The Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on Tuesday, May 3, 2023, began at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room.

Members Present: Derek DeBarge, James Gennette, Antonio Goncalves, and William Rosenblum.

Mr. Manuel Silva arrived after correspondence, and unfinished business were complete, but before interviews began.

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

VISITATIONS:

Lieutenant Interviews for LFD

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5:35 p.m. – Daniel McKenney

Mr. Gennette: Mr. McKenney, how are you?

Mr. McKenney: I'm good, how are you?

Mr. Gennette: I'm doing very well, thank you. So, this is pretty easy, we're going to have you open up, we're going to ask you some questions and then you can make some closing comments and then we'll move on from there. So, the floor is yours.

Mr. McKenney: Alrighty. Well, I want to thank the Board of Selectmen actually for being here. I know it's your second night. There's a lot of interviews here. Much appreciated by all of us. I know some of you a little better than others, but my name is Dan McKenney. I've been a paramedic for 21 years. I've been on the Ludlow Fire Department for 18 years. Of those 18 years, I've been the acting captain of C group for 7 of those 18 years. I have a lot of details obviously of my education and my experience along the way. I'm sure we're going to touch on that in your questions. So, I'll just kind of move on from that. Personally, for me, I've grown up in Ludlow for the most part, lived most of my life here in Ludlow, graduated from Ludlow High School in 1990. I enlisted in the Army National Guard following high school. Did six years in the Army National Guard. Following that, I came back and began my EMT training and going towards getting my paramedic. Been involved in a lot of community service in town, on the Fire Department and personally on my own. With the Fire Department, I was the treasurer of the Ludlow Fire Department Social Club for 10 years. I developed and organized a benefit concert called Rock the Boot that raised quite a bit of money over about a 10-year period. The funds raised for that went to Ludlow families affected by Muscular Dystrophy. So, I'm very proud of that. Along the way, I've done a lot of coaching on the side, youth baseball and youth football in town here, all the way up to the high school level, varsity and JV. I have two fantastic kids. My daughter just finished her freshman year at Suffolk University in Boston. She's on her way home right now so I can't wait to see her later. My son's a junior at Ludlow High School and they're playing Belchertown right now at Whitney Park. So, very proud of both of my kids. In my spare time, I love to golf. I'm a member of the Ludlow Country Club. You'll probably see me more on the range over there than on the course itself because that's just kind of where I am as a golfer. But, that's basically a summary of myself.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. All right, sounds good. Mr. Rosenblum?

Mr. Rosenblum: Mr. McKenney, congratulations for making it to the room. As we said last night, we know that it was an arduous and bumpy ride to get to where we are now and finally we are getting to bring some closure to this. Aubrey just got home.

Mr. McKenney: Today?

Mr. Rosenblum: She's sleeping already. I didn't even get to say hi. So, my question is, if any of us from the Board were to approach you and to say where do you think the Fire Department could save some money, what would you do and why?

Mr. McKenney: That's a good question, I didn't expect that question. Are you retiring or what?

Chief Pease: Not that I know of.

Mr. McKenney: Okay.

Chief Pease: I keep buying lottery tickets and it's not working out, is it?

Mr. McKenney: I guess that's something in my position so far as a firefighter and throughout my 18 years, I haven't had a lot of reason to put a lot of thought into it. But, one thing that does come to mind that I can touch on is as far as our EMS and our ambulance goes you know and you all know very well how busy we are and the turnover in a lot of our supplies that we use is tremendous. Certain supplies versus others. We may have an exorbitant amount of supplies left over at the end of a month let's say, more so than others depending on how much we use of that particular item. For me, I think I would look at getting and sitting down with the EMS committee and our deputy chief and actually just some questions and just talk about are there, how are we going about ordering? What are some things we can do to maybe tighten up here or there in terms of our ordering, restocking, you know ordering different supplies and I'm not sure what the answers are to those, but that's one way I think that would be a way to kind of approach looking at something where we can save some money somewhere. I think I would start there.

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Mr. Rosenblum: Alright, perfect. That's it then, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Silva.

Mr. Silva: Yeah. Welcome.

Mr. McKenney: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: Nice to see you again.

Mr. McKenney: You too.

Mr. Silva: The golf range, you got to get out there.

Mr. McKenney: I know, I know. I try to mix it up as good, as much as I can and you're right, you got to play.

Mr. Silva: Yes. What have you done to help make the Ludlow Fire Department a more successful organization?

Mr. McKenney: Oh geez, you know over my 18 years, I've been exposed to quite a bit, you know in terms of what we do as a social club. Our social club is fantastic. I've been fortunate enough to be around and I go back to 2005 when I was hired, and I've been around some fantastic captains and senior privates along the way. I've taken a lot from that, from them and I've tried to better myself in those terms, in order to be in a position to where I'm a guy that's answering more questions, then asking because that's kind of like, you know the stages we go through as firefighters and I've gotten there and I'm in a position now where I have enough experience as a senior firefighter and an acting captain where I am answering a lot of questions and I am being looked upon to offer advice. So, I think in terms of what we do every day, that's kind of the biggest thing that I've been able to develop and bring forward for myself and for my crew that I particularly, that I work for at C crew.

Mr. Silva: Thanks.

Mr. McKenney: Your welcome.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, Mr. McKenney.

Mr. McKenney: Yes sir.

Mr. DeBarge: Good to see you.

Mr. McKenney: You too sir.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright. So, the Fire Chief puts out a new policy, and with this new policy you and your crew have had the opportunity to read and review it and comment on it. Now you know this policy is not going to be popular with your crew, so my question to you is, how do you handle the complaints or concerns from your crew regarding this new policy.

