

Georgia Fire Department
Regular Business Meeting
April 2, 2015
Approved: May 7, 2015

Present: 19 Excused: 4 Absent: 12

Meeting called to order by Jamie Cota at 8:01pm.

Old Business

- Minutes of the previous meeting read by the secretary. Motion to accept made by Scott Richards, seconded by Justin Hemond, motion passed.
- Jamie thanked the department on behalf of Keith for everyone's contributions to honoring Richard Palmer at his funeral.
- New 32' hydraulic hose is on the Brush truck. Hoses can be connected to extend up to 140' if longer lengths are needed.
- The white buckets in the storage room are for fire prevention use only and are not to be used for any other purpose.

New Business

- Training will be quarterly SCBA. There are five Thursdays this month and Pat King is planning a training for that day though topic is not yet decided.
- Letter read by Heather Grimm from some department members addressed to Keith and the select board in regards to officer selection (see attached).
- Two weekend schools posted. Please let Jamie know as soon as possible if you are interested.
- Truck pulls for Logan will be in Highgate on May 9th. See Russ Hardy or Scott Richards if you are interested in helping.
- Efficiency Vermont evaluated the station's energy use. Recommended external wall lights with LED equivalents in place of existing lights. Additional recommendations included changes to interior lighting and the HVAC system.
- Jamie advised members of new administrative pay policy. Pay sheets have been created and are in the dispatch office. See Keith or Jamie with questions.
- Jamie has FFI/II and VSFA membership cards. See Jamie if you did not receive yours.
- Scott discussed some topics that were taught at the traffic safety course that he and others attended in Fairfax. Noted lack of proper equipment including signs and flags. Grants are available to help offset acquisition cost.
- Scott is inviting area fire department members to help out with the Kinney's Day with Heros event at the St. Albans Kinney Drugs on April 18th from 11:00am – 2:00pm.
- Chris Gonyeau requested and Scott Richards made a motion, seconded by Justin Hemond, to move Chris from active to reserve status, motion passed.

Motion to adjourn made by Andy Vincent, seconded by Robert Williams, motion passed.
Meeting adjourned at 9:02pm.

4/2/15

Chief Baker and Select Board

In reference to the 1st Asst Chief position previously held by Chris Gonyeau in 2014:

Many members are disappointed with the removal of Chris from the rank of 1st Asst Fire Chief and would like to understand the reasoning why the Chief and Selectboard felt there was a need to remove Chris Gonyeau from the position of 1st Asst Chief. This is definitely a loss for the Fire Department and Town of Georgia.

The Georgia Fire Department members understand that a new process has been implemented by the Town Select Board that that they feel is consistent with Vermont Statues as well as sound personnel practices.

The new provision call for the Fire Chief's input to the Select Board prior to the Select Board appointments of Georgia Fire Department Officers based on recommendations from the Chief.

Also noted that there is nothing prohibiting the Fire Chief from considering input from employees on the subject.

New Process given to the GFD members:

- Georgia Fire Department will no longer hold Officer Elections
- Members cannot perform an advisory election to aid the Chief in the selection process

Member options:

- Give input to Chief of own wishes to be placed in Officer positions
- Give input to the Chief of who you would recommend for Officer positions

The Chief is aware of Chris's service history:

- Education in the Fire Service
- Years of Service in Georgia. 24 years, 15 years as Officer and Chief
- Many accomplishments as firefighter, numerous Officer positions including Chief

Chris conducts himself professionally at all meetings

Chris has been Incident Command at many in town calls

Chris has been Incident Command at many out of town Mutual Aid calls

Chris has always been treated as an Officer/Leader

- That was obvious due to the fact that Chris left for one year, came back and was nominated for Chief- he declined that Chief nomination - and was then nominated by the majority of members to fill the 1st Asst Chief position for year 2014- which he accepted.

Chris attends most:

- Business meetings
- Maintenance meetings
- Training events
- Public town events
- Activities hosted by the Georgia Fire and Rescue Association.

Since we know of no valid reason for Chris Gonyeau to have been removed from the position, there are many members that would like to have him reinstated for year 2015.

Request of the Chief and Select Board to respond back to the Georgia Fire Department members with:

1. Does the Select Board have any requirements to fill the Fire Department Officers positions?
2. Why the 2014 1st Asst Fire Chief, Chris Gonyeau, was removed from rank of 1st Asst Fire Chief for 2015?

Respectfully submitted,

Richard McCreath RICHARD McCREATH
Heather A. Grimm Heather A. Grimm
Andrew Vincent Andrew Vincent
Justin Hammond Justin Hammond
Levin Delage LEVIN DELAGE
BRANDY BUCHANAN
Brittany Bell Brittany Bell
Redney Rushlow Redney Rushlow
Jordan Valjeu Jordan Valjeu