

**YORK AREA UNITED FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**AUGUST 20, 2019  
APPROVED**

The York Area United Fire and Rescue Commission held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at YAUFRR Headquarters, 50 Commons Drive, York, PA 17402.

**MEMBERS IN**

**ATTENDANCE:** Austin Hunt, Chairman  
Justin Tomevi, Vice Chairman  
George Dvoryak, Treasurer  
Dave Brosend, Manchester Township  
Lisa Wingert, Manchester Township  
Cara Beth Zortman, Spring Garden Township  
Dan Rooney, Secretary

**ALSO IN**

**ATTENDANCE:** Dan Hoff, Chief  
Steve Hovis, Solicitor  
John Woods, YAUFRR  
Jean Abrecht, Stenographer

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

A. Opening Ceremony

1. Pledge of Allegiance

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt called the August YAUFRR Commission meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt announced that an Executive Session was held following the July Commission meeting to discuss personnel issues and Collective Bargaining. He announced that an Executive Session will be held following the meeting this date.

**3. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS**

There were no citizen comments.

**4. MANAGEMENT/ATTORNEY REPORTS**

A. Steve Hovis, Solicitor

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis stated he had provided the Social Media Policy to Chief Hoff for an up-to-date review of the most recent issues that political subdivisions have had with the social media.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt questioned whether posts can be controlled when individuals are not related to their activities.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis clarified that when an individual is expressing themselves, they should not express an opinion on behalf of YAUFRR unless specifically authorized to do so.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that the board packets are distributed electronically through some private emails. The board had received a canned speech about segregating emails regarding the Right-To-Know.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis stated that if a board member is communicating back and forth in an official capacity using private email address, that could be subject to a search upon a Right-To-Know request. Without an official YAUFRR email address, the board members should be sure to use their township email for your YAUFRR address.

**WINGERT** Ms. Wingert stated that she had set up a separate account for Right-To-Know.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis indicated that he had argued a case before the Commonwealth Court as to this very issue. The Judge walked out and stated that he had just been in his chambers sending some emails to individuals back in his office and asked whether that was an official email or a personal email. Solicitor Hovis won his case.

B. Daniel Hoff, Fire Chief

**HOFF** Chief Hoff mentioned the Training Day for Commissioners had been scheduled for October 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6 p.m.

**BROSEND** Mr. Brosend questioned what the Commissioners should wear.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff indicated that they will have turnout gear for everyone, but wear clothes that can get dirty.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt suggested jeans and a Tshirt.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff reported that the new ladder truck is getting all the stripes and lettering put on this Friday (August 23). He hoped to have it in service within the next two to three weeks depending on the radio installation. He asked the Commissioners for feedback on having a dedication for the apparatus since it's such a big purchase. One of the thoughts was that since there is a new piece of apparatus at each one of the stations, possibly dedicating each one of the trucks to someone who had been instrumental in either the creation or support of YAUFR or the fire service in general. They want this to coincide with and kick off Fire Prevention Week. There are also Open Houses scheduled in each township on October 8<sup>th</sup>, October 9<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>. Fire Prevention Week is the first full week of October.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that a fire service tradition is to push the apparatus in.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that some have done something symbolic as well. A firehouse in West Manchester last fall did a symbolic washing of the rig.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated it was a great idea and suggested to pick one date, make up a press release and make it big with photos.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that this past Saturday (August 17) at the Annual York County Firemen's Convention YAUFR received its first ever Parade Trophy.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented that he noticed in the monthly stats that YAUFR had run to Shrewsbury for a building fire.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff responded that the ladder truck was transferred because all the ladder trucks in the southern end of the County were committed to the fire. They transferred part of the way to Red Lion or York Township as the alarms increased. They just pulled the next closest resource. He indicated it was an oddity.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Discussion – 2020 Budget**