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Mr. McKenney: Great question because these things, these things happen, and I've been on both sides of that. I've heard it from other firefighters, I've heard comments or questions I should say towards a captain, Deputy Chief as to you know why are we doing this particular plan or this whatever it is and I've also been on the other side of it where I've been asked that question. What's this about? What's going on and I think it's just hearing them out. You have to hear out everyone and listen to them because everybody has their thoughts and their opinions, and I think to keep everyone engaged they have to be able to express those thoughts and opinions. But with that, you have to also communicate to them that whatever may be coming down that they're not understanding you know the Chief and the Deputy Chief and the captains they have a plan and they've most likely thought that plan through a lot more than we have, and we have to trust in that. I would communicate that to them, and they have to kind of be on board with that and believe in where it's coming from and why. So, I would communicate that thoroughly on down.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright. Great, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes. Mr. McKenney thank you for 18 years.

Mr. McKenney: Yes sir, absolutely. My pleasure. My pleasure.

Mr. Goncalves: Anything for 18 years is pretty good. We have nine applicants, what sets you apart from the other eight?

Mr. McKenney: I would have to with, as being as humble as possible, I would have to go back to answer this question, I would have to go back and lean on my 18 years of experience from day one. Okay because I progressed through from day one back in 2005 up into a Firefighter that had a lot of questions. Had the opportunity, had the people in place to answer those questions for me and learn from those questions and progressed into a senior Firefighter to where now I was answering those questions right. Ultimately, up until the acting captain positions became available about seven years ago where I was given the opportunity to fall into that position and take that position by taking company officer courses, leadership courses that I've taken, the evaluations that the Chief had put together in-house to qualify to be an acting captain. It was a written evaluation and a practical evaluation. I was very successful in that and there I was off and running as an acting captain and that was seven years ago. Since then, I've had the chance and the opportunity to kind of navigate through the transition from firefighter crew member to an officer in charge of my crew, the same crew and then back again the next day. That's challenging, that can be a landmine field you know, if you think about it. So, it's something I navigated. It's something I've figured out. I've earned the trust and the respect of my crew and my captain and that's another point that I want to make is all of these accomplishments that I

have, especially over the last seven years as an acting captain, wouldn't be a possibility if it wasn't for my captain. He is a fantastic captain. He's given me the freedom to learn and to take his crew when he's not there because that's what we do as an acting captain. Same thing for my crew, all the calls that we go on, I'm with them and I'm not doing anything without them. So, that leads me to the invaluable experience I've had in the last seven years responding as an acting captain and officer in charge of a crew to the many emergencies that we respond to on a daily basis. Car fires, brush fires, residential, commercial smoke alarm activations, CO activations that kind of stuff. Right up to structure fires. I had the opportunity fairly recently to be an incident commander at a residential structure fire, which answered a lot of questions for me and I'm proud of that. I've gone from the hypothetical, the what ifs to actually being able to know for myself that I can execute as an officer. That's what separates me from most.

Mr. Goncalves: Okay just I don't know if I want to go too deeply but just back in 04', 05' how many people had ambulance experience on the Police Department, I mean on the Fire Department?

Chief Pease: Everybody was required to be a paramedic. At the time our paramedic staffing level was definitely less than it is now because we had a lot of basic EMTs and at that time I think we only ran two ambulances.

Mr. McKenney: Yes, we had two, yes.

Chief Pease: I think, yeah, definitely in 05' we only ran two ambulances. It wasn't until I believe 09' or even 10' that we added the third one into the mix and when we did at the time it wasn't expected there. Nobody expected it to do as many calls as it does today, and it was a great move by former Chief Babineau.

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Mr. Goncalves: I'm a testament to that one, believe me. I know. I know. Alright, no I'm good. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Alright, Mr. McKenney why are you interested in the position of Lieutenant, first part? Second part is what have you done to prepare yourself for the duties and responsibilities of the position?

Mr. McKenney: I'm interested, it's a natural next step in my career, that's the easy answer, that's the obvious answer. If, again, I would go back to my you know, back to the beginning for me and understanding that more me, these positions as Lieutenant, they're new. It's not an existing position that we're filling, they're new and there's a reason for that. We are, we have to change as the needs of the community changes, obviously. So, 18 years ago, back in 2005 when we had those two ambulances now versus the three that we have, right. We have had to adjust along the way and change with the community and change what the needs of the community were. So, I've seen 18 years of that, and I've grown with that and I've gained valuable experience in watching that. So, here we are again with another kind of like way we're going to do things. We're not, these Lieutenant spots aren't going to change you know, what we do but maybe alter a little bit of how we do things in terms of training and pre-planning and how we think about prevention, that kind of thing. So, I think I've been along and I'm well aware of why we make the decisions that we make versus just thinking about hearing them and listening to them. I've been an acting captain for seven years, which has put me and my relationship with the captains and the upper management a little closer. So, I get it, my perception is different. So, I see where we are going as a department and for me, I want to be a part of that as an officer and just kind of build up and we do have a young department and hopefully kind of take that information that I've learned and hopefully pass it along as well along the way.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. So, that's the end of our questions, I'm assuming they're all set. Do you have any, all set. So, any closing comments?

Mr. McKenney: Just really quickly, again, thank you again. This was, it's an exciting time for all of us at the fire department and as long as this process has been, I've enjoyed it. I really have.

It's an exciting time and just for one last thing, you know for me personally, if we're talking about timing wise, it's just for me it's just the right time for me and my personal life and certainly in my professional life as a firefighter, these positions. So, I would just end with that and thank you all again.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Thank you so much.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. McKenney: Thank you. I appreciate it.

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5:55 p.m. – Jason Codding

Mr. Gennette: Alright, Mr. Codding, welcome.

