**SUNAPEE BOARD OF FIREWARDS**
**Approved Meeting Minutes**
Safety Services Building – 9 Sargent Road
July 7, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

**Present:** Neil Senior, John Paris, Rick Mastin

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** Town Manager Shannon Martinez; Lieutenant Timothy White; Captain Steve Marshall; members of the Fire Department

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
   The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

   **Mr. Paris made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2026 meeting. Mr. Mastin seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-0.**

3. **FULL-TIME FIRE CHIEF HIRING**
   Mr. Senior reviewed information from the State Division of Fire Standards and Training & EMS regarding what the Fire Academy can offer to assist in hiring a fire chief. It included outreach and marketing, screening applications, interview/question development, and interviews. They discussed who would be on the interview panel and the process of selecting qualified candidates. Mr. Senior will request that they provide regular updates.

   The Board agreed that comprehensive background checks should be conducted on the top three candidates. Town Manager Martinez will research companies that provide this service and obtain cost proposals to present to the Board. She reviewed the Department budget and funds available to cover this process.

   The Board agreed to move forward with the Academy. They also agreed on the importance of providing an update to the community, which Mr. Senior will draft for Board approval.

   Mr. Paris noted the high cost/lack of availability of housing in Sunapee and suggested the Board consider how to address this, to avoid losing good candidates.

4. **DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Board reviewed current personnel levels. Lt. White offered an update on the status of hiring three firefighters and their gear needs. They discussed the need to create a replacement schedule for equipment in light of the NFPA 1971 requirement to replace gear after ten years.

The group discussed responses to calls, including expectations and the need for staffing to provide adequate coverage. They also discussed the impact of mutual aid.

**5. FY2027 BUDGET PLANNING**

Town Manager Martinez reported the Selectboard is working on creating a mission, vision, and priorities. This big-picture strategy should help departments create better budgets. She reviewed the budget calendar, noting that the process will begin on August 17th.

**6. PER DIEM PLANNING AND PROTOCOLS**

Mr. Senior acknowledged Lt. White's work on per diem planning and protocols, noting the need to build off it to create a more robust plan that provides structure and consistency. The group discussed the need for structure for per diems and policies for the Department. They suggested obtaining policies from other Towns to help in this process.

Town Manager Martinez stressed the importance of being mindful of Department of Labor rules, as it does not recognize per diems, and the need to add administrative layers to protect the Town.

The Board will review the proposed protocols for discussion and approval at the next meeting.

**7. STRATEGY GUIDELINES FOR DEPARTMENT DIRECTION**

Mr. Senior said this is on the Firewards list of items to address.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Senior asked for detail about the contract with New London for ambulance and dispatch services, and the group discussed this.

Lt. White reported that due to communication issues with the company outfitting the vehicle that will become Car 1, they are considering using a different company to complete the work.

**9. NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

**Mr. Paris made a motion to enter a non-public session. Mr. Mastin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

The Board went into non-public session at 3:27 p.m.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

By the power of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted,*
*Beth Hanggeli, Recording Secretary*