

**Town of Auburn  
Board of Selectmen  
May 21, 2018  
Town Hall  
6:00 pm  
Non-Public Session #1 of 1**

**Note: A portion of these minutes was unsealed by majority vote of the Board of Selectmen on June 4, 2018**

**Selectmen Present:** James Headd, Richard Eaton and Keith Leclair

**Also Present:** Fire Chief Ed Gannon, William Herman, Town Administrator and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

***At 6:03 pm, Mr. Leclair motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91A:3, II (c) and (I). Mr. Eaton seconded his motion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Headd – yes; Mr. Eaton – yes; Mr. Leclair – yes. The motion passed unanimously.***

Mr. Herman questioned Chief Gannon as to whether there were any other methods that his SOP allows for contributing to that percentage of calls.

Chief Gannon explained that there were other methods that were not calculated into the graphed sheet he provided. Chief Gannon stated that it wasn't just for house fires, alarm responses are an important response need that is lacking in the department.

Chief Gannon explained that there are 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> shifts and he tries to be fair to all of them. Mr. Leclair asked if most had day jobs and Chief Gannon answered that they did.

Chief Gannon explained how someone could get call time by being at the station, whether it was washing their cars while waiting for a call to come in and that 4=1 whereas the details were 1:1 because they were assigned specific responsibilities. Mr. Leclair stated that he worried the chart was not telling the whole story and if the SOP is going to say that these other details factor in, then it should be properly calculated to include everything so that we're sure they are getting full credit. Chief Gannon explained that of the 28 or so on the list he was looking at, a number of those volunteers have moved onto other jobs, the number is not reflective of what he actually has for volunteers. Chief Gannon explained that another volunteer, while he shows less call time, has spent more time in the station doing other things, such as greasing the vehicles. Chief Gannon stated that it is also necessary to log into *lamresponding*. If you come into the station to be on call, you can sign the sheet and clear when you leave.

Mr. Eaton expressed that he did not feel the Board of Selectmen should be micromanaging the Fire Department.

Mr. Leclair asked what it cost the town to have an Auburn resident. If they did not show, they did not get paid. What about gear? Chief Gannon stated that gear was an issue. It has a shelf life of about ten years and has to be replaced. They received a grant for some equipment. If the guys don't show up for training, they are endangering other firefighter's lives.

Mr. Leclair stated that again, he was concerned about this chart.

Chief Gannon referenced the MRI study that had been done recently and this 4:1 call ratio was a way to possibly solve the problem including the 1:1 detail ratio for events like the Duck Race. Chief Gannon stated that the chart goes back as far as 2016 when the MRI study change was implemented only 9 months ago. So, if you take the chart and look at the left half, four have fallen in that last year.

Mr. Headd asked about the new hires, whether they were experienced, certified, had background checks. Chief Gannon explained how new hires usually arrived by word of mouth from family members who were fire fighters. This is something that has been a long-standing tradition. "Unfortunately, once we train them they move on from part time here to full time positions elsewhere so we make the best of the months we have them for." Mr. Leclair stated that there was no policy concerning background checks for volunteer firefighters but perhaps there should be, because they are going into people's homes. "However, those are not inexpensive and would have to be put into the budget."

Mr. Herman asked if there was any reason the new hires were not brought before the Board as required. Mr. Leclair stated that he had the same question. "In town meeting in 1995 it was passed that those new hires should come before the BOS to be appointed." Mr. Leclair asked if he had ever followed up with references. Chief Gannon conceded that while he preferred Auburn residents, that its almost impossible to find them.

Mr. Leclair asked if there was any truth to the allegation that there was a firefighter driving without a CDL. Chief Gannon stated that while they preferred them going forward, there was no requirement for them to be, so that if someone has been driving a vehicle for a long time, such as in this instance, there was no reason to.

Chief Gannon stated that he receives a high response from volunteers for house fires but needs to address the lack of response to what he refers to as "smells and bells" which are alarm activations, sometimes with smoke present. "I need people who show up and are willing to work hard."

Mr. Eaton advised Chief Gannon that there has been another complaint concerning the policy of road closure and this is something that is going to need to be addressed by establishing a chain of command. From when the call comes in and is taken, who gets notified in what order and who ultimately has the responsibility which the Board agreed per RSA should fall to the Chief. "Because its in the RSA its widely accepted and responders will know who to go to at the scene, eliminating confusion." Mr. Headd stated that this policy needs to be put in writing. The Fire Department and Police Department have radio contact with each other, the Road Agent does not. Mr. Leclair stated that "Bruce and Mike had a different relationship, they handled things differently."

Chief Gannon spoke to the seriousness of downed wires and the dangers they possessed both to the responders but to citizens who drive around even blocked roads resulting in disasters. Eversource can come out and give a class. Mr. Eaton stated ultimately the liability ends here.

Mr. Leclair stated that there needs to be rules of engagement for everything from plowing, cisterns, and road closures.

Mr. Leclair raised the issue of Chief Gannon's contract renewal for three years and stated that he was still looking for an escape clause because of the previous social media complaint which

he explained to Chief Gannon hurts other people. Mr. Leclair explained that he understands fully the need to defend himself and all that goes with what goes on. on there. Mr. Eaton stated that he was willing to proceed with the renewal of his contract today. Mr. Leclair and Mr. Headd stated that they required more time.

Chief Gannon departed the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer  
Recording Secretary