



**NORFOLK BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2025 MEETING**

Members present were: M. Sconyers, S. Anderson, J. Bickford, M. Kwast, G. Mudge and J. Torrant and alternates L. Battis, R. Miller and B. Wenrich.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by M. Sconyers.

Election of Officers: G. Mudge nominated M. Sconyers as Chair, second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved. M. Sconyers nominated S. Anderson as Vice-Chair, second by M. Kwast and unanimously approved.

The October 14, 2025 minutes were approved on Motion of M. Kwast second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved.

The Tax Collector's requests for refunds were approved on Motion of M. Sconyers second by G. Mudge and unanimously approved.

The Botelle Superintendent Kevin Case reported on the wonderful Veterans' Day ceremony last week to honor the veterans in town including Chairman Sconyers and First Selectman Henry Tirrell also attended. The elevator at Botelle has broken. Fortunately, volunteer firefighters and EMT personnel assisted during the Veterans' Day Ceremony. Superintendent Case is currently receiving cost estimates for replacement as the engine is 40 years old and cannot be repaired. The Superintendent is recommending to the BOE to use funds from the Non-Lapsing Account when the BOE meets in early December. They will work to manage from the Non-Lapsing Account and within the current budget. Chairman Sconyers asked that the Superintendent keep the BOF and Selectmen updated. It is an Otis Elevator with a cost estimate of up to \$50,000.

First Assistant Fire Chief Matt Ludwig from the Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department (NVFD) spoke at length with a thorough presentation. The NVFD was founded in 1902 and incorporated in 1907. They are a 501c3 non-profit. Last Fiscal Year, the NVFD answered 222 calls. Staff hours total over 5,500 member hours, not including time for meetings, applying for grants, etc. The NVFD has 55 active members, comprising 16 interior, 23 are exterior-certified, 12 are support members, 4 fire cadets ranging between 14-18 years old. They are required to maintain Firefighter I or II certification and attend between 200 – 300 volunteer training/unpaid hours. As a 100% volunteer organization, the focus is on recruitment and retention through year-round community outreach.

The NVFD has an ISO rating of: 4/4Y (2022), (1 is the best, 10 is the worst), with the national average between 5 and 6. There are not hydrants throughout the town and there are significant logistical challenges due to the rural area, steep terrain, severe weather and limited water availability.

Operations & Mutual Aid: The Fleet consists of 3 Pumper Trucks, Tanker, Squad, Brush truck and UTV. There are 150 limited access driveways in Norfolk. The NVFD plays a very active role in regional mutual aid participation and Task Force/Strike Teams. The volunteers participate in weekly trainings and OSHA compliance.

Fundraising & Community Support: The Annual Town Budget covers only core operational costs. Since 2010, the NVFD has raised \$1.15 million in grants and appeals, to supplement capital funds and equipment investments. Radios cost \$9,500 each (the NVFD has 27). The organization is very active in applying for grants for airpaks, radios and turnout gear to keep the burden off tax payers. Turnout gear is \$25,000 per person; the next grant will be for 14 sets of turnout gear.

Vehicle Replacement & Insurance: Fire apparatus has a 25-year lifespan. The cost of a new pumper truck is over \$1.1 million dollars with no-frills and takes 3 years to build. Matt Ludwig relayed that the Fleet Insurance is inadequate and not insured for replacement or fixing value for today. Also important to consider: the Town is building a \$10.4 million dollar fire house, but sufficient insurance coverage is also necessary for the building.

30-Year-Old Pumper Replacement: – Engine 30 “Driveway Truck” pumps water from the bottom of driveways to the top of driveways, can start emergency response, and holds a second set of extrication equipment. It was refurbished in April 2014 adding 10 years of usable service. There are increased costs to fix Engine 30 with limited availability of parts. Options for Replacement were set forth of (1) Buying New (2) Refurbishing (costs 75-80% of a new truck) or (3) Buying Used. It takes six (6) months to develop pumper concept specifications. The fire truck specifications are unique to what exactly is needed to best serve Norfolk.

Equipment Replacement & Maintenance: Turnout gear lifespan is 10 years priced at \$4,975. The NVFD is applying for an AFG grant for turnout gear with an emphasis on obtaining gear that is PFAS free gear. Air paks have recently been purchased at \$10,000 each at a quantity of 18 as part of grant funding. The NVFD is very conscientious regarding mandated replacement schedules. Monthly inspections of equipment, meters and rescue tools are a top priority.

Annual Operating Costs: The NVFD provided a handout on their Annual Operating Costs, which currently total \$132,400. Annual mandated physicals only cover OSHA physicals, and do not include testing for cancers or lab work. Lab work would cost \$700 extra per member. Truck Tires must be replaced every 7 years, costing \$5,500 per 6 tires. The NVFD Annual Appeal Letter generates approximately \$25,000, and the funds are deposited into a restricted account and set aside until full funding is received.

Planning for the Future: The NVFD is focused on: meeting service expectations reliably; enhance firefighter safety and medical responder capabilities; expand recruitment and retention; executing components within their 5-year capital plan; Engine 30 replacement (\$1.1 million); Capitol Investments. Their goal is: A dedicated capital replacement/sinking fund would stabilize funding and reduce volatility to meet expectations.

Volunteer firefighting does not mean free firefighting. Continued financial support is critical to sustain readiness and service to the community. First Assistant Fire Chief Matt Ludwig thanked the BOF for their continued support. For more information, visit the NVFD website: norfolkfire.org

The First Selectman Henry Tirrell introduced himself to the Board.

The Treasurer handed out updated budget reports. She has put in several months of late hours and is continuing to work to configure the reports to set forth outstanding debts and the portion of debts that have been paid off.

There was nothing under 2/3 vote.

There was no Public Comment.

On Motion of J. Tarrant, second by S. Anderson and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Ryan

Jennifer M. Ryan, Secretary