Mr. Codding: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: We will give you a chance to open up, say a few things. We're going to ask you a couple of questions and then we'll give you a closing and then we'll move on about the day.

Mr. Codding: Sounds good.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, so the floor is yours.

Mr. Codding: Okay. Good afternoon, just wanted to say thank you for having me. My name is Jason Codding. I'm a lifelong Ludlow resident. Born and raised, currently reside. Live with my wife, three daughters. I was a Ludlow High School Class of 2000 graduate. After high school I went to college for criminal justice. Around 21, I immediately got a full-time job at Smith and Wesson, continued to pursue my criminal justice degree. I also worked part time on the Ludlow Special Police for a couple of years. Through that whole process I kind of realized maybe law enforcement wasn't my calling. So, I decided to refocus, I went back to school got my EMT basic at Westfield State, went on to get my paramedic. About three months after I got my paramedic, I got hired on the Ludlow Fire Department. I've currently been working there for about 8 ½ years. It will be nine years in August. While there, I've worked diligently every day to come to work with a great attitude. I've also been very active in our social club where we volunteer time, try to donate money back to the community. I've kind of taken the lead on our MDA fill the boot drive. Also, in town I've given time back coaching various sports, baseball, football, and wrestling. Just most recently, a couple of years ago, I was a Ludlow High School Varsity Football Team coach. I kind of had to give all of that up because I have daughters and they're playing their own sports. They play soccer, which I don't offer them much information, but I still go there to try and support them. That's me in a nutshell.

Mr. Gennette: That's it, excellent.

Mr. Codding: Yes sir.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, Mr. Silva, would you care to open up?

Mr. Silva: Welcome. What have you done to make the Ludlow Fire Department a more successful organization?

Mr. Codding: So, as I stated in my opening statement, I just come to work every day, I enjoy my job. I've worked some not so stellar jobs in the past and it's made me realize this is a great job. I love to work for this town. Like I said, I'm born and raised, I take a lot of pride in the department and the town. I think I always try to put my best foot forward, meet every task with, you know, a can-do attitude. I've also, while working, I try to step up to the plate and take on as many tasks as I can. I don't just do what is asked of me, I try to go above and beyond that every

day. Like I do the monument grass and stuff, whatever the Chief needs of me or whatever the department needs of me, I try to take on and just meet with a good attitude.

Mr. Silva: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay, hang on one second. Alright, Jason, good to see you again. Okay, where's my question, sorry. Alright, it's a policy question. So, the fire Chief puts out a new policy, and as a Lieutenant you and your crew review it and have a chance to comment on it. Now you know that this policy won't be popular with your crew, so how will you handle their complaints and concerns regarding this new policy?

Mr. Codding: Okay, so if the Chief hands out a new policy, first and foremost, that's what we have to do, right? So, what I would do is I would meet that, I would tell them, break the news. It might not be, you know, people might not like the policy, but you got to do your job. You got to do what the Chief asks of you and being in that middle management role, the best way to show people that it's good for the department is to meet it, head on, do it as if you enjoy it and maybe they'll follow along, you know. It's hard to get everybody to follow along but maybe you can get a couple of people to snowball effect you know. Like you start it a little bit and then they build and build and build and then before you know it it's, maybe they enjoy it more than they thought they would. Who knows?

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Mr. DeBarge: Sure, you had me at you have to do your job.

Mr. Codding: That's 100% you know and if you do it and if it looks like you enjoy it then people will follow along, I think.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright, I appreciate it. I'm good, thanks.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes sir. Mr. Codding, thank you. So, we have nine applicants for the positions, so what separates you from the other eight?

Mr. Codding: So, that's a great question because there's some really good applicants out there and I think what separates me from them is just my attitude, my work ethic, and just the fact that I try to step up. I try to volunteer my time. I've been the President of the Social Club for the past three years. I give back to the town as much as I can. You know, I'm a very busy guy with my three daughters, like I said, but anytime there's something to do with the department, I step up. I meet the challenge and you know; I don't know if that separates me from all of them, but I think that makes me, and I don't know maybe that's good enough. I hope so.

Mr. Goncalves: 'Me' has done pretty good up until now, right?

Mr. Codding: Yes, so far.

Mr. Goncalves: Alright, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: All set? Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Mr. Codding, congratulations. As we've said to everybody, we know this has been a long process. It's had some bumps in the road. So, it's good that we're getting to the point that you, the nine candidates, get some closure. So, congratulations. My question is, if anyone from this board came to you and asked you a question as they asked you, where do you think the fire department could save money? What would you do to save money and why?

Mr. Codding: So, alright, yeah. So, what I do as part of my job is I do like hose repair and things like that. So, in a way I already saved the town a little bit of money. We have to hydrostatic test hose every year. So, if one pops a hole or a coupling fails, I have a little room in the back, I try to fix it to the best I can. If I can't fix it, I'll cut it down to a shorter length of hose so we can reuse it. So, we're not just wasting hose as we blow through it. That's probably a very, very minute amount of money in the town's grand scheme of things. But, also as Lieutenant, we're going to be in charge of EMS supplies. So, I guess another way we could try to save money is do our due diligence, make sure things that are set to expire, maybe we put them first in the rotation on the ambulance so we use them. That's about all I can think of right now.

Mr. Rosenblum: No, that's good. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, Mr. Codding, why are you interested in the position of Lieutenant and what have you done to prepare yourself for the duties and responsibilities of the position?

