

HUDSON, NH BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of the July 18, 2006 Workshop

1. **CALL TO ORDER** by Chairman Richard Maddox at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall, 12 School St.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Fire Chief Shawn Murray.

3. **ATTENDANCE**

Selectmen: Richard J. Maddox, Shawn N. Jasper, Kenneth J. Massey and Benjamin J. Nadeau. Selectman Kathleen MacLean was on a pilgrimage.

Staff/Others: Steve Malizia, Town Administrator; Priscilla Boisvert, Executive Assistant; Shawn Murray, Fire Chief; Deputy Fire Chief of Operations Gary Rogers and Deputy Chief of Support Services Charlie Chalk; Doug Robinson, HLN; Ashley Smith, TEL

4. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. **Fire Department Discussion Items**

Chairman Maddox asked for a brief overview of the Fire Department. Chief Murray said the mission of the Hudson Fire Department is to preserve life, property and the environment from man-made and natural disasters, while providing emergency medical services, fire and rescue operations, communications, public education and fire prevention programs. Currently, the Hudson Fire Department has 66 personnel on its employee roster, as follows: Fire Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, 4 full-time Captains, 1 Captain of the Call force, 4 full-time Lieutenants, 1 Call force Lieutenant, 24 full-time firefighters, 20 Call force firefighters, 4 Dispatchers, 1 Fire Inspector, 1 Fire Prevention Officer, 1 Executive Secretary and 1 Secretary.

The Operations Division of the Hudson Fire Department, supervised by Deputy Gary Rogers, is the largest division of personnel responsible for response to requests for fire and EMS services. This division consists of four shifts of eight personnel, working two 10-hour days and two 14-hour nights, with four days off between duty shifts. The Hudson Fire Department provides coverage to the citizens of Hudson 24-hours a day, 365 days per year. The Fire Department has three stations in Town, two of which are manned around the clock—the Lenny Smith Central Fire Station on Library Street and the Burns Hill Fire Station on Burns Hill Road. The Robinson Road Fire Station is manned by Call force personnel and recall of full-time personnel, when apparatus from that station is needed.

The Support Services Division, supervised by Deputy Charlie Chalk, includes 4 Dispatchers, the Fire Inspector and the Fire Prevention Officer. The Dispatchers are the first people the citizens come in contact with when someone calls for assistance. The State of NH 9-1-1 public service answering point, which is located in Concord, NH, routes calls for fire and emergency medical services to the Hudson Fire Department. A Dispatcher located at Central Fire Station processes all emergency and business calls from the public. The FPO and Fire Inspector provide a wide array of services to the public, including plan review, assembly and occupancy inspections, and assists contractors with building projects and developments, both business and residential related. Additionally, both individuals conduct fire investigation and public education duties, among others.

The Fire Department continues to experience a rise in the number of calls for service, which include, but are not limited to, requests for fire and EMS emergencies, inspectional services, service calls and other non-emergency requests for services. The Town's population is projected to continue to increase by 1.4% per year, over the next 20 years. If these projections hold true, an additional 6,402 persons will be added to Hudson's population by 2020. With an estimated population of 29,330 in 2020, Hudson will continue to reflect a suburban community, with urban elements, including non-residential and multi-family residential development. The Hudson Fire Department provides protection to 28.5 sq. miles of land and approximately 0.8 miles in inland water areas.

- 1) **Facilities and Facilities Study**

Chairman Maddox said the Board had a copy of the January 30, 2006 document and asked the Chief if any of it had been updated. Chief said no, that it still provides a good overview of some of the issues facing the department's facilities. In January 2006, former Selectman Cole made a motion that was seconded by Selectman Stewart, that the Fire Department be directed to develop an RFP for the purpose of soliciting a comprehensive facility study, including but not limited to valuation of the current structural, mechanical, energy-efficient configuration and livability conditions for each of the three Hudson fire stations. Also, it shall provide recommendations and cost estimates for addressing any deficiencies noted. It shall assess current station location and configurations in relation to anticipated fire and public safety requirements through the year 2025 and shall provide recommendations and cost estimates relative to the station relocation, as applicable, with said RFP to be sent to the Board for its consideration at a workshop to be conducted on 30 May (carried 5-0).

About a year ago, during their preparation for budgets, they began to see the aging of the fire station. Last year, they wanted to do a major renovation of the upstairs kitchen at Central Fire Station, which was built in

1952. Burns Hill Fire Station and Robinson Road Fire Station were built in the late 70's, early 80's. The facilities are getting older and the heating/HVAC systems are becoming challenging and the electrical systems are becoming overloaded. In the past year, a significant amount of money was spent on emergency repairs on the heating/air conditioning system at Central Station. He had approached his then-liaison, Selectman Cole, that they really would like to find out the condition of all of the facilities in the Fire Department, to better allow them to present to the Board some suggestions and recommendations on where they stand facility-wise, looking at the structural stability. Do they need extensive renovations? Do they have to change some of the systems to make them more energy-efficient? Along with that, Selectman Maddox expressed an interest in looking at where the stations are currently located. The Chief said his research has shown that it goes way back to the early 70's, when they were starting to consider building the stations, they consulted the Insurance Service Organization, who wrote a document which recommended that a fire station should be placed exactly where Robinson Road Station is, and the same with Burns Hill Station. A lot of that was based on the public classification and distances that ISO said a fire truck or station should be located to try to reach all areas of Town; at that time, it was within a mile and a half.

Continuing, Chief Murray said in their packets, the Board got a general overview of the condition of all of the stations and some of the major challenges they would be facing in the next year. Deputy Chief Rogers came up with a RFP for a fire station evaluation and a facilities study, which was before them tonight. When Selectmen Nadeau and Maddox came into office, the department did a comprehensive tour of all three stations. If anyone else would like a tour, that can be arranged. A number of areas were pointed out that need to be considered, as they move into the next budget season, adding the Board might want to look into long-term facilities maintenance or capital improvements.

Selectman Jasper said he certainly thinks they need to look at these things, but he was having a little bit of trouble thinking they should spend money to do both at the same time. If they did a facilities study and had a strong recommendation that all or any of the stations were in the wrong place, to have done a thorough facilities evaluation would have been a waste of money. It seems that they ought to do either one or the other. If they need to look at the locations of the stations, that's where they ought to go. He was wondering what the Chief's criteria was for deciding where the stations would be located, ideally speaking—starting from a blank slate. Chief Murray said they already have a benchmark established by ISO. They'd have to look at an aerial view to see where the most development is. In 20 years, the 102 corridor could be developed as much as Lowell Road. A lot of what is looked at in station location studies has to do with calls for service, response times and NFPA standards to see where they can balance the location of the stations to get there within a certain amount of time. Some general studies were done and, without much data. Maps were drawn by NRPC and when they looked at the Town geographically, they expanded the response districts out until each of the districts were overlapping each other. That is why they wanted to go into a more specific station location study, to try and determine what they would use to measure that. Selectman Jasper said Chief Nutting had always told him, to locate those two stations, he started out with a compass and the ISO rating was three miles to get the insurance break. He started out with a compass three miles from Central, then he played around Town, trying to locate the stations so the maximum amount of houses would be covered. The only house, at that time, that didn't come in within that three mile radius, was off Bush Hill Road near the Pelham line. They wouldn't be able to move the stations very far and still stay within the ISO rating. Maybe that's not practical in terms of moving the stations. If they are talking about an additional station, that's a whole different discussion. In terms of where the calls are, that would be an interesting exercise. They probably have everything within their computer system, if someone wrote a program, to extrapolate the data. Chief Murray said that's essentially what they do. At the time the Burns Hill Station was built, the compass drawing was sufficient enough to meet the ISO requirement. In looking at all three stations, if he had to move one, it would have to go towards the south end of Hudson to deal with the increased growth and development there. If Burns Hill Fire Station is eliminated, they would lose all that coverage.

Chairman Maddox thought the ISO looked at more than just a circle drawn on a map, but at road conditions. You can't build up as much speed on Wason Road that you could on Lowell Road. Even though the distance is greater, the road is straighter, so it takes less time. The ISO looks at a number of variables, beyond just a distance factor. Chief Murray said yes—speed, topography, etc. Selectman Jasper said that's where he was going next, and there are two possibilities there. They are talking a lot of money to build new fire stations, and then people will lose their ISO ratings and people won't be happy if their insurance goes up. Perhaps they should consider the upgrade to the infrastructure. They are still talking about the possibility with the potential development that that leg of the circumferential highway would be built as a Town road, and that was one of the considerations that Chief Nutting made—although it was going to be a limited access highway, his intention was that since the access to the circumferential highway was less than 1,000 feet, that there would be an emergency access for fire apparatus on to that, which would get you to Lowell Road much more quickly. Until that whole thing plays out, they have an unanswered question there, as well. If it were to be built as a Town road, you'd have an access right there on Wason Road at Musquash, which would give the access needed and take care of the curves on Wason Road. Otherwise, they've got to look at what to do to straighten out Wason Road to make it sufficient because that is not a good road to be bringing fire apparatus down. They've got a number of considerations, a lot of which are political decisions that the Board needs to make. It would be helpful to limit the first part of the study to getting a computer program written to take the

data already in the system to see where the calls are and map it out with the response times to see how it could be best addressed.