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that in the board packet the Chief's explanation and justification for staffing an additional Battalion Chief was included. The draft budget includes salary for that position.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that since he had taken over as Chief, there was discussion about having staff in place that could handle expansion. He indicated the position he proposes could help handle expansion. As he reviewed the current Battalion Chief's responsibilities, they are handling 39 plus square miles for emergency response., which is twice what they should be handling. Likewise, staffing on the apparatus in some cases is half the national recommendations as more is consistently being done with less.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that what he took particular notice of was the fact that the current Battalion Chiefs have not been able to take the full complement of vacation time. They are working hard all day long and they never believe they are caught up enough to take time off.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff shared from his own experience as a Battalion Chief that he always spent additional time after his shift to take care of everything that had to be done.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether Chief Hoff could compare YAUFR to other departments in the ratio of Firefighters, Captains, Battalion Chiefs.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff responded that feedback from other paid departments in the state shows that the majority of them either have a Deputy or Assistant Chief above the Battalion Chief for administrative work. He would not suggest a Deputy Chief or Assistant Chief but rather a Battalion Chief to pick up some of the administrative work and help with call volume or coverage as needed.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated that the draft budget was developed and will be presented including the costs for a Battalion Chief. He asked if anyone had any dissenting thoughts or comments.

A very lengthy discussion took place, which for the purpose of these minutes, is summarized.

**MUTUAL AID/AUTOMATIC AID**

- Automatic Aid – Dispatching YAUFR on the initial call.
- Mutual Aid – Dispatched in need of extra resources; specialized equipment, specifically requested
- When asked about all Firefighters working for fire suppression at the same time; some need to be kept in staging to relieve those who suffer from fatigue.
- Some felt smaller municipalities without fire services should pay for YAUFR services.

- YAUFR statistics indicated 80.7% of call volume in July did not involve any form of aid
- With uneven mutual aid, municipal taxpayers assist in paying for fire services in smaller York County communities.
- YAUFR personnel typically do their own investigations; no need for Fire Marshall, since our staff is trained.

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN**

- Need to review 2014 Plan and prepare to update with current Commission. Original Plan had 20 to 30 people involved including municipality board members.
- Strength in a regional fire service, which is the basis for YAUFR.

#### **BATTALION CHIEF**

- Battalion Chiefs are typically not involved in fire suppression. They are there to supervise and provide safety for the Firefighters.
- Review current duties and functions of current staff; due diligence.
- Total employment of YAUFR has not been increased; actually has decreased.

#### **HOFF**

Chief Hoff provided statistics he had created in 2016:

- YAUFR serving population of 39,783 within a square mile of 23.14 miles (two townships).
- Manchester added and increased population served to 58,314 covering 39.82 square miles.
- YAUFR costs/person based on population was \$128.18. Cost per square mile was \$220,000. With Manchester Township added cost/person went to \$132.73 and the cost per square mile was \$198,365.
- Using the 2019 budget and applying the same logic, the cost is roughly \$141.00; proposed 2020 would be \$142.00 per person - roughly what YAUFR services cost.

#### **ROONEY**

Mr. Rooney stated that debating the context before YAUFR, separate and after, making a comparison would say there is less staff combined. With economy of scale costs were reduced. A review of YAUFR on a year-by-year basis there is an increase; however, there would be increase if it were separate as well. In order to maintain the quality of what YAUFR has shown, and looking to the future Chief Hoff is looking to hire an additional Battalion Chief. Mr. Rooney defers to Chief Hoff's judgement. He could see value in what is proposed. Reviewing increases

over a few years versus future additions, could be a better bargain than separately and that needed to be communicated with Springettsbury.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff noted that a question was asked whether there could be something that is being done that could be eliminated. He noted that they look at technology and software that might make the job easier or more efficient or make better use of the data collection. The bottom line is that YAUFRR does fire suppression and rescue, EMS response, public safety, fire prevention and inspections. They do not get involved in hazardous material response other than the required training level or tactical rescue. Their purpose is to be the best that they can be with the services that have always been provided. No services have been expanded other than what Springettsbury, Spring Garden and Manchester did as individual municipal fire departments.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt commented on the fire admin. budget line item as a percentage of fire protection part time and overtime which is 16 to 1%; 17 to 19% and the proposed budget with the Battalion Chief is 17%. The overhead ratio is diminishing. He asked Mr. Dvoryak what the Commission could do to help him come to the same conclusions in order to present it positively. YAUFRR is surrounded by non-Accredited Fire Departments. The question is why a decision would be made not to go for Accreditation.

**DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak commented that he understood part of the new Battalion Chief's work would be toward the Accreditation process. He asked what the benefits would be.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that Springettsbury Police were Accredited, along with Spring Garden.

**TOMEVI** Mr. Tomevi assumed that there is a liability issue there for lower insurance.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis responded there could be a lower insurance. It is a representation to the community that YAUFRR has followed the best practices.

