

Wednesday, September 26 2012
CIAB Meeting Minutes

Present at this meeting: Joel Favazza, Kersten Lanes, Janet Rice, Michelle Sweet, Gregg Cademartori, Jeffrey Towne, Fire Chief Smith

Ms. Lanes: Call to order at 5:07 p.m.

The CIAB: Unanimously approves minutes from August 1, 2012.

Ms. Lanes: Briefly explains the role of the CIAB to Chief Smith.

Asks if Chief Smith agrees with the proposed CIP's listing of a pumper and ladder truck for the FD

Chief Smith: Agrees with the CIP; the FD is in serious need of a ladder truck. Ladder 1 is in good condition but needs a backup so it can be taken out of service. Ladder 2 should be a used truck, not a new one.

The FD also needs to engage in proactive maintenance of the vehicles so as to get the most use out of them.

Ms. Lanes: Do nearby towns have two ladder trucks each?

Chief Smith: The bigger ones, yes.

Ms. Rice: Rockport?

Chief Smith: No. They have one and use us as backup as part of the mutual aid program. **We also have the availability of using theirs or another town's as well—but if we're constantly using it, the other towns will become annoyed and may not make it readily available.**

Believes that a regional emergency response system is preferable than the town-by-town system currently in place. Says he is willing to work under another chief as part of a regional system.

Ms. Lanes: For how long have we had only one ladder truck?

Chief Smith: About six months.

Ms. Rice: Do we have enough room for another?

Chief Smith: Yes, we have enough room for all requested trucks.

Mr. Favazza: What is the life expectancy on these vehicles?

Mr. Towne: For new pumpers, 8-9 years in primary service, then a few years as reserve. A new ladder truck lasts 10-12 as primary and another 2-3 as reserve.

Mr. Favazza: **If we're getting** a used ladder truck, how far into the 10-12 year primary

window will it be?

Chief Smith: **It depends—some municipalities are really easy on their trucks and you can get one that is 5 years old but still has 7-8 good years of primary service left in it.**

Mr. Favazza: My understanding is that Ladder 1 is shorter than the ladder truck it replaced and as such is unable to reach the taller buildings in the city. **We have the potential for a 65-70' structure going in on Commercial Street in addition to the assisted-living facilities already in the community—should we be getting a larger ladder truck?**

Chief Smith: **A bigger ladder truck won't fit into the central station due to height and will be too long to safely maneuver in either the West Gloucester or Bay View stations. Additionally, the amount of street space necessary to properly operate larger ladder trucks is more than what is typically available in this City.**

Ms. Sweet: What happens to the trucks we get rid of?

Mr. Towne: Sold at public auction.

Ms. Lanes: Asks Chief Smith to speak to the pumper request.

Chief Smith: Currently, we have only 3 that are operational; 1 is marginal, 1 was bought new in 2011, and 1 is a refurbished 1998. We also have twin 2005 pumpers that were bad when we bought them new and are worse **now—they were a bad investment.**

These pumpers also deteriorate more quickly than they should because the FD lacks a proper maintenance program.

Mr. Towne: Suggests a city-wide fleet mechanic would be preferable to having firemen doubling as mechanics during down-time.

Ms. Lanes: Asks about daily call volume.

Chief Smith: The City handles about 4,500 calls per year, of which about 2,000 is for the ambulances.

Mr. Favazza: How many trucks do you need under the current situation where only the central and West Gloucester stations are open regularly? The previous **chief told this board that although he'd need more trucks to fully staff each station, he had a sufficient amount of trucks to staff the stations normally kept open.**

Chief Smith: We have insufficient staff to ever open Magnolia; however, even with central and West Gloucester open regularly and Bay View open **intermittently, I am running out of trucks before I'm running out of staff to man them.**

Ms. Lanes: How often are all the trucks out at once?

Chief Smith: Every time you have a two-alarm situation, everything from central and West Gloucester is activated.

Ms. Sweet: Will you be developing a maintenance plan?

Chief Smith: We already have.