Chief Murray said, if the Board was willing to entertain the concept, the IAFF has this software and they do station location studies at no cost to the communities. They come in and extrapolate the response data and feed it into the location data. Some people have a concern that the results would be biased, but he didn't think it was, that it's simply raw data, which is verified by the Fire Chief. It would at least tell them if they were aligned in the area. The critical elements come in when you start dealing with Burns Hill Road and Central Fire Station. If the Board wanted him to come back with more definitive information about the IAFF program, he'd be willing to do that.

Selectman Massey said his recollection from last year, when the Chief gave his presentation on the rationale for hiring two new full-time firefighters, was that the Chief had the service records broken out by the three stations. Chief Murray said they have the data available, but they need software programs that inputs certain formulas. Selectman Massey said in terms of call services, they actually saw the number of calls that came from Central, Robinson and Burns Hill. Selectman Jasper said Selectman Massey was looking at just the gross data, but the Board needs to know specific roads. They would be able to find out where the calls were on a specific road, with the response time. If they saw a large concentration of calls over a two or three year period in a section of Town, that might tell you something, versus just the raw data telling them the averages. Chief Murray said that's exactly what it does because they put in the road, its length, speed limits, etc., and it can grab traffic data and it plots all of that. Eventually, it shows them where stations should be located, or it may confirm that the stations, where they are, is fine.

Selectman Massey said they've danced around this for the last year or so, but it strikes him that they sited the Police Station where it is on the assumption that there was going to be a circumferential, and the exit to 111 was right near the station. Now he is hearing that a previous Chief for the Fire Department thought that Burns Hill would be near the highway. What he's mulling in his mind right now is that perhaps it is time to step up to the plate and put a warrant article on the ballot for next year to fund an engineering proposal to create a two-lane Town road from 111 to Lowell Road with the five intersections that are there with traffic lights, that those would be the only access points. A lot of the problems they are talking about in terms of where things are located would change, if trucks at Burns Hill could get on to that road and get anywhere in the south, and the Police Department could go from 111 to Lowell Road very quickly. He proposed an action item to consider funding an engineering proposal to determine what the cost would be to build such a road.

Chairman Maddox said the previous Fire Chief came to the CIP five or six years ago and said he wanted \$1/2 million to refurbish Burns Hill Station, but what he really wanted was \$15,000 to do a siting study. Ever since, that suggestion has been kicked around, but nothing was ever done about it. Maybe they should do that study, at least, whether they use the IAFF or some other service. The first thing they need to know is where the stations should be, with caveats to say if the circumferential ever becomes a Town road, and if there is ever a huge development in the south end of Town, if that siting study would change, and get that piece done. Then, maybe the facilities study on the Lenny Smith Central Station, because that station won't go anywhere any time soon. It serves a need for a very dense section of Town. That facility is 50 years old, so it should be looked at in terms of numbers, what it will take to get that station up to par, as far as electrical, structural, livability, etc. They have a number of issues and need to figure out how to address them. He asked the liaison, Selectman Nadeau, for his thoughts.

Selectman Nadeau said they have to look at upgrading the livability of the stations. The Burns Hill Station kitchen is cramped. Maybe things could be moved around to make it more livable. This year, they need to look at Central Station to see what they can do with the kitchen, the electrical, etc. Deputy Chief Rogers said there is a big list for the 54-year old Central Station. The air conditioning system that was put in 20 years ago wasn't calculated correctly.

(Start Tape 1-B)

Gear is stored in the basement, which isn't good. They have a dehumidifier running down there, but gear shouldn't be stored in a moist area. There are a number of things, not just the electrical and plumbing. Selectman Nadeau asked if the gear could be stored at Robinson Road. Deputy Rogers said there's no room there, either. They have four rooms upstairs that are storage areas for files.

Chief Murray said there are at least four separate air conditioning systems at Central Station. There is the main boiler downstairs and in the attic, there are four handlers. They had to put a modified air conditioning system in Dispatch because the electronic equipment was generating so much heat, that even a window air conditioner wouldn't work. Mechanically, overall, this isn't very energy efficient. As the department grew, they had to add more of those types of systems. The electrical system is circa 1952. During the past year, they had to do some emergency electrical repairs in the kitchen and this year they are going to replace the stove. Overall, Central Fire Station is in serious condition and needs to be looked at good. Burns Hill fire station was built as a call fire station, and served very well for many years, but is now housing three firefighters, cramped in one bedroom that should hold only two people.

Chairman Maddox asked if the basic direction was to have the Chief limit the facilities study only to Central Station, since they pretty much know that station isn't going to go anywhere. Selectman Jasper said that was reasonable.

Chairman Maddox said the second direction was to investigate a siting study, utilizing the methods the Chief outlined, with the caveat that understand there is the potential for a large development and, possibly, a roadway that goes from Lowell Road to 111. Selectman Jasper said the only thing he questions on a facilities study at Central is the ability to follow through. Maybe they ought to focus on one element at a time. A lot of the electrical in use is relatively new. He didn't know about the service downstairs, but when the large meeting room was divided up, that was all new electrical work. The Captains' office upstairs, the bedrooms, etc., and whatever else is up there, that whole area was rewired and is not that old. That's not to say the service entrance doesn't need a lot of work and replacement, but maybe they would be better off, cost-effectively, to concentrate of what they thought they could handle within the budget within a year. If the big thing is electrical, go out and get a proposal to upgrade the electrical, then tackle the other issues as they come along. If they spend a lot of money, then look at the price tag and see it's high, are they going to put a bond out there? That's not likely. Then they decide to piecemeal it and divide it up into five years and what they get today is useless in terms of developing a cost and, four years down the road, other things are going to change. That's his thoughts that he wanted to throw out for consideration.

Chairman Maddox disagreed, saying a comprehensive study needs to be done. If it needs HVAC work, duct work may need to be done, which will affect the electric, etc.—all the various aspects are intertwined. In a building that old, they need to look at everything. If structural changes are needed, they need to consider shoring up or bracing up. There is also asbestos in the attic, which is a nuisance item, and the regulations are not going to get less strict. They may not do it all at once, but at least they would know what exists in one report, and then they can decide what to do first. They may realize a cost savings from fuel and electricity by replacing old equipment with more efficient equipment.

Chief Murray said the issue is one of service versus overall rewiring. The Fire Department is tied in with Town Hall and there are some major service capacity issues with Town Hall, also, relative to the generator. They are pretty well maxed out. When they put in the Plymovent system in, but if they do anything else over there, it's going to require some major service work. Chairman Maddox said the report before them indicated there were ungrounded outlets throughout the building. Those are the kinds of things they need to find out and may cost a few more dollars up front, but at least they can prioritize better if they know the total picture.

Selectman Massey said his take was that if they wanted to understand what really needs to be done in that building, they need to do the whole piece. They may not be able to fund it all at once, but he agrees with the Chairman. If they understand what all the things are, and how they inter-relate with each other, they can then decide which is the most important thing to take first, but at least they'd have a road map for the whole building. If they do it the other way, they run the risk that they fix something, but when it comes to the next project, they have to unfix, because they didn't think ahead. He thinks it would be important for Central Station to do a complete renovation proposal. He asked why the Chief only selected the companies he had on his list—the usual suspects. Why wouldn't they put this out to bid and let any and all comers respond to it?

Chief Murray said when this was written, they only used people they had experience with. Since that time, he has developed other vendors, and it could be put out all over. Selectman Massey said if they do it the way they've been talking about, it would strike him that they'd have two different companies working on the project. One to do the renovations and the other to do the siting project. That's his recommendation.

Selectman Jasper didn't disagree with what Chairman Maddox said. However, if they are going to do this, they ought to take it one step further. This is an item that sticks in his craw, going back to the Town Council days. When Chief Nutting was still Chief and he was a Selectman in his first time around, they looked at the needs for Central Fire Station and Town Hall. They had pretty much come to the agreement that what made sense was to continue Town Hall over to the apparatus bay, but not step it back as had been done because that would keep the front of Town Hall looking the same and they would not lose the parking spaces in the rear, which they lost as a result of stepping it back. At the same time, they felt it would be smart to design a second floor above the ladder bay for the expansion of the Fire Department and, in doing that, the plan was to put an elevator in the corner of the two, to service both Town Hall and the Fire Station, including the new area. But Chief Nutting retired and the Board of Selectmen went out of existence. The Town Council came in and wouldn't listen to anybody, so they ended up with a "\$500,000 abortion," as he calls it. If they are going to look at the whole facility, they ought to look at the infrastructure with the capability to support that long-needed, long thought of addition above the ladder bay. It was designed, ultimately, to be a second floor; planned to be a second floor, and that's the only way they are going to take care of that space. Unfortunately, Town Hall didn't get designed to work with that elevator, which would have worked perfectly to service everything and they wouldn't have that God-awful ramp up the front of the building. They should factor in that square footage for heating, electrical and ventilation.