Mr. Codding: So, I'm interested in the position because it's a leadership role. I've taken on leadership roles in the past through coaching. I've been team captain. Like I said, I've stepped up to the plate and tried to lead by example in the department as I work. So, I think this is a good suit for me. I've never been given the opportunity to lead all that much yet in my eight years but given the opportunity I think I would succeed. To get myself ready for the position, I've gone through many trainings like the writ training, the open water training, I've worked closely with all of the captains and the Chiefs as best I can. I'm always constantly around the department whether it's for callback or all call fire. You know, I'm always trying to show up. I show up to training as best I can and I think that has made me ready for this position.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Alright, so that's our questions. Do you have any closing comments you'd like to make?

Mr. Codding: No, I just wanted to say thank you guys for your time. Thank the Chief and the Deputy and the captains for their time as well and guiding us through this, long winding road that it was. Other than that, thank you guys and have a good night.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Thank you, Mr. Codding.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: Thanks Jason.

Mr. Goncalves: Good luck to you.

Mr. Codding: Thank you.

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6:15 p.m. – Zac Ellison

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Ellison, how are you?

Mr. Ellison: I'm well, how are you?

Mr. Gennette: Good. I saw a guy that looked just like you not too long ago.

Mr. Ellison: Did you?

Mr. Gennette: Yes.

Mr. Ellison: Just like me?

Mr. Gennette: Or maybe you look just like him.

Mr. Ellison: I'm not sure which one of those is good, either he's aging well or I'm just not.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, so we're going to give you an opportunity to give an opening statement. We're going to ask some questions. We'll let you close up and then we'll move on.

Mr. Ellison: Sure.

Mr. Gennette: Alright. Do you want to wait for,

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, we got to wait for him for a minute.

Mr. Gennette: So, we can talk about how Tony leaves us with uncomfortable silence.

Mr. DeBarge: I was going to say, do we need elevator music for this? Standby.

Mr. Silva: Jeopardy.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes. This is where I always get in trouble. Don't do that again.

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Mr. Gennette: Alright. I think you're probably good to go. The floor is yours, sir.

Mr. Ellison: Sure. So, I think I've met most of the people in the room. For those of you who don't know me, my name's Zac Ellison, a second-generation firefighter here in Ludlow. Lifelong Ludlow resident. I spent the last 10 plus years as a firefighter here in town. Firefighter/paramedic. Prior to that, I had worked for a few different ambulance companies as a paramedic. I had worked in Springfield, Chicopee/Holyoke area as well as Fitchburg and Worcester as well. I really enjoy Ludlow. Ludlow has been a passion of mine. Within the department in the last 10 years, I've had the opportunity to hit a couple of what I think are milestones. About seven years ago, I became one of the safe program coordinators. So, me and Jan Thornton, we work within the school system, fire safety, other safety practices and stuff. That's something I'm extremely proud of. A little over six years, or a little over five years ago, excuse me, became an acting captain within the department. I really enjoyed that supervisory role, interim supervisory role. I think it's afforded me the opportunity to log over a thousand hours as an acting supervisor with experience there. Also, the union, current union president for six years, which has proven to be, proven to be something I enjoy. It's just another leadership aspect. About four years ago, I was lucky enough to be appointed to the state hazmat team as well. District four here, which covers Massachusetts, Western Massachusetts side, and something I take very seriously there as well. I think that strong values, good work ethic, and building a trust with the people you work with are the fundamentals of leadership. I think that's something I've been striving for, for quite a while now, since before I worked here. I've only been able to hone my abilities since working here and I'm extremely excited for this opportunity.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Perfect. Mr. DeBarge, do you want to lead us off?

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, sure. Hey Zac. Good to see you.

Mr. Ellison: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: So, congratulations on your opportunity for promotion. I have a policy question for you.

Mr. Ellison: Okay.

Mr. DeBarge: So, the fire chief comes down with a policy that has been presented to everyone and everyone's had the opportunity to review and comment on it. Now you know that your crew is not going to be, this policy is not going to be very popular with your crew. So, how do you handle the complaints and concerns of your crew about this policy?

Mr. Ellison: I think change is hard for everyone, admittedly. So, I think we all have a little of that in us. Policies, I feel are put in place for a reason. We are starting to see gone are the days of the iron fist because I said so, this will be it. I think that the best way to approach my group with this policy is to get a little bit of background. So, I would get all the clarification that I would need from the Chief or Deputy Chief. If I had any questions, certainly I would voice them there and unfortunately, being a mid-level supervisor affords you the opportunity to catch it on both ends, right. So, If I had any questions, I think I would start there. When I presented it to my group, I would be prepared for a little bit of backlash. I'd be prepared for people to be uncomfortable. Knowing the reasoning behind what we're doing, I think is extremely important and introducing that to the group would make it very important as well. I think it goes a lot further when you explain things to people and why we're that, not so much we're doing this because I said so. There's a reason behind what we are doing and a lot of times in our profession, it's trying to keep us safe. As I said, you know, prior gripes can kind of go both ways. That's something that I'm going to have to field. Whether or not everyone agrees with everything in the policy, I think it's important that we all work together and that they know. They being my group know that my consistency in that leadership role is going to create trust. If I'm consistently coming out and listening to their concerns and taking them further, if need be, or at least having a dialogue with them, then my group is going to trust me. In my opinion, consistency builds trust and that's true of a new policy or regulation at work. It's true if they're going to trust me to hand them the right equipment on the ambulance and it's true if they're going to follow me into a basement. Being up front, having an open dialogue and open discussion with the group and going from there.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay, great. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes. Welcome.

Mr. Ellison: Thank you.

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Mr. Goncalves: So, we have nine applicants here for four positions. What separates you from the other eight?

Mr. Ellison: Well, certainly not my looks from another one of them, but…

Mr. Goncalves: You look like one of the guys that was here earlier, I don't know.

