

NORFOLK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT  
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 28, 2023

President Paul Padua called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

There were 29 members present.

Paul asked for a moment of silence for our past and deceased members, especially John Dwyer.

Chief Matthew Ludwig presented his annual report.

Elections followed.

President – Paul Padua  
Vice President – Dan Wuori  
Secretary – Judy Ludwig  
Treasurer – Angela Hutchins

Board of Trustees –  
Richard Byrne  
Ted Hinman  
Ron Zanobi

Chief – Brian Hutchins  
1<sup>st</sup> Asst. Chief – Matthew Ludwig  
2<sup>nd</sup> Asst. Chief – Steven Hutchins  
Captain – Scott Padua  
EMS Captain – Ashley Allyn  
Lieutenants –  
Car 5 – Justin Zarzycki  
Car 6 – Thalyia Byrne  
Car 7 – Mike Listorti

Mechanics –  
Gary Bottom  
John Hutchins

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Judy Ludwig  
NVFD Secretary

## NVFD Annual Chiefs Report

August 28, 2023

During the FY 2022-2023 the Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department responded to 219 calls for service.

<b>47</b> - Automatic Alarms	<b>2</b> - Illegal Burning
<b>33</b> - Medical Assists	<b>2</b> - Good Intent Calls
<b>25</b> - Motor Vehicle Accidents	<b>1</b> - Chimney Fire
<b>19</b> - Canceled Enroute	<b>1</b> - Boiler Malfunction
<b>16</b> - Burned Food	<b>1</b> - Rescue, EMS incident
<b>14</b> - Wires Down	<b>1</b> - Search and Rescue
<b>10</b> - Hazardous Conditions, Other	<b>1</b> - Flammable liquid spill
<b>9</b> - Assist CSP	<b>1</b> - Service Call
<b>8</b> - Brush Fires	<b>1</b> - Animal Rescue
<b>6</b> - Standby/Station Coverage	<b>1</b> - Nothing Found on Arrival
<b>5</b> - Building Fires	<b>1</b> - Odor of Smoke
<b>4</b> - Basement Pump Outs	<b>1</b> - Hazmat release investigation without Hazmat
<b>3</b> - Carbon Monoxide Incidents	<b>1</b> - Severe Weather Standby
<b>2</b> - Vehicle Fires	<b>1</b> - Special Type of Incident
<b>2</b> - Trash Fires	

The 2022-2023 Departmental Statistics are:

3,812.86 - Staff hours from dispatch to Incident completion

2,162.49 - Staff hours of Non-Incident departmental activities

2,284.30 - Staff hours of Training

8,259.65 - Total recorded staff hours logged by NVFD personnel in FY 2022-2023

The membership of the NVFD continues to log many hours of training to meet the annual State, Federal, and OSHA requirements. We respond to emergencies, ensure our equipment is in good working condition, and support the community as we manage the many facets of our town's volunteer fire department. As I've said in previous years and still to this day, there is always something happening down at the firehouse.

This year the NVFD membership was busy responding to multiple incidents; Motor Vehicle Accidents, Fire Alarms, Assisting the Ambulance, Building Fires in and out of town, and many other calls for service. These emergencies come at all times of day and night. Without our members' continued dedication to training and quick responses, the outcomes of these incidents, and the lives affected, would be greatly impacted.

To summarize everything that occurred this year, We began in the fall with a large-scale "center-of-town" drill bringing in several mutual aid companies to assist. Focusing on the Royal Arcanium building and the newly improved hydrant system, a training scenario was established complete with lost victims and theatrical smoke where we maintained over 4,000GPM simulating a worse case scenario plan of attack for any building in the center of town.

This year certainly tried to tax this department to the absolute max. On November 5th we responded to a rolled over tractor trailer which would quickly become the largest gasoline tanker spill in Connecticut's history. This membership bolstered 26 firefighters that responded without hesitation, ran in while others fled, and put the lives of others ahead of their own to evacuate everyone that was near the path of gasoline and vapors that

were rapidly moving near houses and into local waterways. It is without a doubt that our collective actions mitigated an unstoppable flow and prevented a highly flammable liquid and gas vapor from finding an ignition source that stretched over two thousand feet. The Town of Norfolk and its citizens are forever grateful for our members' courage and bravery that day.

