

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
FIRE COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, January 18, 2007**

Mr. Lawlor called the meeting to order at 7:pm

Members Present: Mr. Rohrbach, Mrs. Van Tassel, Mr. Palmer, Fr. Bruno, Chief Bill Meier, Fire Marshal Walter Summers, LT. Glenn Reynolds

- Minutes of the November Fire Commission Meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.
- The Schedule of Official Fire Commission Meetings for 2007 was approved. The Fire Commission will meet on the Third Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire House.
- It was determined that it was not necessary to recertify the Fire Chief because the chief had been appointed by the Fire department and the Fire Commission to a 2 year term in 2006.
- There will be no change in the officers of the Fire Commission although the invitation (plea) for someone to volunteer as “recording secretary” remains.
- Fire Chief:

The chief reviewed his proposed budgets for the Fire Department and the Ambulance. The official budget will be submitted on approximately Feb 1. With the unanimous approval of the Fire Commission the chief’s budget have stayed close to the targeted increases suggested by the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen.

While 3-4% increases on both budgets do not represent large sums of money, the chief has focused on two key items.

1. With the unanimous support of the Fire Commission the chief feels strongly that the Officer Stipend Program for both Fire and Ambulance should be continued and expanded.
2. Vehicle Maintenance will continue to be an unpredictable factor

3. Building Maintenance items, particularly the building's heating system continues to be a significant drain and potential "large ticket" item that cannot be predicted. The heating system has not been "right" since the firehouse opened.
4. County Fees for the emergency Call Center will not change this year but we should expect an increase next year.
5. The Fire Department personnel contract has not yet been finalized. The employee costs have been estimated.

- Bundled Billing:

The Fire Commission joined with the Board of Selectmen to unanimously endorse the proposed ambulance service contract with the Ambulance Service of Manchester which eliminates the problem of "double billing" for some Medicare patients. Services for paramedic services and "transport" will be united into one bill for some patients. Patients under 65 will continue to get separate bills. Maintaining paramedic care service for the citizens of Somers is critically important.

- Fire Marshall:

The Fire Marshall submitted his proposed 2007-08 budgets within the suggested 3% range. Keys will be maintenance of the 65 hydrates that the town "owns" (painting and reflective stripes) and moving to wireless inspections with lap top computers. The salary items have been left unchanged because the eventual structure of the Fire Marshall office remains undetermined.

There have been no applications for the Fire Marshal and/or Inspector position. Discussions continue with the Board of Selectmen.

The Fire commission unanimously voted to reiterate our original proposal to add a full time position to the "paid staff" which would then allow Glenn to move to the Fire Marshall position on a 20-hour basis. The position has been open for more than a year.

- The Library Referendum was scheduled to take place on the following Tuesday. The willingness of the Board of Finance to support our proposals for substations and ladder trucks may be affected by the results of this vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35