Mr. Ellison: I think what would set me apart or would speak to my credit would be my experience in this interim position. As I had stated earlier, logged over a thousand hours, about 168 acting shifts. I've been doing a very similar job to the one that I'm applying for. I think that that has given me a little bit of an inside scoop as to how a transition would go. If there was a transition from an interim supervisor to a permanent supervisor position. I've that opportunity to work in that position with multiple groups, getting along, getting to know most of the folks that I work with. I think that gives me a little bit of a little bit of, I'm going to say, a feather in the cap so to speak, combined with a desire to want to work with these people and a strong work ethic.

Mr. Goncalves: Good deal. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Mr. Ellison or that's I guess your dad, right? So, Zac congratulations as I've said to everybody else too is that the process has really kind of stunk. It's been dragging out, and finally everybody gets to have some closure and move on and hopefully become Lieutenant. My question is, if any of our Board members were to come to you and ask where do you think you could save money in the fire department, what do you think that would be and why?

Mr. Ellison: Saving money is always kind of a hot button issue, right? As far as, where does it come from? In a department as busy as ours, I know that the Chief and the Deputy have a lot on their shoulder with that. If I was asked how I could assist in that I think, well one of the areas I think I would approach would be from a training aspect and I want to be clear on one thing is that I don't and in no way, shape or form am an advocate of cutting out any training. I think training is what makes us the best. That's what makes us who we are. You know, we have the distinct advantage in Ludlow to have a lot of folks who've got a lot of talents and a lot of experience in related fields. People who have, you know, served as combat medics overseas and as of recently still have been in charge of those units. We have folks who can weld. We have folks who can build. So, from the training aspect, I think that it could get a little bit expensive to bring in outside vendors for a lot of classes. Maybe exploring some in-house certifications for some folks to get them certified as trainers within their specialties. I think that would afford us the opportunity to save some money, I'm sure outside vendors on a cost like that, but also gives our folks a chance to interact with their peers and share their knowledge on a professional basis. Things that can be done on duty, off duty, but taking full advantage of the resources that we have within the building.

Mr. Rosenblum: Perfect. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Silva.

Mr. Silva: Yeah, welcome.

Mr. Ellison: Thank you.

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Mr. Silva: What have you done to make the Ludlow Fire Department a more successful organization?

Mr. Ellison: I think within the last 10 years or so, it's always been a goal of mine to make something better. I firmly believe that you should pick things up and then when you leave them, they should be better then when you found them. I would like to, several areas, but one I'd like to touch on specifically, if you don't mind is my involvement within the safe program here at the fire department and then in the school system. Together, me and Jan Thornton along with obviously the Chief's help and everyone who participates with us, we've been able to grow that program into so much more than fire education. You know, you're out of class for a day, you're running around playing games. I think that our community outreach now holds no bounds. We've redone some of our props. We go to the daycare centers. We're constantly involved in some volunteer work up at the Boys and Girls Club too, as well as other entities in town that we've partnered with and I'm really proud of our community outreach now and I'm proud to have been a frontline part of that. I think that's important that the community know what we're doing. That we're actively out there trying to prevent things, trying to keep people safe, but just trying to get to know them.

Mr. Silva: Thank you.

Mr. Ellison: I'm really proud of our community outreach and how I've been able to help with that. If that answers, it.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. So, I got a two-parter. First one is, why are you interested in the position of Lieutenant and what have you done to prepare yourself for the duties and responsibilities of the position?

Mr. Ellison: I'm interested in this position because I see where the fire service is going. I think that, as I had mentioned earlier, sometimes gone are the days of old and the iron fist. The world is changing. I've been an active part of changing with it within the fire service. I've waited until the time was right. I feel that I've put enough time in, I've participated. So, to kind of bridge over to your second part if you don't mind, I've participated in several outside classes and programs, fire officer trainings and such, but I feel like I'm ready. I feel like the experience that

I've put in, the time that I've put in has, is telling me that I'm ready to be a leader and I think that leading from the front and leading by example is something that I've always strived for and I think that's something that this department would benefit from, especially in a mid-level supervisor, a line officer position. As far as preparing for it, I've been preparing to be a great firefighter, hopefully one day since before I became a firefighter. If that involves leadership, which obviously it does, I think that's something that just by taking steps, whether it be with the safe program, with the union, as an acting captain, various classes that I've taken, and other things that I've done. All of those things have prepared me to get to this point, but I'm never done preparing. I'm never done preparing myself and I'm never done looking for the future of the fire department itself, not just my own.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. So, do you have any closing comments that you'd like to make?

Mr. Ellison: I would like to thank everyone for their time. I know it's been a two-part day for everybody, so you know, that can be a lot. I think you have a lot of great candidates in front of you. You know, Chief has done a great job too, obviously, but I do want to say that I'm extremely proud, as was mentioned, it's been a long process and I'm extremely proud of everybody who's made it here and I couldn't ask for more and I couldn't ask for better people to work with and I appreciate your time.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Excellent. Thank you so much.

Mr. Ellison: Thank you.

Mr. Goncalves: Thanks Zac.

Mr. DeBarge: Thank you Zac.

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6:35 p.m. – Matthew Niles

Mr. Gennette: Welcome Mr. Niles, how are you this evening?

Mr. Niles: Good. How are you sir?

Mr. Gennette: I'm doing well. I'm doing well. Thank you for your interest. We're going to give you an opportunity to make an opening statement, ask you some questions, give you a closing and then we'll move on.

Mr. Niles: Okay.

Mr. Gennette: Alright. The floor is all yours.

Mr. Niles: Well, I do appreciate everyone's time interviewing the nine of us going through this process. As a 12-year member of the fire department, it's kind of a huge honor for me anyway to be sitting in a position where I'm sitting right now. Being interviewed with some of the candidates; it's quite tough going up against these guys. These guys are some of the best guys that I've ever known and ever worked with. So, it's a true honor to be here in this position, regardless of the outcome. Going forward from this point, you know, regardless of how this goes down having Lieutenants in this department is something that's much needed and I'm just thrilled to be a part of this process.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes.

