year- The Paid Driver Program carried the deficiency of the Response Improvement Plan until the last quarter of the Budget year when Bob Tait had to transfer approximately \$45,000.00.
- PPE/ Non-Recurring Account- We started with \$50,000.00 that was reduced by \$18,000.00 to pay for expenses approved by the BOFC from the prior budget year. Finance was able to add an additional \$50,000.00 in September and since then the BOFC has approved almost another \$40,000.00 for PPE since the start of this budget year. The money allocated for fire fighter gear along with the amount approved leaves approximately \$30,000.00 or less remaining.
- Going forward the BOFC should require 3 quotes/sole source/ state bid when approving a purchase, a sales order with the 3 quotes attached should be given to the Purchasing Agent to issue a P.O. or encumber the funds to lock in the expenditure within 30 days.

David also wanted to note to the budget committee that next budget year (2024-2025) we have to replace 42 SCBA Bottles (Due to out of service January 2025) that equates to about \$63,000.00 at \$1500.00 / bottle.

Announcements-

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Tim Whelan and seconded by Jay Nezvesky and the motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Schreiner, BOFC Clerk



NEWTOWN-SANDY HOOK
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, INC.

December 1, 2023

Dear 12/14/12 Emergency Responder,

The Foundation would like to take the opportunity to remind you of the mental health and wellness benefits available to you and your family through the Sandy Hook School Support Fund at the Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation. The Distribution Committee in charge of such decisions voted that no monetary changes would take place for mental health treatments in 2024.

The Fund will provide payment (or reimbursement) of authorized **mental health** treatments totaling up to \$1,500 for **police, fire, and EMS staff who responded to the tragedy on 12/14/12** or in the days following. Immediate family members (spouse and children) who might be impacted by your response and involvement in 12/14/12 related activities are also eligible to receive a family cap of \$1,500 for mental health services (**a total max of \$1,500 for all family members**).

Additionally, the Distribution Committee reinstated payment (or reimbursement) of *Health & Wellness Activities* for all **police, fire, and EMS staff who responded to the tragedy on 12/14/12** or in the days following. Effective January 1, 2024 you are eligible to submit up to \$500 for Health & Wellness activities. Please refer to the attached FAQ's for a list of approved Health & Wellness expenses.

New Reimbursement Updates

- The Foundation has transitioned into an electronic payment method. Individuals enrolled in this method will receive reimbursements within 5 days. The Foundation will continue sending checks as well, but these will be processed bi-monthly.
 - Please contact the Foundation to enroll to receive payments electronically. (For information regarding enrollment, please see the attached FAQ's)

If you have any mental health reimbursements for 2023, please submit them as soon as possible. Questions regarding claims or eligibility should be directed to the Foundation 203-461-2233 or L.Connell@nshcf.org.

We appreciate the service that each of you have provided to the Newtown community and wish you all the best.

Most sincerely,

Lucie A. Connell, MPA
Executive Director
enclosure: FAQ's 2024

What documentation must I provide to have eligible expenses paid?

Itemized bills and/or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) that have your name, dates of service(s), the amount owed or paid, proof of payment if paid, the providers' name and billing address. **Photocopies of checks will not be accepted.**

For medication (Rx) reimbursement, a copy of the Rx and a receipt will need to be submitted. Preexisting conditions are **not covered** and **insurance must be the first** method of payment for any services, as applicable.

After insurance, the Foundation can cover up to \$175, \$200, \$250 per hour depending on your providers credentials (i.e. LCSWs, LMFTs, LCPs), psychologists, and psychiatrists. This includes EMDR, EFT/Tapping, and Equine Assisted Therapy. Please note these are above what is considered reasonable and customary by insurance companies).

All documentation will need to be submitted to the Foundation within **30 days** without EOB and up to **45 days** with EOB from the date of service. In order to preserve funds and adhere to the highest standards of accounting, the Foundation will have to close out the year by December 31st. If the Foundation receives invoices after December 31, 2024, the transaction will go towards your 2025 cap.

