

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM  
March 27, 2019, 5:00pm

Committee Members present:      Councilor Martin Pepin, Chairman  
   Councilor Kenneth S. Vincent  
   Councilor Edward Levasseur  
   Councilor Nancie Cameron

Administration/Staff present:      City Manager, Bob Belmore  
   Police Chief, David Kretschmar  
   Fire Chief, Keith Hoyle  
   Paul Robidas, Stewart's Ambulance Service  
   Justin Van Etten, Stewart's Ambulance Service  
   City Clerk, Trish Harris  
   Mayor Dana Hilliard

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Chairman Pepin called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Levasseur, made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2019 meeting. The motion passed, 4-0.

EMS – AMERICAN AMBULANCE CONTRACT AND FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Mayor Hilliard addressed the committee stating that he is in support of the extension of the contract with American Ambulance which has been acquired by Stewart's Ambulance. They have had a stellar record in service. The new management also has a great record with impeccable standards and the citizens of Somersworth will benefit from their services. They expect no disruption to the service as the transition takes place, and safety will be assured. Mayor Hilliard encouraged the members of the Committee to support the extension of the present contract with American Ambulance (now operating as Stewart's Ambulance). (Mayor Hilliard left the meeting after his comments.)

City Manager Belmore reported that Stewart's Ambulance Service has acquired American Ambulance; there is a letter in packet from Justin Van Etten, Chairman of Stewart's Ambulance. The current agreement with American Ambulance expires July, 31 2019. We have the option to extend the current contract for another 4 year term. EMS service will continue to carry the American Ambulance name, but will be transferring at some point to the Stewart's name.

Mr. Van Etten stated that they acquired all equipment, including ambulances, about 2 weeks ago. They made offers to the staff of approximately 70 people, and all but maybe two will be continuing with Stewart's. Operationally, nothing has changed.

There was lengthy explanation of the acquisition, and the timing of the name change on the vehicles and uniforms from American Ambulance to Stewart's Ambulance Services.

City Manager Belmore stated that he is happy to see Paul Robidas coming back. He has had good interaction with Mr. Robidas over the years. It is also nice to see that Stewart's Ambulance Services is housed in Somersworth.

Chief Hoyle stated that there was excellent service when Mr. Robidas was in charge. He and Paul worked closely together and he is glad to have him back. Paul runs a tight ship and Stewart's is a high quality company.

***Councilor Cameron, seconded by Councilor Vincent, made a motion to recommend to full Council that the City extend the previous contract with American Ambulance, now acquired by Stewart's Ambulance Service, for four more years. The motion passed 4-0.***

#### Fire Station RFP

There is a memo from Chief Hoyle in the packet that outlines the RFP.

There was brief discussion regarding the process and timeline for the RFP.

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Chief Kretschmar noted that the Department is currently down one officer, but there is one person in the academy and one officer in field training,

They changed the recruitment process to make it a bit quicker. They also have an officer visiting Great Bay College when the entry test is conducted to speak with potential applicants. This has created some activity.

Upcoming events:

Drug Take Back Day, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 10a-2p

Bicycle Safety Day, May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Middle School after Community Cleanup

Touch a Truck, June 1st at Walmart

Middle School Law Enforcement Day, May 17th

Coffee with Cop in mid-May

Chief Kretschmar explained, because of changes to the Working Dog foundation staffing at the training facility, they decided to seek an alternative to complete the certification process and now have been offered a place at the Boston Police training academy, which is conducted just outside of Boston. The training is for 14 weeks, and Bravo and Colton will be a certified K9 team when this training is complete. Bravo will only need drug certification after that. The cost of this training was \$1400 and came out of the K9 budget line.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Pepin stated that the Committee was assigned the task by the Mayor of reviewing the Fire Department to see what is needed. There are several things that need to be addressed. Pepin mentioned that they should look at several operational needs such as having a Deputy Chief and full-time secretary, training needs and staffing response to call backs.

After lengthy discussion regarding the direction that the Committee should go with this task, City Manager Belmore suggested that the he and the Chief Hoyle get together to prepare a presentation about staffing, training needs, apparatus, response time, Deputy Chief, full time staffing, etc., and report back with a over view of the department.

There was then lengthy discussion about the need for an assistant chief.

The consensus of the Committee was for the City Manager and Fire Chief to prepare an operational analysis to present to the Committee at the next meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 5:00pm.

## ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Cameron seconded by Councilor Levasseur made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed, 4-0. The meeting adjourned 5:52pm.***

Respectfully submitted,

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Trish Harris, City Clerk