**WINGERT** Ms. Wingert noted that anytime the image for the fire or police departments can be improved and made more professional, she is in favor. She stated she sees value in it and has no problem speaking for it. She added it is well justified and she applauded Chief Hoff for wanting to pursue Accreditation. YAUFRR may be the only one in the entire area to be Accredited.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that they had attended a conference that gave a methodology to look at everything from administrative policy, operational practices and other services provided. It is based off of National Best Practices. They take into consideration the makeup of the municipalities, funding available, etc. YAUFRR would not be judged according to why we're not providing a water rescue team, for example. YAUFRR call volume does not indicate that as a priority. Until they begin dissecting everything that YAUFRR does they won't know what's missing. Chief Hoff believes that he was put in place to make YAUFRR the best fire service there is, and that may mean growth. They may find they can get rid of things that aren't working or implement new things that will work, which is what he believes Accreditation will do. Using best practices will help to be more defensible in court if necessary. They are basing operations and administrative practices on industry best practices.

**DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak asked Chief Hoff why he thought other paid services do not have the same philosophy.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff responded that it is time and manpower. He believed many chiefs are not in it for the long term and not interested in taking on such an aggressive process, but the number of hours that some had indicated were upwards of 2,000 hours.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that when YAUFRR was formed they found an energetic and very intelligent Chief in Bob McCoy, who set the standard for Chief Hoff as his predecessor. He set the tone for the whole department. Battalion Chiefs agree with self-improvement. People notice how organized, disciplined and trained the department is. However, they don't see the long drills, the SOP's, etc. supporting the Battalion Chiefs. It's an entire system that has been created to continually improve fire service. That's why YAUFRR stands out. People acknowledge that YAUFRR people are good at what they do.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff added that when Chief McCoy came to YAUFRR and worked 10 years he already had a hefty pension. He was interested in building something but knew his time would be limited. Chief Hoff indicated he planned to be here for another 17 years, and he wants the department to be the best it can be and to continue the pride YAUFRR people have knowing they're the best they can be.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt expressed his thanks to Mr. Dvoryak as he had challenged the board not to just become a rubber stamp. YAUFRR is fiscally responsible, however, they are not in this to save money but rather to create a valuable fire

service. They need to look at the population served per capita and right sizing of the fleet, improvement and potentially increasing the size meaning the management structure must be incorporated. The nucleus is in place to support growth. As a board member, he supports the management team that sees the vision and not just sustaining what was done last year. He hoped Mr. Dvoryak can convince himself to make a positive presentation back to his board and explain why it is important.

**WINGERT** Ms. Wingert commented that if her house was on fire, she guaranteed 150% she would want YAUFRR to be there because she knows the management of the firefighters that would respond beyond what is needed to get her house under control.

**ROONEY** Mr. Rooney questioned what the total net increase would be to the bottom line.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff responded it would be 1%.

**ROONEY** Mr. Rooney commented on the value YAUFRR brings in all three municipalities.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that the discussion has a very valid point because the budget analysis should be a strategic plan in terms of deployment of resources and why. He was glad Mr. Dvoryak had brought up the subject by honestly saying he did not support it the way he understood it. It is useful in that there now is a need to convince him why it is something worth the investment.

**DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak responded that he is looking at a bigger picture in terms of where YAUFRR is heading strategically and whether it is a direction the municipalities want to go. He was not sure that the current Commissioners have had conversations in terms of the growth of YAUFRR.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt indicated that he and Chief Hoff may have not shared strategically; however, that is the opening statement of every Annual Meeting with the Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, and they are all hanging off the budget.

**DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak indicated that a role that he often finds himself in as a board member listening to many good ideas, is to answer the question of the funding.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt noted that the value for this position with benefits will be around \$100,000 per year.



**BROSEND** Mr. Brosend stated that he had not yet talked with their board members on the subject and he couldn't speak to it either way. He noted that when Manchester came on board with YAUFRR it became very clear that growth was a focus primarily through three pillars which are here and mostly through contracted services going forward. The way it was presented to us and interests him is the value from his perspective that it's not going to decrease the fire expenses; it would slow down the individual costs that paid individually, slow down the rise. That really was the philosophy that sold Manchester, and that is the approach we've gone forward with as far as where YAUFRR is going.