Chief Murray said he couldn't agree more. A second floor there would give them additional square footage to make that first floor an open pay type garage that it originally was. They have a mechanical room and a weight room down there. It is, essentially, a box built off the overhead door off the back of the station. It would be a benefit to look at it to see if it can be done or not. Chairman Maddox said the study would not only be the deficiencies in the existing infrastructure and building, but recommendations as to what would make the station viable and livable for the next 25-30 years. Look at not only fixing what's wrong today, but what they might be able to do in the future. If the roof is already built to hold a second floor, maybe that wouldn't be such a big expense to add space for a relatively low cost. Selectman Massey said they might even be able to get combined dispatch up there. Chairman Maddox thought that would require a secure facility, but it was an idea.

Chief Murray asked if the Board was interested in looking at a proposal from the IAFF for a station location study. Since several responses were in the affirmative, Chief Murray said he'd put that together and bring it to the Board at a regular meeting. Chairman Maddox said the \$15,000 number was thrown around; a school might do it, just to show them the difference between the free and what they'd get for \$15,000. What is the difference between the two? Chief Murray asked if the Board wanted to see a comparison. Chairman Maddox said if they could, in case one just gives a basic four wheels and a motor and the other gives automatic transmission—a lot more detail of what they will get. Selectman Massey said it would be better to have a proposal that they put out for bid. If they want to do this, they need to do it the way they thing is the right thing to give them the right answers. The IAFF may only give them 10% of what they need. They have to start from what they need and have the responding companies bid on that. Selectman Jasper said they don't have any money in the budget to do that and what the IAFF could give them would be a good starting point. They may look at the data and decide it's not feasible to move the stations because they are already 90% there; or they may feel it has to be looked at in depth. If it's free and there are no strings attached, getting the data is going to do that same thing that a \$15,000 study does. The conclusion may be the same with the IAFF study and the \$15,000 study. After they get the free study, they may feel it is flawed, but at least they have a starting point. Then they can go out and do the full blown study. He didn't see any harm in getting a free study, when clearly they don't have \$15,000 budgeted for it—and they are only 18 days into the fiscal year. The Board would be well advised to listen to what IAFF has to offer.

Selectman Massey said free is always nice, but nothing is free in life. Unless they start with an objective—what they want—the IAFF has a vested interest in the outcome of such a study. He's not saying they would bet a biased study; he's simply saying that unless you start with a set of criteria you are going to judge the response on, you aren't in a position to know if the results are biased in favor of adding things. Chairman Maddox said he was trying to split the baby. He thought they could just ask the company what they would get for \$15,000—some kind of brochure. That's all he was looking for; he wasn't looking to spend any money, at this point. He was just looking for some middle ground.

Selectman Jasper didn't have any problem looking at the data, but IAFF has a computer program and they just plug in the data and come up with the results. A study will go in and look at a lot more. That's his understanding of what they would get. He didn't know if there was any vested interest. IAFF has probably developed the program because they felt that in certain communities they really have a problem with response time and then it gives them the data to be able to say we need more stations, or we need different locations. He didn't think this would lead to a conclusion that more personnel is needed. Selectman Massey said he wasn't assuming personnel. Selectman Jasper said the Board will do with the data what that want to do with the data, but he didn't have any objection to seeing what the differences were.

Chief Murray said Selectman Jasper was correct. The Fire Department does the leg work, providing the information. They extrapolate the data and the IAFF uses their software, but he can provide more information on the IAFF, which will provide, at least, a benchmark. They may find out that the ISO formula that was done in the 70's is correct. Before the Board invests money in more definitive things, he recommends the IAFF proposal. Selectman Nadeau asked if they knew of any towns around here that has used the IAFF study. Chief Murray said yes, quite a few have. Selectman Nadeau said that's something he'd like to see. Chief Murray said he'd bring it in with his proposal. Selectman Nadeau said he'd like to see it before then.

Chief Murray said he was all set with IAFF, but to reiterate, the Central Fire Station comprehensive study to include the possible expansion of the ladder bays. Chairman Maddox said whatever else they feel is a suitable addition to make that station viable for the next 30 years.

Selectman Jasper said maybe it's time to talk about the feasibility of raising the garage doors. One of the things in the report was the possibility of lowering the ceilings, but that may be in conflict with raising the doors. As part of that, they ought to look at the feasibility of raising those doors, if it makes sense. The question goes back to the apparatus. They had to go with the custom truck, and there's nothing wrong with going with a custom truck, even if it's a truck that's a foot and a half higher, but do they limit themselves, and should they look at that as part of this? Does that fit into this request? He didn't know, but it certainly changes some other dynamics, in terms of the ceiling, and that's what he was thinking of. If it makes sense to

lower the ceiling because the doors are only this high, but now you've lowered the ceiling and later on, you decide to raise the doors, you've wasted a lot of money.

Chairman Maddox said that's part of the feasibility for the next 30 years. Fire trucks aren't going to get shorter. Selectman Jasper said he's thought too many things over the years and found out that, because he didn't voice them, they didn't actually become part of the reality. You cannot assume anything. Selectman Massey thought they should include it, for no other reason than to lay to rest whether it is or is not feasible, so they don't end up having a discussion three years from now, if only, if only, if only. He didn't believe they could lower the ceilings because of the garage door openers right now. They should include whether it's technically possible to raise the doors on both the main station and the ladder bay doors.

Chief Murray said, with all due respect to the Board, after the experience with the latest fire engine because the Board was concerned about the height, he wanted to go on record as saying he didn't feel the apparatus bay doors truly are a height issue for the fire apparatus they were dealing with. However, he didn't have a problem taking a look at it as part of the facilities study. After all of the research he did for the Board, which involved Selectman Massey with some of the engineering stuff when they brought the first engineer in, that the future fire trucks are not going to be an issue as far as height goes. They already demonstrated that. When they spec'ed out the new fire truck, they specified a certain height, and had five vendors tell them that the cab they were asking for was a standard height. The cab wasn't custom cut, or anything. This particular cab they got is a standard height, and is typical of other manufacturers, too. When they do the study, they can look at this issue again. He didn't have a problem with doing that, but they've already spent \$2,200 to see if it is feasible.

(Start Tape 2-A)

2) **Apparatus Replacement/New Engine**

Chief Murray said two years ago, he completed a vehicle replacement program. During the budget process, the Town Administrator put together a vehicle replacement document for all of the Town departments, using the Fire Department's schedule, which brings it out 25 years. The Fire Department's apparatus includes ambulances. An Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund was established in the 90's. At that time, the Town said that every three years, they were going to replace an ambulance, which they run for nine years. It has been a very successful program. As they get to the nine year mark, they see new technology. The vehicles get run very hard, through all kinds of weather conditions. It has many types of systems on board and demands a huge electrical draw. After nine years, the electrical systems are tired. He encouraged continuing with this vehicle replacement program. He and Deputy Chalk will be before the Board on July 25 to make a recommendation for the replacement of the 1998 Road Rescue, having gone through the bid process. They were allocated \$120,000 this time around. In the past, they have been fortunate, taking the trade-in into account, which brings it into the window. As the Board gets into the budget season this year, they are going to request that the amount be raised to \$140,000 for a new ambulance, because of the increase in cost for steel and fuel. If the Board approves the trade-in of the ambulance, they will stay within the \$120,000 amount.

They just replaced the 1990 KME with a new KME engine at a cost of \$332,000 with an allocation of \$350,000. This year, he is going to ask the Board to consider replacing the 1992 KME. They are so back to back, in the next 15 years or so, they will be in the same boat again. He and Chairman Maddox have discussed the apparatus replacement plan in the past two years, and the Chief was asked to come up with some different options. Relative to replacing the 1992 KME, there are several ways to do that. When the Budget Committee approved taking some of the Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund money and some of the contingency money to purchase the vehicle outright and not put it on a long term lease program, that worked out very well. That took a major cost item for an apparatus that could be problematic over the years, as costs go up. He has other options to consider, which include anywhere from a lease purchase of a fire engine where the Town would consider taking \$100,000 from the Capital Reserve and then putting that money down and going to a lease-purchase over a three to five year period. Another option for consideration is, as they read the vehicle replacement program over the years, they talk about when they get to the two freight liners in 2013 and 2015, they talk about looking at the Quint concept of fire trucks. The Board could consider, instead of replacing Engine 2, the 1992 KME, maybe take a broad look and go after a Quint now instead of replacing it with another engine, which will buy some more time in the long run. There are many options. When they did the apparatus replacement report, in the foreword that he gave to the Board, he clearly stated that this was a working document and, certainly, political, financial and in some cases, sometimes some of the apparatus may be slated for replacement that year, but they can get a year or two out of it. When he developed the apparatus replacement plan, it is meant for a tool for the Board to use to try to come up with ways to keep it on track. The apparatus capital reserve fund has been under-funded ever since its inception. Obviously, the economy factors into that. Hopefully, there will be some consideration given to boost that up, or come up with some creative financing over the next few years, because they will eventually face some expensive apparatus replacements.