The Fund is the **final payor after utilization of insurance** and therefore we must receive verification of what is or is not being covered by your insurance. Even if your provider 'does not take insurance' you may have out of network benefits that we need to be able to determine before making payments. ***If you need assistance with insurance submissions, feel free to reach out to Lucie Connell or Clinical Manager of Human Services, Corrine Ofgang.***

In some cases, we may need an opinion written by a licensed medical or mental health professional that documents that the service(s) is/are a necessary part of treatment due to the impact of the loss on 12/14/12. Please note that this stipulation is in place in order to be compliant with IRS regulations governing non-profit organizations.

Where should I submit the information?

All information should be sent via email to lconnell@nshcf.org.

How long does it take to process my reimbursement?

The Foundation implemented an electronic payment method in 2021. This method guarantees that all reimbursements will:

- be safely deposited into your account within 5 days; minimize lost checks; provide you with detailed information pertaining to your reimbursement (*The Foundation will still process reimbursements by check, although this method will take place bi-monthly*).

How do I enroll to receive my reimbursements electronically?

Contact Lucie Connell at lconnell@nshcf.org or (203) 461-2233. You will need to provide your Account Number, Routing Number, and Contact Phone Number.

Please keep in mind that funds are not payouts to individuals. The limits are the most that the funds are able to contribute towards individual care at this time. Individuals who do not use the amount they are eligible for are not entitled to roll it forward into future years, receive a direct payment, or 'give' their amount to someone else. There are a finite amount of resources remaining and the limits have been determined based on average utilization and funds available in order to be as equitable as possible. It is expected that support will be available until **June 30, 2025**, but amounts may vary.

Please contact Lucie Connell, NSHCF Executive Director for further information.

Office of Victim Services (OVS): Families may access remaining funds they may have from the Office of Victim Services (OVS) if limits are reached through the Sandy Hook School Support Fund. OVS can be reached at 888-286-7347.

FIRE MARSHAL'S COMBINED MONTHLY TIME SUMMARY

CODE	CATEGORY	INCIDENTS	HOURS
A	FIRE CALLS	2	
B	FIRE INVESTIGATION	0	
C	FOLLOW UP INVEST.	0	
D	BUILDING & SITE		
	1. Building Inspections	22	
	2. Site Inspections	15	
	3. C.O. Inspections	6	
	4. Suppression & Dry Hyd	0	
	5. Tank Removals	1	
	6. Burn Permits	4	
	7. Fire Drills	1	
E	FOLLOW UP INSPECTIONS	3	
F	OFFICE	210	
G	COURT APPEARANCE	0	
H	PLAN REVIEWS	1	
I	TRAINING	8	
J	PURCHASING	95	
O	OTHER-Rich	1	
O	OTHER-Dave	5	
O	OTHER- Steve	0	
O	OTHER-Jamillynn	5	
	TOTAL	379	403.5

Rich	Run Fire Pump	1
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Dave	Run Fire Pump	3
	CT. Eye Care-14 church Hill	1
	Rankin- uniforms	1

Steve


Jami	Poster Contest	3
	Fire Prevention	1
	Fire Watch	

Nov-23



Marshal's Signature

FIRE MARSHAL'S COMBINED MONTHLY TIME SUMMARY

CODE	CATEGORY	INCIDENTS	HOURS
A	FIRE CALLS	2	
B	FIRE INVESTIGATION	0	
C	FOLLOW UP INVEST.	0	
D	BUILDING & SITE		
	1. Building Inspections	36	
	2. Site Inspections	17	
	3. C.O. Inspections	3	
	4. Suppression & Dry Hyd	0	
	5. Tank Removals	0	
	6. Burn Permits	1	
	7. Fire Drills	1	
E	FOLLOW UP INSPECTIONS	1	
F	OFFICE	242	
G	COURT APPEARANCE	0	
H	PLAN REVIEWS	7	
I	TRAINING	4	
J	PURCHASING	113	
O	OTHER-Rich	4	
O	OTHER-Dave	5	
O	OTHER- Steve	0	
O	OTHER-Jamillynn	4	
	TOTAL	440	345
Rich	Run Fire Pump	4	
Dave	Run Fire Pump	1	
	Haording issue	1	
	Knoc Box- Keys	1	
Steve			
Jami	Poster Contest	4	
Oct. 2023			
		 Marshal's Signature	