

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
March 27, 2023  
MINUTES**

**Public Hearing: Acceptance of 2021 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant**

**Call to Order**

5:30 – Chairman McGarry called the meeting to order

**Present:** Chairman Fred McGarry, Vice Chairman Richard Pitman, Selectman Alden Dill, Selectwoman Cynthia McHugh and Selectman Will Huebner.

Chairman McGarry reads the notice for the public hearing and then turns it over to Chief Fisher. Chief Fisher goes over the SAFER Grant and what it would provide in detail. It is then opened up to the Board for questions.

Vice Chairman Pitman asks if it makes a difference to the academy that it's coming through a grant like this, as fire fighter 1 and firefighter 2. Chief Fisher explains that it does not.

Selectman Dill asks if this is for call only not full time and the grant is not going to be used to hire full-time firefighters and Chief Fisher says that is correct.

Selectwoman McHugh asks if this is going to include the call people they have now and Chief Fisher states no and it's only for new members. She then asks about the recruit retention and the administrator and if they have to be kept on after the grant is done. Chief Fisher states that the positions end at the end of the grant.

Selectman Huebner asks how many current call firefighters do we have. Chief Fisher states that we have twenty. Mr. Huebner then asks how many more do we need and Chief Fisher states, as many as we can get. The more the better. Mr. Huebner then asks if this would only pay for their recruitment, training, gear, and equipment not their hours worked? Chief states this would pay for them to go class and the class and their gear but once they start going on calls, they would be paid through the Towns current stipend program. Mr. Huebner states there will be some extra stipend to be paid. Chief Fisher explains how the current stipend works. In conclusion the only foreseeable extra cost to the tax payers would be insurance costs. Mr. Huebner asks if the Chief has an estimate of what the insurance would cost. Chief Fisher states that that is something they can follow up on.

Chairman McGarry opens questions up to the public.

**Public Questions/Comments:**

Jeanne Menard. Mountain Road. Ms. Menard asks that if once someone goes through the program do they need to serve the community for a certain period of time. She would also like to know if there is a corresponding grant for the Rescue. Chief Fisher states he is not aware of an EMS focused grant for staffing. He then states he is not sure if they can keep people within the town serving for a certain period of time after completing the program but it's something to look into.

Harriet Cady. Ms. Cady would like to know if there is an age requirement. Chief Fisher states that the minimum age would be 18.

Selectman Huebner asks what the other qualifications are to enroll in the program. Chief Fisher states that for the Town of Deerfield it would be the standard criminal record background check and motor vehicle record check. There is money included in the grant for physicals that would follow NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) requirements.

Kevin Verville. McCarron Road. Mr. Verville would like to know what's included in the retention part for the three years and if they receive the part-time salary pay. Chief Fisher explains that this grant focuses on recruitment and that these would only be call members so it's just the stipend pay per call. If they would like to apply for one of the part-time positions at the fire station after training, they welcome too if there's an opening and then it would come from the budget. Mr. Verville then states he thinks this is a great opportunity for the town and thanks the chief.

Selectwoman McHugh asks if we send someone for training as firefighter one will they come back as firefighter 1 and EMR or are there people that will be recruited for just EMR. Chief Fisher replies that the program is for firefighter 1, firefighter 2, and EMR and they would become certified in all 3 under this program.

Selectman Dill asks how successful this has been with other towns. Jeff Labrie, who assists towns with fire grants, steps up to provide an answer. He states that it has been extremely successful in other towns.

Chairman McGarry asks if someone finishes firefighter 1 and decides the time commitment is too much and asks if they can just stay at firefighter 1 or if they can do 1 and 2 and not EMR. Mr. Labrie states the grant is written for the recruits to do all 3 but he could check with FEMA to see if it would be okay to just do 1 or 2 or 1 and 2.

Jeanne Menard. Mountain Road. She is curious to know there is any screening of potential candidates and have people currently in department set realistic expectations for people. Chief Fisher states, absolutely.

Chief Young from Candia Fire station steps up and explains that there is work to be done on the front end and that work will help with the success of the program.

No other citizens have comments so Chairman McGarry closes the public hearing.

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary  
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*