Chairman Maddox asked what the replacement schedule was based on. Hours? Miles? Runs? Age? Or a combination thereof. Chief Murray said it was based mainly on projected service life, but also on recommendations from NFPA and a lot of the research he did when he was writing the report. Chairman

Maddox asked if the new truck's expected life span was 14-16 years. Chief Murray said he was reluctant to answer that because years ago, a Chief said 20 years, which he thought was correct at the time. However, he would estimate 15 years. Chairman Maddox asked if X amount more was spent on maintenance on a routine basis, if that would buy them another five years. His 'other' job takes him to many fire departments who are running 30-year old vehicles as front line apparatus. Are they doing a better job of maintenance? Are they doing something different that Hudson is missing? Why is Hudson looking to replace two 15-year old vehicles that they bought at \$225,000 and \$333,000 with \$6,000 in trade-in? Is it worthwhile, as an option, to rehab the 1992 at a cost of \$75,000 to get another five years out of it? What are other departments doing that they are running 30 year old vehicles as front line equipment? Chief Murray said what sent his apparatus to an early grave was a significant increase in call volume. There are major shifts in technology in just the last five years, such as electrical systems. Then there's the New England weather. If they are running more, they are more exposed to the elements. They've built up their preventative maintenance, but it's not going to buy them five years. The collateral duty of one of the mechanics is inspecting brakes. He was sent to one of the shops and was told how to visually inspect the brakes, be able to check whether the canisters were working, and all of that plays into it. The 1992 vehicle has significantly increased its call volume and it is just worn out. As for other departments, what is their call volume? How are they using it? Years ago, the proposal was made that every five years, they would begin to transition out. The history on that would have to be researched, but they were saying that the new apparatus would be run hard for five years, and then use it as a secondary use vehicle, but the 70's vehicles just started dying out, and that plan was never realized; at least that is what he gleaned from his research on this. The 1990 and the 1992 are fire engines in the era that is the last of the older ones that have been run hard and are just tired and are not going to make it.

Selectman Jasper said the Chief was correct in the history of the current apparatus. He has often felt they would be well advised, probably, at about 10-12 years, send the truck out for major rehaul. NY City runs their apparatus very, very long, but they have their own shop, where they totally refurbish their equipment, and other department do that, as well. A lot of cities around Hudson have old apparatus, but the problem is Hudson doesn't do anything major; they wait until the truck breaks. The down side of that is to send a truck out for rehab is that it's out of service for a long period of time. Where he's going with this is he didn't know that there was any other choice other than to replace the engine now or next year, but he wants to take a look at what their real needs are. When they talk about a Quint, they are going to have a real hard time convincing him that this Town needs another aerial device. They are blessed to have Nashua close by; Hudson doesn't have to put their stick up and use it very often in Town. They are talking in the range of \$500,000 for a Quint, which gives the Town another aerial device, which, literally, he couldn't see. Hudson has a marginal justification for having an aerial device. They can't depend too much on Nashua, but Hudson doesn't have much use for an aerial device. They have to evaluate if they need 105, or if an 85 foot stick was needed, and what that would have them. Certainly, they have to have an aerial device, but not another one. He thinks they ought to be looking at the tankers, whether they should be buying 2,000 gallons with a crew cab, which gives them the ability in a short period of time to use that as a backup engine in an outlying station. Maybe they are better off doing that and dropping down—maybe not even dropping down to a fourth engine, but they've got two engines next door, a rescue—what about looking to see if there is a rescue type engine that gives them pumping capability, with maybe less water than 1,000 gallons, but can replace the rescue and they can drop down one vehicle. Have something that serves both needs, and then they have the tankers, with the ability to carry four or five people, when you have an engine down. He'd like to have those options explored because he didn't think they were very efficient with the tankers. He can remember one time when he got in trouble for the engine being down and he was sitting on the milk create between the two seats in the tanker because they had to get the person out there. He shouldn't have done that, but he did, because that's what they were doing at the time. It's unfortunate to lose that engine and now they've only got a two-seat tanker and you can't really operate as a front line pumper. He'd like to hear the Chief's thoughts on that, not necessarily right now, but he will fight tooth and nail against another aerial device.

Chief Murray said Selectman Jasper had some points that should be considered. He wanted to share the thought process on the Quint, an idea which has been thrown around even before his time. Mainly, it is growth in the south end. Maximizing the use of resources when you can put a 75' ladder and have an engine going at the same time, in the long run, eliminates having to send a 105' ladder on a standard fire call. Another reason was looking at how much apparatus they do run, and if there is a way to reduce it. He feels strongly that they need three engines. Selectman Jasper's tanker pumper concept, with a crew cab, isn't a bad idea because when you have a fire engine go down, it will be for a few days, so adjustments have to be made. Over the last year, the 1990 and the 1992 KME were down, and they were running just the freight liners. He isn't hard and fast on the Quint concept, either, even though Chairman Maddox likes them. The concept of a rescue pumper is interesting because one of the trade magazines he was looking at today is showing that fire departments are going towards rescue pumper concepts, which he is more than willing to look at to consolidate and decrease the amount of apparatus they need. Sometimes they can't even get the rescue out on the initial call because they are too busy getting engines and ladders and tankers on the road, so they go second. If they make it a pumper rescue, it becomes more versatile, so he is open to any of those.

Selectman Massey thinks Selectman Jasper has something they can look at as a strong possibility. He's thinking in terms of a couple of things. Number one, they do have the problem that, if an engine goes down,

it's going to be out of service and they are scrambling, but it would seem to him that, if they did that, they would want to institutionalize the major overhaul program. None of the current Selectmen may be here 10 years from now when Engine 4 would be scheduled for that overhaul, and he thinks it would be a wise idea to create a major equipment repair capital reserve fund so that when a large expenditure is required--\$75,000—they would have the money to do it, and it would also serve as a sign post that it's there for a specific reason. And there wouldn't be institutional memory loss as to why it's there. He also thinks, as he's said on many other occasions, they really need to—and it's been said you can't forecast accurately what this equipment is going to cost, but if they think this vehicle replacement schedule is anything close to what needs to happen, the cost—if you look at 2011, if that's when Ladder 2 gets replaced, they are probably talking \$700,000 - \$800,000. Right now, they are putting \$50,000 a year into the capital reserve fund, which may not be sufficient. Maybe during the budget cycle, they should look at whether they should consider increasing the amount of money going into the equipment capital reserve fund—which the Chief has already mentioned—and to create a major capital reserve fund.

Chief Murray said the next one coming up is that engine and if the Board is interested in seeing either a replacement engine or a rescue pumper, they could make some significant progress in the apparatus replacement fund. If you look at the chart, Rescue 1 is due to be replaced in 2010, and they may be able to accomplish both of those and take out a significant cost item from there. They haven't heard about the Assistance to Firefighters grant, which is a positive sign. If they were fortunate enough to get that grant, they could seriously look at a pumper tanker, with that configuration. Selectman Jasper said he'd really like to see how many times the current ladder is actually used—not just stuck up in the air, but how many times it's actually used at a scene. That may be very telling, going from \$350,000 to \$550,000 to get a ladder that you're going to actually use once a month. Less than once a month, probably. That's a lot of money for a truck that's going to last 15 years if they're spending \$200,000 for 10 events a year. That's a lot of money, if you're spending \$12,050 every time you stick it up in the year, just to have that.

Chief Murray said they just had major work done to the ladder last year and it almost comes close to a rebuild on it. His intention is to have it evaluated and he may be able to move that out a year or two. As the Board thinks about this in the future, do they now go spend another \$700,000 for just a ladder truck alone, or do they, perhaps, go back to a 100' Quint and consolidate and use the apparatus more efficiently. He is open to all of that.

Selectman Nadeau said he was looking at the chart, and where they have to replace Engine 2 in the rescue is two years away, going with the rescue pumper would be a good thing. They can kill two birds with one stone. If they get the grant, would this truck qualify for that? Chief Murray said he'd have to check on that, but they specified that it was going to be a tanker, used specifically for water supply. He could talk with FEMA to see if they would allow it, if it could be interpreted that way and switched around. Chairman Maddox said that's why he said to go for the Quint; if they are going to get a truck from the government, go for the big one. The other thing with the Quint, it would give them backup when the ladder was sent out to be refurbished. He's not so sure the ladder needs to be replaced in 2011. They may spend \$150,000 and have it gone for a year and refurbish the entire thing and have a ladder truck that would give them another 15 years, without spending \$1 million. There are a lot of options in the document. He asked that future documents include the truck numbers because Engine 4 is actually Engine 2 now. It gets confusing for some of them who don't know all of the numbers. Chief Murray said he could do that. Chairman Maddox said he's always had a problem with them saying the command vehicle is going to last 10 years, since, historically, it has never made it past five, and the charts don't line up, which is probably because some of the information hasn't been updated. Chief Murray said he took the Chairman's advice and moved some of the cars back. They had originally put in 10 years. His has 22,000 on it now, so it won't last 10 years. Chairman Maddox said the Bronco's frame came off after six. The document needs to show the criteria of what they are going for before he can 'put his arms around it.' Save them the trouble of being asked this during budget time. What is the Chief really basing this on? He understands some of it is purely subjective, but if the ladder has gone out 327 times last year, and it went out 312 times the year before that, what is that number? How is that different from an engine relative to how much use it gets? Address those kinds of questions, so they have some sort of definitive answer, and not just age, but whatever the formula is that is being used, so the Board can explain how the formula was arrived at, and how it is supported. Is the ladder being sent out for \$150,000 a better deal than buying a new one?

