

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Personnel

At year end our roster is at 25. We were very fortunate to have two new firefighters appointed during 2012; David Canavan of Pheasant Hill Lane and Eric Hedblom of Westford Street. These individuals have completed their emergency medical technician training and are a welcome addition to the staff. While David began training on the ambulance operation, Eric enrolled in the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Call and Volunteer Recruit Training Program which provides the firefighter with over 130 hours of intensive education and training in basic firefighting skills. Eric graduated in December and we congratulate him on his accomplishment. In October, we said goodbye to Lieutenant Robert Trainor as he retired from the department with over 30 years of dedicated service. "Bobby" served first as an auxiliary in 1982 and then progressed to a regular firefighter in 1987, and was certified as an EMT in 1987. In 1995 Bobby was appointed to the position of lieutenant becoming an integral part of the command staff. His training continued and he became certified at the Firefighter I/II level in 2007. To fill the position I appointed Matthew Svatek of Sunset Road. Matthew has been a member of the fire department since 2005 and was clearly the most suited candidate for the position. Matthew is certified from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy at the Fire Officer I & II levels. His responsibilities will be overseeing the self-contained breathing apparatus training and maintenance program as well as the training and maintenance on the thermal imaging camera and various hazardous gas detection meters. In October, we also welcomed the department's very first administrative assistant; Sandy Savage of Rutland Street. Sandy has quickly become an essential and welcoming support for the chief and deputy chief. In December we said goodbye to John D'Auria of Chelmsford. John served for five years and left for an opportunity in firefighting at a neighboring community. We thank John for his contribution and wish him well in his future endeavors.

This has been a difficult year for staffing. Several firefighters and EMT's have been on leave due to either injury, illness or other compelling personal matters. At times it was difficult to maintain our minimum staffing level and the department finds itself asking the remaining staff to be available and do more calls. I am pleased to report that with the outstanding dedication of the members, we have been able to cover all of the calls for this year. I wish to take this opportunity to thank those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to cover the emergency response needs of our citizens over the past year. We have an active recruitment program and are currently seeking additional individuals who might have the time to commit to serving the community by becoming involved with us.

I have been working with the Personnel Board, Selectmen, and Finance Committee to review the compensation of the Deputy, Captain, Lieutenant's and EMS Coordinator's positions. The compensation of these positions is significantly out of line with like positions. The fire department is not part of the Town's wage and compensation plan and

a comprehensive review of the positions, with regard to compensation has never been done

Apparatus

Our new Engine 6 was delivered on January 31st and was put into service after training and orientation was completed. Unfortunately it had to be taken out of service on several occasions for warranty work. Now back in full service, this four wheel drive vehicle has the ability to pump ample water over long distances to attack brush and wood land fires. In addition the truck carries foam for use on specific types of fires. We are fortunate to have the delivery of our new pick-up truck which replaced our 1997 vehicle. This new vehicle is used as a command and service vehicle.

Fire Prevention

It has been a very busy year in the fire prevention area, with the increase in inspections required in our public facilities and a number of other inspections required in the new State fire prevention regulations.

For fiscal year 2014, I am creating a part time fire prevention/inspection position. In December the job description for this new position was submitted to the personnel board for review and approval. This part time position is necessary due to the limited part-time hours of the Chief. In addition the State this year developed a training and credential program for individuals conducting fire prevention and inspection activities. As our community grows, especially with new housing, the area of inspections and fire prevention activities will increase. In addition to public facility inspections other areas requiring inspections include: oil burners and oil tanks, LP tanks, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on real estate sales, fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, blasting, and fuel oil tank removals.

Projects

While the school expansion and renovation project came to a close in the fall the department responded to a total of 18 false alarms from the construction during the summer months. With the completion of the school project we now have a source of water in the form of an on-site 80,000 gallon cistern. This is a huge fire protection benefit to the Town. The new Spalding building is fully fire sprinklered and is one of the safest buildings in town due to its construction and modern fire protection systems.

We met with the developer and engineer on the Benfield Farms Project and completed a preliminary review of the fire protection system requirements. In December, we reviewed a plan for a Conservation Cluster on Long Ridge Road and lastly; we are working on a project utilizing the help of our senior tax workers to map all of our water sources utilizing GIS.

In February, we received \$103,000 worth of firefighter self-contained breathing apparatus. This equipment is state of the art, lighter, and uses the latest technology. We were awarded a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) to purchase this equipment which allowed us to replace our 15 year old equipment.