Mr. Gennette: Do you want to start us off?

Mr. Goncalves: Thank you. Thanks for everything. Twelve years, eleven years?

Mr. Niles: Umm, 2011.

Mr. Goncalves: 2011.

Mr. Niles: Sometimes it gets a little hazy after 3:00 p.m., so.

Mr. Goncalves: We have nine applicants for those four positions.

Mr. Niles: Yes sir.

Mr. Goncalves: What sets you apart from those other eight?

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Mr. Niles: From where I stand, I feel like I have a quite a unique experience level. Even though I have not been here on this department for very long, as long as some of the other candidates for this position itself, I feel like ever since the young age of where I was having run-ins with the fire department in my town, have a father as a police officer in town that I grew up in and being welcomed into the fire service family growing up, that was the clear indicator for me as to where I wanted to go in life and have set a goal for myself to go forward and to achieve that goal ever since I was that young child. By starting at the ripe age of 15, being driven to a fire station, I was actually a pioneer candidate starting an explorer program back in the town where I grew up in. I was the sole member until word caught on and when I was going through high school, about more interest from that point, I actually went into EMT school, well before the age of 18; had to actually wait to turn 18 to take the test to become an EMT. I always tried to fast track getting to where I was. Several days after turning 18, got my EMT, became a call firefighter in the town that I grew up in, so I left the explorer program itself and started going to college as well and just continued to strive towards the position of where I wanted to go.

Mr. Goncalves: Good deal. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, Mr. Niles, as I've said to everybody is congratulations on, as you were saying, is the process has been arduous and it's been long, and you need to be commended for that and for making into the room. So, congratulations.

Mr. Niles: Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: My question is, if any of our Board members were to ask you where do you think that the fire department could save some money; where do you think that would be and why?

Mr. Niles: Pertaining to a budget or cost savings? Obviously, in today's day and age it is, things are skyrocketing in price. Understanding that money is needed to continue an operation such as a fire department of any size. I would have to probably rely more on in-house training itself rather than outsourcing training and by in-house training would mean sending several representatives to a class. So, more of a train the trainer deal and that would be pertaining to fire and EMS as well.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. Niles: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Silva.

Mr. Silva: Yes, welcome.

Mr. Niles: Thank you.

Mr. Silva: What have you done to make the Ludlow Fire Department a more successful organization?

Mr. Niles: Getting into the department at a young age as I did, I undertook, I actually sought out and undertook several responsibilities that were not necessarily highly sought after. Some of those responsibilities would be QA, and QI of ambulance call reports. So, after every single time an ambulance leaves the station, a medical report is documented with that person, with what was going on, what we did for treatment in that regard itself. I sought out the responsibility of going and ensuring that everything was being followed protocol wise by the state and by our medical, local medical control director itself. That would be reviewing calls of all sorts of acuity, high and low and just making sure that things were being followed. The other responsibility that I undertook and sought out actually was to order supplies needed for said ambulance calls itself. Obviously, there, we do a lot in the back of an ambulance nowadays, as much as just giving a little bit of oxygen all the way to advanced airways of innovation, IV access medications and all that. Obviously, equipment is needed for those to do that. Here in Ludlow, we do quite a few calls, so it is, I undertook a responsibility of ensuring that we had those supplies, we had that equipment to make sure that everybody had the necessary tools in order to perform their job and perform it well. Those responsibilities were given to the Deputy Chief and the implementation of the Deputy Chief itself. However, I still sit on a committee with three other members and a representative of each group. We have four groups, and we work with the Deputy Chief as of right now to assist him in overseeing a lot of the EMS supplies and training and need for equipment. The other responsibility that I undertook and still am part of is our self-contained breathing apparatus, our air packs. Chief Pease was kind enough to send me to a training to where I am now responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the air packs that we have. Now, quite honestly those are pretty big deals. That a pretty big important piece of equipment. If those go wrong, my best friends are going to get hurt and that's something that I don't want to see happen. So, I take that responsibility pretty seriously.

Mr. Silva: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Hey Matt, good to see you again.

Mr. Niles: Good to see you sir.

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Mr. DeBarge: Okay. So, Fire Chief comes out with a policy for any and all in your fire department and as a Lieutenant, you know that this policy is not going to be very popular with your crew. They have an opportunity to review it, and comment on it How are you going to handle complaints and concerns from your crew about said policy?

Mr. Niles: I think a tough skill for folks of all ranks would be the ability to separate relationships and by relationships, I mean friend, and worker. They're, just like in life there are going to be things that you don't necessarily agree with, that you don't want to do. But when you come to work you do have to have that ability to separate friend and want to do as opposed to operational need and continue the direction of the fire department in a positive way. So, what would need to be done is to make sure that everybody's on the same page with that mindset that folks know that coming to work is not just coming here to play and to have a cup of coffee. It is to ensure that the operational readiness department is one of the utmost important things and it may be annoying, and it may be troublesome, but it's something that needs to happen to ensure that everyone is going to be safe on and off the job and that the services that we provide for this town are continued and kept up.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright. Great, thank you.

Mr. Niles: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: I got a two-parter. First one, is why are you interested in the position of Lieutenant and what have you done to prepare yourself for the position?