(Start Tape 2-B)

He thinks looking at a rescue pumper, something they talked about a long time ago, that's the first vehicle at an accident, which is mostly where you are going to send a rescue, unless it's a specific big issue. Why not have that as a front line vehicle, and either save a vehicle, or already have the equipment there. This is going to be an evolving document that's never going to be cast firm, but will be used as a guideline. The other thing is, this is nice, but what are those items expected to cost, so they can put a realistic number into the capital reserve. If they plan on replacing the ladder in 2011, then they need to put some serious money in there before the ladder is due. Finally, he thinks they need to find a way to separate the two front line vehicles being a year apart. The easiest way might be to schlep it off to another Board, but he thinks they really need to take a look at that because it will be problematic for every Board forever if you have two front line vehicles, for whatever the cost may be then, coming back to back. Selectman Nadeau said it could be changed to a rescue pumper. Chairman Maddox said it's still a big chunk of money, and that's the problem.

Selectman Jasper said relative to the capital reserve, the Selectmen did put more money in there, but the bottom line reality is they have to look at the bottom line on the budget, and the budget that the Board of Selectmen put forward to the Budget Committee was a 13-1/2% hit on the tax rate. They can say they need to put more money in there, and yes, they should, but it's hard to tell people they are going to take a huge chunk of you now to save money later. When they do that, they have to prioritize. In order to put in \$100,000 or \$125,000, some other things aren't going to happen this year in Town. He has always said they have to determine what the hit on the tax rate is going to be, and if the Board says they don't have a problem with a 10% or 15% increase, that's fine. Those are the Board's budget parameters, but be assured, by the time it gets through the Budget Committee, it's going to be back down around 5% or 6%, but those are the decisions that have to be made and realities have to be recognized. He assumes the pumper still have very low mileage. The tanker that replaced it in 1989 was a 1963 Ford and that thing only had about 13,000 miles on it, if he recalls correctly. If they are looking at a tanker pumper, they could probably at least maintain the two years, put some money in the capital reserve, because the problem with replacing this much equipment is if you go into lease-purchases, your budget numbers ratchet up incredibly. The tanker will be 21 years old, but the one it replaced was 35 years old, and that one was sad—in real bad shape and was taken off the road by an inspection by the State. They should never allow their equipment to get that bad, but the last time he saw this one, it was in pretty good shape. This one is a function of age, when you're looking at 20 years, rather than the condition, per se.

Chief Murray said as far as the other tanker goes, in the future, he would seriously like to explore, due to the vast improvements that the Town is looking at in the south end of Town—a new water tank and looping—keeping the second tanker, and will one do the job of two. They have to look at that as they modernize their equipment and the infrastructure becomes more efficient. Selectman Jasper said they have to take into consideration the resources they have around them. The water system is primarily in the center of Town, leaving the outskirts without hydrant protection. In some towns, fire stations are as close to the scene as Hudson's is. He is sure many departments, on a structure fire where they think they need water, are more than happy to put a tanker on the road on a first response. If they have one 2,000 gallon tanker or 2,500 gallon tanker, they could work with other communities. Another thought Chief Nutting had, and it's too bad it didn't come to fruition, was to try to work with the surrounding communities and, instead of everybody having three stations in Town, they'd have a central station and a combined station on every border of every community, allowing for pooling of resources. Unfortunately, that's not the New England way, and probably would work out west. Chief Murray said it's very successful in stronger county forms of government. Selectman Jasper said they could still use that concept, particularly in dealing with tankers.

Chairman Maddox recapped by saying the Board's direction for the new engine was to look at what they can get as a rescue pumper. Selectmen Jasper and Nadeau concurred with that. Chairman Maddox asked if that would be going to Burns Hill. Selectman Jasper said it'd be staying here. Chief Murray said that would have to be determined. If they are going to change to a rescue pumper, they'd have to look at how it was going to be utilized, and they'd have to see what they have for resources. Chairman Maddox said the direction was to look into costs of pumpers, rescue pumpers, and they are looking to put it on the FY08 budget. Selectmen Jasper, Nadeau and Massey agreed. Chairman Maddox said he was the only 'no' vote.

Selectman Massey said he'd be willing to look at that option, if they had another proposal that would say what would it take to extend Engine 2, which is now Engine 4, for another five years. Chairman Maddox what numbers would come out of that. If they spent \$50,000, would they get two years? If they spent \$75,000, would they get three? Selectman Jasper said that may be over the hump, where that is not feasible. That's something you've got to do in that 10-12 year range. By the time a truck is 15, 16 years, it's too late. You now have to put too much money into it. Selectman Nadeau said it wouldn't hurt to look at it. Selectman Jasper said perhaps not, but the Board is giving them a lot to do. He is puzzled by the Chairman's opposition. They were talking about looking at a rescue pumper for 2008, which was when Engine 2 was being looked at replacement, which does that, and he was saying they were backing up. How are they doing that? Chairman Maddox said because in FY06, they just got a new pumper, so they are going to put two front line vehicles back to back. Selectman Jasper said he had misunderstood, thinking he meant putting it off, but the Chairman actually meant putting them too close. Selectman Massey said that's why he was picking up on extending the life of that machine every three years, and widen the gap between the two. Chairman Maddox said they wouldn't put the next Board of Selectmen in the same predicament. Everybody bemoans how they got there, and it may not be doable, but it deserves to be looked at, as it goes through the budgetary cycle, to see if it's feasible. He's not saying he'd go with it, but it deserves to be looked at.

Selectman Nadeau said if they get a rescue pumper, they would be taking rescue out of the picture. Chairman Maddox disagreed. Chief Murray said replacement of Engine 2 is a major step because they are getting past that 15-year engine. Once it is replaced, now is the opportunity for the Board to get on a stringent plan. At either five years, move it to secondary, or at 10 years, they are definitely going to refurb it and get more out of it. Selectman Nadeau was right, that if they are going to go to a rescue pumper, they are going to eliminate the rescue. That's the purpose of going to a rescue pumper. Deputy Chief Rogers said it would at least reduce the need to replace that rescue because it would not be used as often, if they chose not to get rid of it right

away--if you got a rescue pumper, but kept Rescue 1 for some other reason. Chairman Maddox said it holds stuff you couldn't put on an engine. Chief Murray said it could be moved back to a service utility type vehicle that is not going to get the heavy duty run. A rehab vehicle. Selectman Jasper said if it was really going to be used for a rehab vehicle, it's not going to be running under emergency conditions. When the vehicle has finally had it, at that point, they might be able to hold on to an ambulance every time they get rid of it. Instead of getting \$6,000 they are going to hold on to the ambulance for three more years and use it for the same purpose, so they could essentially eliminate the cost of replacing, just by holding on to a vehicle to transport people or sit in rehab, or a different type, more cost-effective vehicle. Their options open up considerably.

Chief Murray said relative to the comment on the refurb, he can look into that. They did look at it on the 1990. In his professional opinion, the 1992 is beyond. In the past three or four years, he has spent \$30,000 - \$40,000 just to keep it running. He thinks, to totally strip it down to refurb it just to buy a couple more years is not cost effective, but he will go through the exercise to prove that to be the case. Selectman Massey asked if the refurb would be a brand new engine. Chief Murray said they could look into that. Selectman Massey thought the biggest problem, as the machine gets older, is the engine has a tremendous amount of running hours on it. What would the cost of a new engine be? And, by putting in a new engine, distress other things. It may turn out that, by putting a new engine in, the transmission can't handle it, etc., etc. He would be looking at, if it is refurbished, it would be an engine replacement.

Deputy Chief Chalk said when they considered refurbing the 1990, it's not the engine that's the biggest problem; it's generally the body, and things on the body, that are coming apart. The engines are kept up. To refurb it, they basically have to pull it apart and rebuild it because the aluminum bodies corrode. That's where the major expense is. The engine can be rebuilt in-chassis. They looked at several ways to rebuild the Detroit's, but that's not a high ticket item and not the biggest cost of the rebuild. The biggest cost is the body refurbing and any problem with the frame. The tank is a poly tank, so that's not a problem. The pump itself is generally in a workable state because it gets inspected and tested yearly. The body rebuild will kill them, and they had one of the best in NH look at the truck. His opinion was yes, it can be done, but they will spend a lot of money with a lot of metal replacement on the truck.