Emergency Management

We experienced Hurricane Sandy in October and Carlisle declared a State of Emergency. The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) met before the onset of the storm and each day to participate in a conference call with State officials who provided us with weather information and available resources. We worked very closely with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, Region 1 in Tewksbury and our local resources. Blackboard Connect was used several times to update and advise residents via telephone, text and e-mail during the storm. N Star has a new on-line portal which is now used by the emergency management director to report power outages and wires down. The LEPC is headed by the fire chief as the director and includes, Douglas Stevenson, Board of Selectmen, Tim Goddard, Town Administrator, Chief Fisher, Carlisle Police Dept., John Luther, Building Commissioner, David Klein, COA Director, Linda Fantasia, Board of Health Agent, Gary Davis, Supt. of Public Works, and Alan Lewis (HAM Radio Officer). This dedicated group of individuals makes a very powerful team to assess the situation, plan and direct the Town's emergency responses. During the storm some lost power for a few hours while many lost it for much longer. The LEPC expressed its displeasure to the commissioner of the Department of Public Utilities regarding the utility companies' lack of response to the emergency conditions around town during the first 24 hours. We found this unacceptable and are continuing to work with the utility to improve their service to Carlisle.

Fire Alarm Codes

The fire alarm code system has been updated. The new listing can be found on our web page, at the Town web site www.carlislema.gov

Preventing False Fire Alarms

During the calendar year the department responded to 65 residential fire alarms. This is the second largest number of responses to calls for the department. Almost all of these alarms are preventable and we seek your help in reducing them.

The department would like to make the following suggestions in this effort:

Maintaining Your Fire Alarm System and Preventing false Alarms

- Be careful when cooking.
- Have contractors cover smoke detectors before works begins to prevent dust contamination
- Have your fire alarm system cleaned, inspected, and tested at least once each year

- Replace smoke detectors that are 10 years old
- Be sure that your alarm service contractor calls the fire department before working on/or testing your system

Don't forget to uncover the smoke detectors after the work is complete!

Always remember to call your alarm monitoring company before testing your system to prevent a false alarm and fire department response.

Calls & Statistics

We ended the calendar year with a total of 410 calls. The department responded to 228 fire calls and 182 emergency medicals. During Hurricane Sandy in October, the station was staffed around the clock. We responded to a total of 60 calls for assistance from our residents in a 24 hour period. On July 9th we had a two alarm structure fire on River Road and in December we fought a three alarm structure fire on Cross Street. At both of these fires we activated our Emergency Canteen Team to provide food and drink for the emergency personnel at the scene. We are very grateful to Captain Supple, Larry Bearfield and Robin Emerson of Fern's as well as Molly and Catherine Sorrows, and Liz Bishop for responding to our call. The service they provide is not only welcome, but so very much appreciated by everyone on the department.

We experienced several unforeseen expenses during the last six months of the year. These included a computer server crash, a hurricane, and two structure fires 18 responses to false alarms and the inspection time necessary to see the school project to completion was extraordinary. Finally the hours required to review the Benfield Farms Project has impacted the budget as well.

As the department grows in terms of vehicles and people we face cramped quarters and difficult conditions for conducting department business. In addition there is a severe lack of storage space within the building and the mechanical room cannot hold any more equipment. We experienced difficulty in trying to bring the new municipal fiber cable into the station this fall.

The Central Middlesex Emergency Rescue Authority's Advanced Life Support system is now in its third year. Procedures were implemented on July 1st in accordance with the new State Law requiring public safety answering points (PSAP's) to provide emergency medical instructions to the 911 caller when appropriate. This is called EMD or Emergency Medical Dispatch. The goal is to provide appropriate pre-arrival emergency medical instruction over the telephone to the individual calling. In many cases this instruction can be lifesaving prior to the arrival of emergency responders. Carlisle dispatchers answering 911 calls determine the nature of the call and then transfer the call to Pro-EMS. Pro-EMS provides the EMD as a service to the Town. The dispatcher may stay on the line with the caller while the EMT's, ambulance and police are dispatched.

EMT's received training on new regulations regarding Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST). These new regulations allow a person to have medical orders developed in conjunction with their physician that directs their care should they have a sudden illness or injury and need to be transported to the hospital in an emergency. More information may be found at <http://molst-ma.org/about>

Our annual Open House was held on October 20th thanks to the efforts and support of the Carlisle Firefighter's Relief Association. Many residents attended and took the opportunity to see the apparatus, equipment, and speak with the firefighters. The highlight of the afternoon was Peter Robinson from A.C. & M Fire Equipment of Acton who once again provided a spectacular and rare opportunity to learn about portable fire extinguishers, their use and application. The demonstration included live fires and the use of the portable fire extinguisher. Refreshments were served and literature on various fire safety related topics was available. In addition, the department used this venue as an opportunity for individuals interested in becoming involved with the department to learn more. I'm happy to report two individuals came forward and are currently going through the candidate selection process.

I have completed my tenth year as your fire chief. It is important to note that Deputy Chief White provides essential support to the chief's position during the year. I am very appreciative of his help and support in the daily operations of the department. Since we have no full time staff it is also important to note the work of the officers in assisting with the management of the department. Thanks need to also go to Captain Supple, Lieutenant Koning, Lieutenant Svatek and EMS Coordinator Rubenstein for their hard work and dedication to the smooth operation of the department. I am thankful too for each and every one of our firefighters and EMT's. Carlisle is truly blessed to have this group willing to be available to respond to their fire and emergency medical needs during the year.

David R. Flannery
Chief of the Fire Department