Mr. Niles: I believe when I started the interview this evening, I mentioned that, very briefly on how I got involved in the fire service to begin with. I also feel like I have maybe lightly touched base on being a well-rounded individual, having quite a bit of life experience and stuff in many aspects, whether it be in public safety or in personal life. I feel that having someone in a position where they are well-rounded both on the job and off the job is one of the utmost importance itself. Being a leader is somebody that people have the ability and to come to in any time of whether it be need or want and having someone who has been in positions, whether it be in bad or in good, that can assist in navigating someone either on the job or off the job, I believe is an important characteristic of a leader. I believe that I have those qualities. I would hope that the people that I work with also agree that I have those qualities. Preparing myself for this position, I believe, like I said probably goes back to when I turned 15 and got involved with a medical emergency at my grandparents' house itself and it was the first time that I actually was up close and personal with the paramedics and watched them work and what they did I thought was just awestruck. I could not believe how someone could walk into a house and fix someone who was rendered incapacitated. I thought that was just unbelievable. From them stepping up and getting an explorer program going, showing interest in that, being taken under the wing of one of quite possibly the smartest paramedics I've ever met in my entire life. Riding on the ambulance with him at such a young age, setting a good course of direction on how to obtain a position of where I wanted to go ultimately. Getting involved with the services, like I mentioned, of the QA and QI of ambulance calls. Being involved in a position where safety is viewed very highly in making sure that you know what you're doing to make sure that the folks that you work with are going to be safe as well. Exposing myself into all sorts of life experiences itself. Again, bad or good, I feel has prepared me for a position like this.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Alright, good enough. Do you have any closing comments you'd like to make?

Mr. Niles: Like I mentioned, I appreciate everybody making the nine interviews, that's a long day, couple of days.

Mr. Goncalves: It's our pleasure to meet all of your guys.

Mr. Niles: I do really appreciate your time and I look forward to continue serving on the department and in a supervisor role.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent, thank you very much.

Mr. Niles: Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. DeBarge: Thanks Matt, appreciate it.

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6:55 p.m. – Ethan Dubois

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Dubois, how are you?

Mr. Gennette: So, for the record how do you say your name?

Mr. Dubois: Dubois.

Mr. Goncalves: And if you were French, how would you say it?

Mr. Dubois: Dubois.

Mr. Gennette: Alright. Mr. Dubois, we're going to open the floor up for you to say a few comments, ask you a few questions, let you close, and we'll be done.

Mr. Dubois: Okay.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, so the floor is all yours.

Mr. Dubois: My name is Ethan Dubois. I am a fourth-generation firefighter for the town of Ludlow. I've been with the department for a little over eight years now. The last two of which I've held the role of acting captain. Within the department, I am the union secretary, I'm part of the truck committee, building new trucks, the maintenance division, as well as representative for the overtime committee. I just want to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity tonight for the interview.

Mr. Gennette: Perfect. Alright. I think we're back to the beginning, Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: You're welcome.

Mr. Rosenblum: Congratulations. We know it's been a long journey for everybody, for all nine of you and you should all be commended for getting to this point. So, congratulations on that.

Mr. Dubois: Thank you.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, my question would be if any of the board members here came to you and asked you where do you think that the fire department could save money, where do you think that would be and why?

Mr. Dubois: I would probably refer to the Chief for that question if it were up to me. I think the Chief does a really good job being proficient with money per se. You know, I'm buying in bulk possibly EMS supplies or you know two for one deals or stuff like that.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: That was a great answer. Mr. Silva.

Mr. Silva: Yeah, I for one know it's Dubois, and that's because I know tons of them and now the Chief Dubois that just passed what about a year ago, was that your grandfather?

Mr. Dubois: That was my grandfather, yes.

Mr. Silva: I was very happy to see him every morning that I went up to the golf course when he was there. He was 95 and he was there, and he would walk sometimes. It was totally amazing. So, I was just going to ask, is that what happens with firefighters; they get so athletic, so trained that they live forever.

Mr. Dubois: That we live forever, no. Maybe if we're lucky.

Mr. Silva: So, anyway, my question is what have you done to make the Ludlow Fire Department a more successful organization?

Mr. Dubois: Wow, what I've done to make it more successful, there were a few trainings that I took, classes to continue my education and these specific things here. One being our rapid intervention team and our water rescue. Not to say that they were lacking per se, but we needed a little bit of an overhaul to you know, up our standards and the newer technologies and way of doing things. I took a couple of classes in each of those places, and you know, speaking with the

Chief and some other captains, kind of revamped both of those, whether that be training, better equipment, better tactics to make us very proficient and highly skilled in those two scenarios.

Mr. Silva: Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. DeBarge.

Mr. DeBarge: Yes, Ethan it's good to see you.

Mr. Dubois: You too.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright, policy question for you. So, the fire Chief comes out with a policy that you and your crew have been able to review and can comment on, you know, this isn't going to be popular, this policy with your crew. So, my question to you is how will you handle complaints or concerns from your crew about said policy?

Mr. Dubois: Ultimately, if the Chief made it a policy, it's something that he wants done, I think leading from the front and having a positive attitude to have the crew follow you and have your back, if you're negative and then the crew's already negative about it. If you're positive about that specific policy, I think it will breed a better environment for taking that policy seriously and in a positive light.

Mr. DeBarge: Alright, great. I appreciate it. I'm good.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. Goncalves: Yes. Your grandfather was a great guy.

Mr. Dubois: I appreciate it.

Mr. Goncalves: I actually played every weekend right after him, right before him I was,

Mr. Dubois: So, there was no more golf balls left, he picked them all up.

Mr. Goncalves: no, he actually gave me all the golf balls and your grandmother gave me your grandfather's golf clubs. I have them at home.

Mr. Dubois: Oh, very good.

Mr. Goncalves: And his bag and everything.

Mr. Dubois: So, you're shooting under 80 now.

Mr. Goncalves: I am shooting,

Mr. DeBarge: He is actually. He is.

