



Health & Human Services and Public Safety Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 20, 2018, 5:30pm, Room 24, City Hall

Committee Attendance:

Councilor Belinda Ray, Chair (District 1), Brian Batson (District 3), Pious Ali (At-Large)

City Staff: Licensing and Registration Coordinator, Jessica Hanscombe; Director of Health and Human Services, Dawn Stiles; Police Chief, Michael Sauschuck; Fire Chief David Jackson; Assistant Fire Chief, Keith Guatreau; Corporation Counsel, Anne Torregrossa; Director of Public Assembly Facilities, Andy Downs

Announcements: Fire Chief Jackson is retiring.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Meeting Called to Order and Minutes Reviewed:

Meeting was called to order at approximately 5:35PM.

Chair moved to accept minutes with one correction to attendance. The motion was seconded with all in favor.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Fire Department Facilities Assessment Presentation

The Functional Assessment of Fire Station Locations is [available here](#):

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/5963?fileID=32406>

Chief Jackson explained that ESG and many grants do not give money for bricks and mortar construction. Opportunities that do pay for construction are applied for when they are available.

A new position will manage the Alan Ave rebuild and focus on Fire Department Facilities.

Councilor Ali asked about volunteer and reserve firefighters. The Chief explained such people exist as on-call members and are stationed on the Islands; they must be considered employees to be covered by workers compensation.

Report Overview:

- New buildings are sprinkled
- First engine must arrive in 4:00 minutes and the rest within 8:00
 - The average response time is 3:34
- Turnout time should be 80 seconds; EMS is 60 seconds
- Minimum of two engines: one ladder and a chief
- All stations are over 40 years old; all stations over 50 must be renovated
- Ambulances are so busy that engines are sometimes sent in their place as many have advanced medical and EMT at a minimum



- Railroad crossings can cost 3-5 minutes
- Life Risk is analyzed on page 21 categorized between high, moderate, and low risk where the highest risk are residencies and where people assemble
 - The fire stations are mostly located in high risk areas
- Personnel breakdown is on page 35
- Runs are difficult in areas without addresses
- North Deering strip mall areas are difficult to get to in time
- Woodfords corner is the geographic center of the city where all trucks can respond to within 8 minutes
- Codes and regulations have changed since construction, including women entering the workforce

Report Recommendations:

- To keep all stations
- Have two chiefs
- Increased staffing

All station locations are recommended to keep their locations; some need new buildings and some just need renovations. The amount of money spent on abatement means it would be more cost effective to build new. It is possible to keep the architectural style with new buildings. Central was recommended to be rebuilt; it does not meet ADA standards.

- Bramhall to keep location but be rebuilt
- Ocean avenue has a sinking floor and is recommended to be rebuilt or to move nearby and rebuild
- The station at Alan Avenue will be rebuilt and is going out to bid shortly; it will be the new standard
- Rosemont station is sinking
- Stations are in the areas they should be and should not move more than 0.5 miles from where they are
- Next step is to create a long-range plan that includes building plans that will meet future standards

Councilor Batson asked Chief Jackson to explain the Jetport firefighters' role. The Jetport adheres to FAA standards and is classified as a Class B Airport. The FAA does not prescribe personnel but does require an amount of foam and water be able to be moved a certain distance within a defined timeframe. The requirement is for 24 hours a day, so Jetport Fire cannot respond to EMS calls; in-town trucks must respond. Response happens within the 4:00 minute timeframe. More staff would be needed to respond to EMS calls using Jetport Fire.



Councilor Batson asked about call volume for Rosemont (it is in the middle of a high density, high risk area). Rosemont's quint truck has a ladder and water pump. It also has the third of the five busiest ambulances. Chief Jackson will circulate the call statistics.

Councilor Ali asked if we charge for fire response. Fire is a free service but EMS is not. Chief Jackson explained there is a mutual aid agreement in the Greater Portland area where the surrounding municipalities help each other without charge. The agreements are honored and abuses are addressed as they arise and are worked out.

Chair Ray asked how often other communities help, specifically if Portland must rely on Westbrook and Falmouth in the North Western part of the city. The City does not; Portland responds in time to address fires in those areas. The map appearing to show a lack of coverage is due to the Deputy Chief not making the time benchmark coming from Bramhall, not that closer stations are unable to quickly respond in those neighborhoods.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Sound in the City

Chief Sauschuck explained next steps outlined in the memo Anne Torregrossa put together, [available here](#):

< <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/5962?fileID=32404> >

- Sound Oversight reviews all noise complaints, including monitoring and tracking where complaints occur
- Entertainment licenses automatically renew but now problem licenses can be reviewed by Council.
- The number of concerts have been reduced
- The workgroup is analyzing best practices
- There is work to do to make the Acentech data inform policy
 - Decibel Levels
 - Licensing Scheme: State got rid of the statute requiring licenses. Ordinance delineated between having or not having dancing. The group is looking to update this antiquated parameter to indoor/outdoor speakers, etc.
- Outdoor speakers are identified as an issue (Chapter 17 has a rule about playing music to attract business).
- Some historic sites have building code that relate to sound
- Acentech will meet with the City again and provide C-weighting at the three primary entertainment locations where data collection was interrupted for various reasons
- Chief Sauschuck explained the group would like to avoid piecemeal updates and give a holistic package that addresses licensing and zoning in a complete answer
- Now is the best time for outreach to the 120 businesses identified to talk about enforcement

Chair Ray said it is important to include Portland Downtown and the Chamber in business outreach. Ray asked about the existing enforcement ordinance, such as Chapter 17 prohibiting



outdoor speakers being used to attract business. Anne cautioned writing anything new until existing enforcement options are examined in practice.

- A citywide ordinance would require planning board review
- Limiting to entertainment licenses is where the group is moving to.
- Nuisance noise is in zoning code
- The group is looking at public versus private space

Chair Ray asked about the 100 foot rule. Chief Sauschuck views the 100 foot rule as a separate issue that addresses crowd dispersion and not sound.

Chair Ray thanked Jessica for listing all the entertainment licenses and lining the complaints to the corresponding license.

Is it possible to link sound oversight in other parts of the City Website?

- Police?
- Parks?
- HHS?

Chair Ray asked for a digital copy of the best practices.

Anne asked if the Councilors feel strongly that the workgroup should look at zoning or entertainment licensing. Chair Ray said that it is difficult to say as areas have become such strong mixes of residential uses. Anne asked if building code should be a part of this to make sure residential or hotel developers have realistic expectations in relation to exiting use.

Sound mitigation will be addressed.

Chair Ray summarized that there are education and enforcement pieces being put into place this season but that there is not a need to report to the full Council.

Education will kick off in May; the workgroup will meet and get possible dates to come back to the committee.

Don't report noise on the fix-it page and redirect to the appropriate area.

Councilor Ali asked where he should direct a constituent who has a noise problem with a truck; Chief Sauschuck said that is a community policing issue; an officer can talk with both parties to solve the problem.

Next meeting:

April 10th in Room 209.

Meeting adjourned.