After several years of enduring the water tank on the tanker leaking in the station, this department raised funds and received additional support from the town to spec and order a new tanker truck. After waiting almost 15 months from ordering, NVFD members flew to Minnesota for final inspection in December and two brave souls drove the 1,400 miles back to Norfolk, some in a snowstorm, and arrived home safely. Eager to place the unit in service, members spent the next two months training on driving and reviewing the new apparatus's features and operations.

In January, NVFD firefighters responded to an MVA with entrapment involving live wires being draped over a vehicle. Forced to wait 68 minutes for the wires to be removed before we could extricate the two occupants, a followup letter was sent to Eversource questioning their response and policies. An investigative reporter took interest in this dilemma prompting officials all the way to a State Senator to respond which resulted in months of hearings and testimonies to be conducted. After the dust settled, it was determined that a policy change from within Eversource was required to address future incidents in the state so others won't have to endure the same life or death scenario our patients did on that day.

Since it's obvious in our line of work we can't not be the center of attention, on July 9th NVFD firefighters responded mutual aid to a house fire in Winchester. As the fire was being mitigated it began to rain. The intensity kept increasing, the waters in South Norfolk kept rising, and it's believed that several beaver dams along Hall Meadow Brook couldn't hold back the 7+ inches that fell in just a few hours which caused catastrophic flooding and damage to state and local roads south of Bruey road to Rt263 in Goshen. Without hesitation, NVFD firefighters again responded around the flooded areas to rescue citizens stuck between flood zones, closed roads where bridges had been completely washed away and knocked on doors to let citizens know we were there and that their safety was our number one priority.

The firehouse committee continues with station designs and has a concept site and floor plan that has finally moved its way to the wetlands committee for anticipated approval. This is a long time coming for many of our members who have been advocating for a safe station that meets State and Federal standards to properly house the lifesaving tools and apparatus that the community of Norfolk so heavily relies on.

The membership of the NVFD works tirelessly throughout the year staffing and managing the many fundraisers and town gatherings sponsored by the department. Continuing our commitment to the community, our members assist with Halloween providing a safe and fun environment for everyone, Breakfast with Santa, The Annual Tree Lighting on the Town Green, Santa's special Christmas Eve delivery, flooding and maintaining the skating rink on Mountain road, the open house, and running of the 44th annual road race this year.

The NVFD is not all about firefighting, our members come together several times a year continuing the department's public relations with many of the Town events and outreach programs to bring the citizens together which further supports the mission of the Fire Department and the Town of Norfolk.

I would also like to acknowledge the support that the Fire Cadets provide to the membership of the department. Going into their 39th year of service, this program is vital in sparking the interest in young adults and filling the roles and ranks of the department later in their firefighting and volunteering careers.

The commitment of our membership never goes unnoticed; our efforts are continuously appreciated and even applauded by both our residents and those in neighboring towns. We continue to look for new members that can offer assistance in any capacity. Help is always needed, from firefighting to administrative functions; we encourage anyone with a desire to help our community's emergency services to apply.

As I reflect on the last decade as Fire Chief, this department has grown exponentially in its training and capabilities. From our apparatus, to our equipment, to our tactics, we continue to stay progressive. You never know when the next big incident is going to happen and all we can do is train to be prepared for any situation thrown at us. To quote the Greek poet Archilochus; We don't rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training.

As I step down and pass the torch, I would like to thank the membership of this department for all of your support over the last 10 years and listening to me ramble on at meetings, drills, and just in general. I'm confident this membership will stay progressive but remember it takes a village to do so, many hands DO make light work. Be the reason not the rock. To those that decide to take the step to be an officer in the future: You set the pace for others to follow, so don't drag your feet and always leave it better than you found it.

In closing I want to thank the Town of Norfolk and the citizens we serve, for without your continued generosity and support, we would not be the department we are today.

In Service and signing off as Fire Chief,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Ludwig', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Matthew J. Ludwig  
Fire Chief  
Norfolk Volunteer Fire Department  
Service Years 2013-2023