

A workshop meeting was held on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 beginning at 3pm remotely via Zoom. The following members were present:

Allyson Hamilton, Chair
Mark Gallivan, Vice Chair
Benjamin Barrett, Clerk
James O'Neil
Glenn Maffei

Also participating
James Johnson, Town Administrator
Paul Barry, Fire Chief
Aoife Kelly, Executive Assistant

Call to Order and Remote Participation

Chair Hamilton called the meeting to order at 3pm and announced that pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, all members will be participating remotely and every vote taken will be taken by roll call vote.

Fire Department Command Structure

Jim Johnson provided a quick overview on the proposal by Fire Chief Barry and outlined that the financial impact is not as significant with former Chief Bailey leaving, Linda Menyo's retirement and having the open Deputy position for several months. This new structure would bring it in line with the existing command structure at the Walpole Police Department.

Chief Barry thanked everyone for the support over the past two months and expressed his appreciation for the great work Mark Timilty has been doing. Chief Barry explained to the Board that the goal behind this command change was to provide a better service to the Town, with the existing structure there has been three Lieutenants in the Fire Prevention Officer role since its creation in 2021. Moving this to a Deputy Fire Chief would provide more consistency in that position.

Chief Barry outlined to the Board that the Union had agreed to a tentative MOA, which would allow the current Fire Prevention Office Lieutenant position to remain unfilled once it becomes vacant. The Board thanked Chief Barry for bringing this forward, and like the new structure and the thought process behind it. The Board outlined to Chief Barry that they appreciate the work so far with the union. The Board did note that they would like to see at least one of the positions filled soon so that there is more support within the department. Chief Barry thanked the Board and noted that the union has been great to work with and with the support of Town Administration, he is hopeful to get the assessment centers started within the coming weeks.

On motion of Board Member O'Neil, seconded by Vice Chair Gallivan, voted to authorize the Fire Chief to move forward with the proposed reorganization of the management of the Walpole Fire Department as presented in his proposal dated August 2, 2023. On roll call vote of the Board, Motion Passed (5-0-0).

On motion of Board Member O'Neil, seconded by Vice Chair Gallivan, voted to authorize the Chief to move forward with the assessment center for the Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant and Deputy, with the directive that the Assistant Chief be filled first. On roll call vote of the Board, Motion Passed (5-0-0).

Chief Barry provided the Board with a brief update on the progress of the ambulances that were ordered with one due at the end of the month and the second shortly after.

On motion of Board Member O'Neil, seconded by Clerk Barrett, voted to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned accordingly at 3:50pm. On roll call vote of the Board, Motion Passed (5-0-0).