Selectman Massey said, as Chairman Maddox said, the key is if they can widen the gap between the two engines, so they are not faced with a heavy hit every two years, a lot of money may not be a lot of money. Until they know the actual cost, and how long the life would be extended, it may turn out that it is doable. If it's \$150,000 that is not feasible, but if it's \$75,000 it might be worth it. Selectman Jasper said that's why part of this has to be, if they go to a rescue pumper, if that is a different life cycle than a front line engine, which is virtually going out several times a day, versus a rescue pumper, which if you are going to use it as a rescue pumper, it's going to go to structure fires and car accidents, are you now looking at a truck because you are going to automatically extend that five year period, from two years to five years, just by the natural course of things because it has a different use. You are not replacing in kind. How does that dynamic work? He tends to think if the \$350,000 was divided by the 15 years, and put \$100,000 into it to get three, they may find that the numbers come out the same, and you still have an old truck. Those are the two things they have to look at—the dynamics and the math. He will be the math doesn't make sense on a truck that old.

Chairman Maddox said a rescue pumper and a pumper are the first vehicles out of Burns Hill and Leonard Smith Central Station. If they made that a rescue pumper, it won't go out less. It will go out the same amount of times the new ones go out now. They wouldn't downgrade the response of that vehicle because it's a rescue pumper. He asked if that reasoning was correct. Chief Murray said probably not. What they are doing is maximizing the use of the truck. Chairman Maddox said absolutely, but relative to Selectman Jasper's statement, it won't be going out less because its function is different. Selectman Jasper wanted to explain where he was coming from. Obviously, the Chief is in charge, but his thought was that if you used it as a replacement to Engine 3, and he has lost track of what age is what, but if it was replacing Engine 3 at Central, that engine goes out a lot less, just by the nature of the calls, and that was his thought. It would physically be there, replacing the second engine in Central and replacing the rescue, and you would still have front line regular pumpers at the three outlying stations. That was why he said it would be going out less, but if the Chief doesn't utilize it that way, for whatever reason, he figured that would be the best. Chief Murray said they have to look at that because if you are going to run it front line, then they are tying up the heavy rescue equipment--Hurst tools, generators, etc.--on med calls, for instance. Engine 2 is first out, so they could look at running Engine 3 second on the boxes and the fires.

Chairman Maddox said they were talking about replacing the other front line, Engine 4 or Engine 2. Selectman Jasper said they are just not giving them the new truck; they are giving them another truck. Chief Murray said it's something that requires study because if they go with a pumper-tanker concept, he might now run a pumper tanker on a first structure assignment instead of just the engine. Chairman Maddox said so they've solved nothing, they just moved the question. Selectman Jasper said they've thrown a lot at the command staff tonight, and they have to look at the dynamics. It's not fair to ask them to give an answer tonight on what they would do. They have to sit down and look at the matrix and what makes sense. The

Board, hopefully, has given them food for thought and some options. Now they have to see what they come back with.

Selectman Nadeau asked if the new engine was running and all set, if the compartments were working well, etc. Chief Murray said it is doing well. It has gone back for warranty work, just like with a personal car. It came back last week. They have the equipment to mount, the axes, etc., and are in the process of putting that in. It's in full service and running on calls. He and the Deputies are pleased with it. Selectman Nadeau asked if that came in at \$332,000. Chief Murray said yes, they were still around that mark, less \$6,000 for the trade. In 2007, there are new emission standards coming out that will bump up the price. He read an article on that today, which he will forward to the Board. It talks about what different engine manufacturers are doing to their engines, and steel and fuel are bringing the cost up. He confirmed that he was going to come back to the Board, looking at a rescue pumper/engine rescue pumper concept and go from there. He will bring in a regular engine for comparison, if that's the consensus of the Board. Chairman Maddox said as well as a price to rehab the 1992, and what the Chief thinks that will accomplish. Selectman Nadeau added how far that would get them.

At 8:50 p.m., Chairman Maddox declared a recess. The meeting resumed at 9:00 p.m.

(Start Tape 3-A)

3) **Manpower/Staffing**

Chief Murray said during budget season last year, he came forward with a proposal to increase staffing levels for the Robinson Road station, looking towards the future, which made a lot of people nervous. But his responsibility, as Fire Chief, is to let the Board know what he feels the needs of the department are for the Town. This isn't based only on Green Meadow, it takes into consideration new construction and the growth in population, as he indicated in his opening statement tonight. He'd like the Board to know that, in the coming years, staffing levels will need to be increased. He believes that 12 people would buy them the time to get there and meet the demands of emergency services. Call for services are going up in all levels, not only emergency calls. He still stands by the 12, but it is up to the Board to decide what it wants to do.

Chairman Maddox noted that the employee roster indicated three secretaries. Chief Murray said that was a typo, there are only two—one Secretary and one Executive Secretary. Chairman Maddox referred to the next page and said based on estimates, a firefighter will cost \$64,638. Chief Murray that was for a paramedic, which is what they've been hiring. Selectman Massey said if the Chief goes forward, and the Board were to support it, and put in the four positions, in last year's budget cycle, there was an estimated offset of \$110,000 in overtime, so they wouldn't be looking \$64,000 but at \$56,000 minus \$109,000. Chief Murray asked if he was referring to the Safer grant. Chief Murray said no. The Chief had something like \$220,000 for the four positions, but he also indicated that there would be a savings in overtime of \$110,000. If the four people came on Board, the Chief had indicate there would be a \$110,000 savings in overtime. Chief Murray responded by saying that was over the four year period, if they were going for the 12.

Selectman Massey said his recollection was that they would have taken \$110,000 out of this year's operating budget, if those four people would have been hired. Selectman Jasper disagreed. Mr. Malizia didn't think that was possible, if you do the math. Not in one year. Selectman Massey said the rationale was they would not have to have call-backs, that because there would be six at Central and there would be less reason to call back when you had the first ambulance go out. You'd still have three people being able to cover. Chairman Maddox said there was a savings, but he couldn't recall the exact number. (Talking over each other.) He said they should let the Chief make his presentation, then see where it goes. Chief Murray said Selectman Massey was on the right track, but some of it had to do with net impacts to the Town without a grant, which would have been \$109,000. If they were able to get the Safer Grant, there would have been less of an impact.

Selectman Jasper believed they needed daytime help at Robinson Road. Putting two people there, 42 hours a week each, gives coverage of a tanker and an ambulance, and an engine, only if a call person or an off-duty person comes in, but it puts them in a much better situation. That is a start, and if they were to do that, it gives them the ability to evaluate what that does for them and how it impacts the Town. It gets them people there; you look at what it has been done and then they can see if they have to change it, and what that requires, a side bar with the union to allow for hiring of firefighters for a 42-hour week. That's what he would support because, otherwise, they are looking to staff that station with two people takes eight people to do that and he didn't believe they could justify, with the delay and response at night, because Central and Burns Hill are able to move at a much quicker pace at night, and there's not a lot of calls out there, there isn't a great deal of residences in the northern part of Town because there aren't any condos or apartment buildings. It's single family on larger lots. That's what he proposes they do to start. It starts to get the Fire Department to where they want to be and it gets him to where he thinks they ought to be, and it gives the Fire Department the opportunity to show him he's all wet, but it hasn't put the department behind.

Chief Murray asked if that was two people. Selectman Jasper said yes. It's not an engine crew, but the primary needs out there during the day are ambulance and tanker. There is a call force that could be built up,

so they might get an engine on the road. They would have a better chance of getting a staffed engine on the road than they do now. There are people in the area who may come back on call back. It opens up opportunities and they have to think outside of the box. Years ago, a bunch of them had CB's. They'd call in and say, 'grab my gear, I'll meet you there.' This gives the Chief the opportunity to think outside of the box and accomplish the mission better than they are now. That makes sense for the taxpayers and is a win-win situation; and it starts. The Fire Department started with full-time personnel; it didn't start with a whole lot of people, it built up gradually. He hoped this suggestion would be given serious consideration.

Selectman Nadeau has noticed that the department has been going out on more medical calls and accidents than on fire calls. He asked what the ratio was. The Town Administrator directed him to the last page of the charts, which gave that information. Selectman Nadeau commented that the red line was way off the chart on all of them. He asked if it was worth looking into an outside ambulance service. Chief Murray said not at all. Selectman Nadeau asked why Nashua did it. Chief Murray said, as a large city, they have an entirely different situation. He would never support privatizing the ambulance service for a whole host of reasons. When an ambulance makes a call in Hudson, they are getting professional care by people who have a vested interest in the community. It's not profit-driven for the Town. It's giving a service back to the community. Residents pay health care insurance at vary high rates. The Hudson Fire Department is generating revenue of \$396,000 if not more per year, that residents are paying in their health care insurance. At the very least, they are partially covering their costs for running the ambulances. It doesn't fully fund it, but it offsets it. One of the private ambulance services in the area is owned by a local hospital. If they go with a private service, the insurance payment goes to the private ambulance company, but they take you to their hospital and get more of your money that way. He is proud to say that the citizens of Hudson are getting the best quality care, and they are getting it from caring professionals who have a vested interest in them. That's the short answer, but this issue has been looked at many times over the years and comes up every two or three years. He steadfastly stands by the Town's professionals on staff.