**WINGERT** Ms. Wingert stated that she did discuss it at their last board meeting, and she did not think this would be a problem. Information is always provided up front, and Manchester likes the way Chief Hoff runs the organization. She indicated she had relayed it to Mr. James right after their budget meeting and he was fine with it. She indicated she could probably speak for the other supervisors how they see the approach. She didn't see anyone having a problem with it. She asked Mr. Brosend if he would bring it up at the next meeting.

**ROONEY** Mr. Rooney stated he did not want to speak for others, but he did not see it as a problem.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt suggested to get feedback and if there are additional questions about the Battalion Chief to reach out to Chief Hoff for additional information. The joint budget presentation is September 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis stated that at that point it is provided to the townships to go back and discuss and provide comments with the understanding that it needs to be passed by each township.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt stated that the board should provide a sense of what should be presented in September. Nothing is binding at that point. At the joint meeting Chief Hoff can make the presentation to all three boards and indicate that he had included this Battalion Chief and one of the things that will be done with the Battalion Chief is cover excess workload of our current battalion chiefs. All 15 township board members can receive a first-hand presentation and that gives them a few months for feedback before December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**DVORYAK** Mr. Dvoryak asked that they be provided with the information the Commissioners had received last week. All the board members will be at the 9/17 meeting at 6 p.m.

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt asked whether there was any further discussion on the budget, any changes to be addressed. At this point it is not guaranteed that the present draft with the Battalion Chief will be presented. The net is showing a 2.8% increase over the bottom line. He asked for head nods to use this draft for his presentation.

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated he would send the Capital Budget along with the Strategic Plan to the board.

**5. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

A. Payable Listing as of July 31, 2019

**MR. TOMEVI MOVED TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE LISTING AS OF JULY 31, 2019. MR. BROSEND WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**6. BIDS, PROPOSALS & CONTRACTS**

There were none for action.

**7. COMMUNICATION FROM COMMISSIONERS**

**BROSEND** Mr. Brosend reported that they had a totally fun day at the park. A lot of township residents were thankful that YAUFRR did show off. It was good to see the staff and the apparatus there and they did a very good job representing us.

**8. VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE**

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that they did not meet last month due to lack of a quorum. The meeting was cancelled due to the weather related incidents. Five minutes before a thunderstorm came through and since most of the volunteers that participate are Fire Police, they were out there directing traffic.

**9. RESOLUTIONS AND AGREEMENTS**

There were none for action.

**10. ACTION ON MINUTES**

A. Approval of Minutes – July 16, 2019 – Fire Commission Meeting

**MR. DVORYAK MOVED FOR APPROVAL THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 16, 2019 MEETING. MR. TOMEVI WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**11. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Update – Battalion Chief Van Pelt vehicle

**HOFF** Chief Hoff stated that he appreciated the board members responding electronically so they could move on acquiring the vehicle. Solicitor Hovis indicated there is a need to take some Legislative action to ratify the decision. He stated that Chief had been able to find a pre-negotiated COSTARS vehicle from Manheim, a new 2019 Ford Explorer for the insurance payment and \$73.00. The insurance covered the entire vehicle including the radio. It will be lettered and lighted but they are holding off on the radio until next year.

**TOMEVI** Mr. Tomevi asked whether there had been an appeal to the trucking company to note the damages.

**HOVIS** Solicitor Hovis stated it was absolutely turned over to the insurance company and they will deal with the trucking company's insurance.

**MS. WINGERT MOVED TO RATIFY THE PURCHASE OF THE 2019 FORD EXPLORER. MS. ZORTMAN WAS SECOND. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

B. Discussion – Commission Training Day

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt announced that Commissioner Training Date is set for October 30, 2019 at 6 p.m. at York County Fire School.

C. Discussion – Amending Charter Agreement Members

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt brought forward changing the Charter Agreement to amend the townships to allow them to appoint board members to the Commission. To summarize the pros and cons, you've all mentioned your personal bias that you think board members should be aware of how the money is spent. Other side of it is the boards and he would like for the township boards to have the opportunity to

pick their engaged citizen or someone outside of the board to be clear that the township still controls that person. He had indicated his concern about the longevity of the Commission and had asked for the item to stay on the Agenda. If the board wanted to proceed, Solicitor Hovis could draft an amendment to allow boards to appoint a municipal resident. He asked for a head nod. Each board member indicated their preference is to keep the Charter Agreement “as is.”

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**HUNT** Chairman Hunt reminded the board of the Executive Session to be held immediately following adjournment. He adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file at YAUFRR Headquarters

Dan Rooney  
Secretary

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