Mr. Towne: Our insurance company offers incentive grants to use on maintenance **and loss prevention—we'll be working with them on this.**

Mr. Cademartori: How much for a new ladder?

Chief Smith: \$800-900k.

Mr. Cademartori: We need to see the next ladder on the 10 year plan in that case

Chief Smith: My plan goes out to 2023. My goal is to have 6 engines (4 up front, 2 backup). It will require buying a piece of equipment every year, maybe every other.

Ms. Lanes: **Then the CIP isn't accurate as it doesn't contain the future truck purchases.**

Mr. Cademartori: Suggests an option for the CIAB would be to reject because, after speaking to the Chief, the FD needs appear different than what is provided on the CIP.

Ms. Lanes: Asks about the condition of the station and substations.

Chief Smith: Repair is needed in most stations. Magnolia is the worst; leaking roof is allowing water damage.

Ms. Lanes: **Why not level Magnolia if you don't use it?**

Chief Smith: **It's not in a bad spot—especially if we went to a regional system.**

Mr. Favazza: When was the last time Magnolia was open?

Chief Smith: It was opened once or twice in the last fiscal year.

Mr. Favazza: Do you still need Magnolia if a central fire station goes in at Fuller?

Chief Smith: Yes.

Mr. Favazza: Is Fuller the ideal location for the central fire station?

Chief Smith: Right now, it takes us 12 minutes to get into Lanesville. Moving to Fuller might knock it down a couple minutes but will not bring it into compliance **with the standards—if we're responding to an emergency in Lanesville where someone stopped breathing, there isn't going to be anybody to save by the time we get there, even from Fuller. Additionally, from Fuller, we're even further away from the Magnolia area. We still need to figure**

out what makes the most sense for everyone.

Ms. Lanes: What information do you need to determine what makes the most sense?

Chief Smith: We need to determine how long it takes to get to various portions of town **and how to improve upon that. We'd need to make sure any new building** fits our needs. And it should incorporate a central dispatch.

Mr. Cademartori: **Why haven't runtime reports been studied?**

Mr. Towne: They may have been by previous chiefs.

Ms. Lanes: Asks the Chief to compare/contrast Gloucester with his prior location.

Chief Smith: Mutual aid is better here than his previous community, in part because **there's less help available and it takes longer to get there—so you have to** be well-run. The downsides to this area are civil service restrictions, losing people to Massport due to better available pay, and the archaic communication and infrastructure systems in place for the department.

The CIAB: Thanks Chief Smith for his time.

Ms. Lanes: Asks Mr. Towne about the parking kiosks.

Mr. Towne: Explains that the City has installed 11 at a cost of \$135k, and plans to install another 22 at a cost of roughly \$300k. These kiosks last 10-12 years and pay for themselves after 7 years. They make more money for **the City as people can't share time any longer.**

Mr. Favazza: What about decrease in violation revenue?

Mr. Towne: We are monitoring to see if that happens.

Ms. Lanes: Asks Mr. Towne to speak about new accounting software.

Mr. Towne: Explains that the current City accounting is spread across two separate systems with horrible software in charge of bridging them. The new software costs include implementation because the company really wants us to bail out from the old bad software and get on board as soon as we can with the new good software. Essentially, the City will be receiving about \$700k in software and implementation and migration for much less.

Ms. Lanes: **If this isn't purchased, what happens?**

Mr. Towne: We continue to struggle with the current software, which will be **discontinued anyway in a few years. Then we'll have no choice but to** upgrade for full price.

Mr. Favazza: If we botched the last software purchase, how are we now better equipped to make a smart choice in software?

Mr. Towne: **The last piece of software was bad when we bought it—but cheap to**

purchase. I've personally demo'd and will continue to test various aspects of this new software before committing to it.

Chief Smith: Does it have interdepartmental capacity?

Mr. Towne: Yes; the building inspector will be able to see if someone is paid up on taxes, etc. in order to issue a permit.

Ms. Lanes: **Separately, we still need to read the water report and issue a "this isn't a plan" response.**

The CIAB: Agrees next meeting is TBD.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.