Selectman Nadeau said he was looking at the medical calls and fire calls and, if they get rid of the ambulances—and he's not saying he wants to—that would drop the numbers by more than half. Chief Murray said he respectfully disagrees. Even if a private ambulance goes on the calls, the Fire Department would have to go to help lift a heavy person out of the house; they'd have to respond to perform CPR, etc. Selectman Nadeau said that's what the Town is doing now, anyway. Chief Murray said yes, and the citizens are getting a two-for-one deal. Hudson has trained firefighter-paramedics that the community has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in training them. Selectman Nadeau said he wasn't saying to get rid of them.

Chairman Maddox said the Fire Department is a first responder, no matter what. They show up at the house, regardless of who takes the patient away. Chief Murray said in his experience, this community has been served very well by firefighters who are cross-trained as EMT's, and that isn't the case with privatized service. Chairman Maddox said 55% of the calls are for ambulance or medical, so the question has to be asked what the options are. He didn't want to go that way, but he did want to hear the answers.

Selectman Jasper said Selectman Nadeau needs to look at, and the Chief did speak to it, but not with numbers. He has real numbers for only one month. In the 5/21 to 6/21, the ambulance went out alone 52 times; went out with an ambulance and engine 89 times. They would have eliminated the department being involved the 52 times potentially, although it may well have been that the ambulance provider required a higher standard of having somebody respond than Hudson might, necessarily. In looking at the raw numbers, you wouldn't eliminate the 1,800 and he didn't know how this runs from month to month. They'd have to look at that, but they might save 1/3rd of those, 600-700 calls. Would they actually be able to drop any personnel with that? Maybe they could drop two people. Maybe. Is that a good idea, or a bad idea? But then they've lost that revenue and you have less people available for all types of incidences and less revenue. He tends to agree with the Chief that it's probably not something they want to seriously consider. But there are a lot of ways they can reduce their personnel costs, that may accomplish the same thing and doesn't take away from the service provided, which is very good—and the revenue is certainly a help.

Selectman Massey said he looked at these numbers last year and, unfortunately, he has the wrong summary with him and he doesn't have the revenue numbers, but his analysis last year indicated that, by Board policy, they are charging Medicaid-approved rates for the ambulance service. When you call, regardless of your financial or age condition, you are paying the rate that the US Government has established for Medicaid-Medicare reimbursement. When he looked at the revenue numbers last year, and compared them to the operating budget, and he had to do some extrapolation because they don't, on the ambulance, and he's looking at the FY05 budget, the ambulance was budgeted \$100,000 but his recollection is they had about \$400,000 in revenues budgeted. When he took the eight people that man the ambulance and calculated approximately what their salaries were, he came up with they are pretty close to either showing a slight profit or very close to the expense line. Even the fact that they are Town employees, they are using the most conservative revenue inputs, and are more than covering the costs.

Chairman Maddox thinks they have to rethink what they have. If you look at the breakdown, the Town is an EMS service first and a fire service second. According to the figures, they only had five working fires last

year, and 1,900 medical calls. Almost everyone in the department is an EMT and most of them are going towards their paramedic level. Chief Murray said they continue, with the support of the Board, to put them through paramedic training, which is advanced life support. The fire service needs to look at that and the Board needs to reflect on the fact that it's really an EMS service that also has the capacity to put out fires. You're not going to get that if they bring on a private ambulance service. They'd still have to have the firefighters because they need minimum staffing on a piece of equipment. If you roll to a box with two engines and a ladder, you need eight people, so he didn't know how many people you could really remove if the ambulance wasn't there. They have to look at this department differently than just 'big and red,' because most of the calls is the ambulance going out. He asked for a point of clarification. The Chief has a total of 3,398, but on the last page breakout, 674 of those are Litchfield's. The colored chart has a total of 3,398 as the total for 2005, but on the last page, it says that 674 are Litchfield. Deputy Rogers said they run the ambulance for Litchfield. Those 674 calls are Litchfield Fire and Hudson Ambulance, but there are some in there that would be just Litchfield Fire. Chairman Maddox asked if that's the way it has been calculated from 1999. He was told yes. Chairman Maddox was looking at the percentage increase of 27% and he wasn't sure if someone changed the formula. This is a service the Town provides, so they have to look at it a little differently. He has asked the Chief to look at the calls he has gone out to that people call and they are not taken to the hospital in the ambulance and, thus, not charged. They might want to look at that in a future meeting.

Selectman Jasper said one of the things that bothers him tremendously, and it goes back to wearing on the apparatus. Until they manned Burns Hill, they had an ambulance there. He understands, at that time, they had four pieces of apparatus and certain changes had to be made, but the wrong decision was made at that time. Instead of taking the forestry out of there, which probably doesn't run a dozen times a year, they took the ambulance out of there and put the staffing in there. Consequently, they use the engine as a taxicab to bring the personnel down here. They can't give them a car because they might be half way here and get a call and they'd have no equipment. It wouldn't eliminate them coming down here for coverage all the time, but it would seem they could take a lot of wear and tear off of the apparatus by simply saying in the summertime they are going to buy a little tent and put it over the forestry and take it out of service in the winter and put the ambulance in there, or evaluate the need to have the forestry altogether. It seems clear to him, and no one has been able to convince him otherwise, that it just doesn't make any sense not to have that ambulance there. Whether they got to come down here or not, if you've got a call for an ambulance and an engine, you could have an ambulance there and get them there that much quicker. He really hoped the Chief would seriously consider changing that around so they can save the wear and tear on the vehicle and, with the fuel prices, one hell of a lot of fuel because those trucks eat it up pretty good, going back and forth. If the Chief would just evaluate how many gallons is being burned up, sending that truck down here, they'd all be surprised by how much money would be saved.

Chief Murray said he was going to hit a home run for Selectman Jasper tonight. As of July 1, they started a two-phase program on that very subject, which will be done in two phases, adding that Selectman Maddox had a lot of the same concerns about moving Engine 4 to Central, which they have stopped doing, as of July 1. They want to see how much they can reduce the traveling. From July 1-September 1, they will evaluate how fast Engine 4 responds from the Burns Hill district to medical calls. They have stopped moving the engine up, unless this engine and ambulance are absolutely tied up for 15 minutes or longer. On September 1, they will put an ambulance at Burns Hill and do another 90-day test to see if they can get either the engine or the ambulance to a medical call quicker. Selectman Jasper said good, that he was very pleased to hear that.

(Start Tape 3-B)

Chief Murray said after they evaluate that data, he will bring the results to the Board to let them know what they will do and where they will go with it.

Selectman Nadeau said the earlier, Selectman Massey was talking about the Medicare rates. If the Town changes their rates, would it make a difference? Chief Murray said one of the positive elements of the Town of Hudson adopting the Medicare/Medicaid rates is the Board of Selectmen decides to what extent they are adopted. The ambulance billing company recommends billing 30% ahead, but the Board has, over the years, taken into consideration the elderly population, their ability to afford the cost—out of pocket expenses above and beyond what Medicare/Medicaid charges. Through Board direction, he has directed the billing company to passively pursue billing collection for Hudson citizens. For instance, an older adult on a fixed income, who is just on Medicare or Medicaid, will be asked to pay above and beyond what is covered, but it is not done in an aggressive manner. Selectman Nadeau clarified that if it's a Hudson person, the collection agency doesn't go after them beyond the Medicare rate. Chief Murray said they get billed for above and beyond what Medicare pays, but the Board of Selectmen have said it isn't going to be done aggressively, such as sending a collection agency after someone on a fixed income. There is a process in place where, if someone cannot afford that because of their income status, they can appeal through the Fire Department. It is brought to the Town Administrator and, on a case by case basis, evaluate it and, if necessary, waive any fees. Chief Murray knows that costs are a major concern, and they are carefully watching the Fire Department's costs. He has reduced an out-of-control overtime budget which, at some points, \$70,000 to \$80,000 a year. That is now down to a more manageable level. Costs are a concern to everyone, and they are trying to toe the line. The

Selectmen, in taking the role they have toward older adults, is a way of thanking them for living in this community.

Selectman Nadeau asked if Hudson has to supply Litchfield with ambulance service, or if that being done as a revenue. There is no requirement for Hudson to provide them with ambulance service. It is an agreement that was made years ago and it does bring in some revenues. Not only are the Litchfield patients billed, but Litchfield pays the Town an additional stipend above and beyond what they would charge a patient, based on the call volume, which is billed quarterly. Litchfield is also paying an annual fee for dispatch, and he plans to come back to the Board in the fall to discuss those costs. Selectman Nadeau asked if this created a burden for the Town in overtime and manpower. Chief Murray said not in this case because the Town was sending the ambulance, but Litchfield was providing the engine manpower. It's no different than if the Town ends up with an ambulance call at 5:55 versus one in Litchfield. If it becomes a financial burden, or something that impacts the Town's services, he would bring that forward to the Board. Chairman Maddox asked if the Chief meant \$25 a year or a call. Chief Murray said it was \$2,500 a year.

Selectman Jasper said that was a sore spot. A number of years ago, Chief Carpentino came in with a proposal. He took the total call volume and divided it up and said this was what Litchfield should be charged, which was an outrageous number. At the time, he (Selectman Jasper) convinced the Board not to do that. If they did away with the Litchfield calls, the Town's expenses wouldn't go down one dime and if they charged Litchfield what Chief Carpentino was proposing, Litchfield would go someplace else. The Board sent him back to come up with a new proposal, but he never did because he didn't like what he was told by the Board. Just a couple of weeks ago, he talked to Steve about that because the Town needs to come up with a new proposal. One of the things Chief Murray might want to do is talk to Sheriff Hardy because he does regional dispatch for a lot of communities for police. There was a whole study committee that looked at that, so the Chief might want to use that as a basis to look at what they should be charging. Litchfield knows they are getting a free ride for dispatch. Chief Murray said he knew, that he has spoken with Chief Schofield, and he has started some preliminary work on it. He will bring that forward at a future meeting. Selectman Jasper said it needs to be done in time for the Litchfield Chief's budget presentation, and he is on a different schedule from Hudson. Chairman Maddox said it's \$3.70 a call. Selectman Jasper thought the Hillsborough County rate was on a scale, like \$12 and may go up to \$15 a call.

Chief Murray said, if he brought forth a proposal for two people, Monday – Friday, 42 hours a week, if the Board would be interested in looking at that. Selectman Massey asked where that would fit, relative to the Union pay plan. Chief Murray said they could open the contract and do a side bar. Chairman Maddox said they are presently paid on 42 hours a week, so it would just be a schedule change. He asked if the Board should go for two, four, 12 or zero. Selectman Nadeau said two for Robinson Road, Monday – Friday. Selectman Massey said he'd prefer Wednesday – Sunday. Selectman Jasper said call people will be available nights and weekends, so that's why he said Monday – Friday. Having a couple people there would help with the call force because they would have some support there. Selectman Massey said he would support two for Robinson Road. Chairman Maddox said he was still of the mindset for four because of the overtime, and see what they really need. They need to know how many calls that station would respond to before he gives the go-ahead to do that. If they are going to respond to four calls per week, is that cost effective? Is that what they want to be looking at? They need more information before he goes one way or the other. At least, this gives the Chief an idea of where the majority of the Board wants to go. According to the chart, Monday is one of the busiest days.

Selectman Jasper said the number of calls they respond to is a function of the district they are assigned to and that has shrunk over the years. He assumed if they had full-time people there, that district might expand. Deputy Rogers said they kept the district counts the same. They change dispatches, but the count was the same. Chief Murray said the key element is how they are assigning their resources. Selectman Jasper said they were responding to over 365 calls a year. Obviously, a lot of times it was just the ambulance, so he expected they would be running a pretty good number. If they came down here and grabbed an ambulance and went up there with an ambulance, they would probably be fairly busy during the day. That's a better way to do the experiment because it's hard to tell if you don't physically have them there. You could put two people down here and run the numbers, but he didn't think that accomplishes the same thing. The hope of all of them is to have people in that part of Town have the best service they can afford, and that's the busiest time. Look at it after a year and if they feel this was stupid, they can just be absorbed. Chairman Maddox said they need to make it clear they are adding two people to the Fire Department. They may not be at that station forever, if that's the Board's mindset. After a year, those two might go into the pool of resources and be put elsewhere. They shouldn't say those two will be at Robinson Road forever. Selectman Jasper said no, but thought they probably would be, but he didn't like to lock people into any place. They have to allocate their resources. Since that was the Chief's goal to have people there, but it would take him awhile to do it, he'd rather get people there sooner rather than later.

Selectman Massey wouldn't want to definitively say tonight he'd support it until he sees the overall budget. They may have to make some tradeoffs at that point. If it did go forward, and it got passed, he would definitely want the work days structured such that, if they say it would be better to change the hours from

8:00 – 5:00 to something else, they would be flexible enough to do that, and not be locked in to an 8 – 5 time frame, if they found out, over the experience level, that it would make more sense to shift those hours. They need that flexibility, if they do this. And, long term, those people would know full well that they ultimately, depending on how it all played out, be looking at two 14, two 10 work schedule. In summary, he didn't think they want to lock it in that that station would always be an 8:00 – 5:00 for the 42 hours and the people that took those jobs would know that, ultimately, they may be on the same work schedule that all the other firefighters are on. Selectmen Jasper and Nadeau agreed with that.

Selectman Jasper said he would not envision two people being hired and then going to Robinson Road and staying there. He envisioned that two people be hired and people would rotate in and out of that station. Selectman Massey said that would be something the Chief would work out. Selectman Jasper said it has been such a nice night, he had a couple other things he was going to bring up, but would leave them for the budget. Chairman Maddox said that was the purpose of these workshops, so Selectman Jasper should, at least, put them out there.

Selectman Jasper said overtime continues to be a concern of his. One of the things he has looked at and hasn't been able to figure out is that when they are at full complement, they have two Deputy Chiefs and a Training Officer, who is a Captain and a Captain is a very expensive person to replace. On days when Captains are out, and maybe not every time, because somebody may be out long term, but it might be worth considering—a Captain doesn't have to go on an ambulance, he only goes out on an engine—(they work an 8-hour day and the shifts are 10 hours, so you could either hold over the first Captain, or the last Captain, or ask the next Captain to come in early), have somebody from command staff cover those shifts during the day. Have these guys get on an engine on the days when that is feasible. What would that save in overtime? If it even worth doing? It's just a thought that he had in order to try to save some overtime. It's not like they would have to stay on the apparatus floor, or stay with the guys. It would only be those cases where they need a Captain. He didn't want to get into a debate on it; it's something the Chief can respond to in October. Chief Murray said he can take a look at that.

Chairman Maddox asked if they've applied for the Safer Grant this year. Chief Murray said not this year. If they are successful and the Board makes the decision to move forward, they would have the opportunity again next April. Anything he brings in for the Board's consideration or review, he'll work the Safer form into it, and without it, like he did last year. Chairman Maddox said it's a function of saving some money up front, while they train and get them assimilated into the system. Selectman Nadeau asked if it would be better to go with two full-time firefighters with the Safer Grant, versus the eight hour guys. Chairman Maddox said the 8-hour guys would be full time. Selectman Nadeau thought it would make a difference. Selectman Jasper said no. Selectman Nadeau asked if the Safer Grant would still qualify for this. Chairman Maddox said it covers call firefighters, as well. Selectman Jasper said, in the long run, they pay for it all. It's only a short-term grant, anyhow. Chairman Maddox said it's over five years. (Talking over each other.)

Selectman Massey thought the Board would be interested in an article he saw in the Telegraph several months ago. The Town of Hudson's Police overtime budget is 7.22%; the City of Nashua's Police overtime budget is 24%; the Town of Hudson's overtime Fire budget is 25.4%; Nashua is 34%; Town of Hudson's Public Works overtime is 15.96%; Nashua is 30%; the Town of Hudson's Operations & Maintenance for sewer is 11.77%; Nashua is 18%. It's a city versus a town, but when he saw the numbers, he said WOW. He thought it was an interesting comparison.

4) FY2008 Budget Process

Chairman Maddox hoped the Fire Department walked away today, knowing a number of things the Board wants to look at. They've given each other some information and the budget marathon will be the arduous, torturous endurance that they've gone through in the past. The information they traded this evening will go into the budget presentation to show what they gave the Board, how they interacted, and the information that would be assembled for the Board. Hopefully, that three-day marathon will be more of a sprint.

B. Request to participate in Exceptional Children's Week Program

Chief Murray said this was going to be held in Gilmanton, a one day event, Monday, August 14. He was asked to provide some foam and the forestry truck to demonstrate to some special needs children what foam does and give them an opportunity to meet some firefighters and explorers. This is sort of a humanitarian mission for the Town and he hoped the Board would authorize this. They have foam in stock that would be rotated out anyway. This would shed a nice light on the Town of Hudson and on the firefighters and explorers. He will use volunteers for the project.

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Nadeau, to approve the Chief's request, carried 4-0.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Selectman Jasper, seconded by Selectman Nadeau, to adjourn by at 9:55 p.m., carried 4-0.

Recorded and transcribed by Priscilla Boisvert
Executive Assistant

HUDSON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Kathleen R. MacLean, Selectman

Kenneth J. Massey, Selectman

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