Mr. Goncalves: Thank God, he gave me a lot of balls.

Mr. Silva: Did you mean his age?

Mr. Dubois: No, no, no.

Mr. Goncalves: That's my goal is to someday shoot my age.

Mr. Dubois: There you go.

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Mr. Goncalves: Think about that one. So, we got nine applicants for four positions. What sets you apart from the other eight?

Mr. Dubois: What sets me apart is my leadership skills. The qualities that make a good leader. I'm a good communicator, I'm a good team player. I'm quick and responsive under duress per se. I put myself in a position of an informal leader the past few years and not only to act like that, but to think like that. I put myself in that scenario on a daily basis, trying to make myself better. I attend all trainings. I'm dedicated to this place, the Town of Ludlow. That's what sets me apart.

Mr. Goncalves: Good deal. Thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Alright, so I have a two-part question. First one is, why are you interested in the position of Lieutenant and what have you done to prepare yourself to fulfill the duties of the position?

Mr. Dubois: I'm interested in the position because it's a step in the right direction for me. It's a challenge and it keeps me on my toes at all times. How I prepared, taking extra classes, and really just following in the shadows of leaders who I see as what I would like to become whether that be retired or present now. I'm sure my captain now really finds me annoying; I'm asking a thousand questions. Why did you do that, why do you think that way? You know, what could have changed per se? So, just putting myself in that role on a daily basis and thinking not just like a private but you know, how my captain thinks.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent, excellent. Alright, so any closing comments you'd like to make?

Mr. Dubois: Just want to thank everyone for the opportunity.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent. Alright. That's it, you're all set.

Mr. Rosenblum: Thank you.

Mr. Dubois: I appreciate it.

Mr. Gennette: Have a good night.

Mr. Goncalves: Good luck to you.

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Mr. Gennette: Chief, are you ready for your comments?

Chief Pease: You know I talked to Chief Babineau because this is the first time I've made, we've been in the position to make multiple promotions and to quote him "it wasn't the most favorite part of my job", you know, and we all wish we could give every one of these guys a job. I can say that everyone of them is capable, you know, some of them definitely interview better than others, but I'll say this, you know, my staff, command staff, five captains, Deputy Chief, along with me and Carrie with HR too, kind of bounced some questions back especially regarding civil service selection process and the process that which we used. We interviewed every single candidate, probably took the better part of a half an hour for each of them and after we were done, we deliberated for at least two and a half hours round and round and round in circles and you know you can easily say there's no clear-cut decisions that were easily obvious and easy to be made. As you can see, everyone of these candidates does more for the department than just punch the time clock and work there. Every one of them has taken on extra responsibilities. Some of them they have been given, but a lot of them, they have asked for and welcomed upon themselves. A little bit of them have a very, a variety of different backgrounds of where they come from, where their specialties are but I could say that throughout the whole course of the last two days, I couldn't be more proud than to have shown you and the town, the department and probably you know, the future of our department. You know, you've seen nine guys here that are up for promotion. There are another two that past the test that didn't make it to this

room, but I'd like to mention them too because you know, they're good guys too that are the future of this department and seeing all of them, you've probably seen one of the next Chief's here, down the line someday. I'm pretty positive that you have, whether they get this next job or not, you know, we'll see, but it's one of those nine. So, going back to the start of this process, we had elected to follow a written civil service exam and an assessment, and we would've got the blended score of each of them in the perfect world. It just didn't work out for us because there was some legal action, the test was cancelled actually five days, the written test, five days before they were all ready to take the written test and some of these guys spent two years studying for that, which was a heartbreak for them. So, I went back to them, the union and said, "well what do you want to do"? I mean, we have these positions that have been approved almost two years ago from the Selectmen, you know we got to move on it and could wait to see if there's a written that's coming out, or we could go with an assessment only. The assessment that we had was done by six different fire chiefs, two different panels, four different, pretty elaborate exercises and from that list, from those four exercises, we were given a list and a ranking. So, I think you know looking back at everything and talking to our captains, our command staff, everybody that you saw here got to interview for probably 15 minutes, on average give or take, maybe 10 for some. We had the opportunity to see them over the lengths of their careers. Obviously, their careers have been a variety of different lengths, but most of them have at least at or around exceeded the 10-year mark. You've seen one that had some very lengthy experience with us as a call firefighter and then you know worked diligently to become a full-time firefighter. But aside from him, they're all relatively average of the same experience. A couple of 18-year veterans, but again, when we go back to the process, we're a civil service community, we were given a ranking. So, we had a clear number one, which was Mr. Dooley, that you saw. Two, there was a tie between Mr. Ellison and Mr. Bienvenue. Then there was a three-way tie at the next spot, which was Mr. McKenney, Mr. Nally and Mr. Codding. Below that, go down the ranking, it's Mr. Ellison the second, Junior, Zac, Mr. Dubois and Mr. Niles and like I said I think we have to consider the process that we selected to go by, their career, their evaluation through an interview, which I did with my command staff. And when we deliberated for that two and a half hours, we came out with a unanimous recommendation for your body. So, I'm here to deliver that recommendation from my command staff to you guys and considering some advice from HR. So, it was not done in a vacuum or as a quick, just you know pulling names out of a hat. We really went round and round and this is unanimous from our command staff. So, I will give them to you in the order of seniority, which is probably the best way to make this motion. So, the most senior person with career status here in the department that we voted to recommend was Dan McKenney, Private McKenney. Second in seniority career status, but not in the years of serving at the department was Bud Ellison, William Ellison. Third was again our number one ranked candidate through the civil service selection process, Robert Dooley and the fourth who again was tied for the second spot was Jason Bienvenue. Again, that's a unanimous recommendation from my command staff, considering every variable including the selection process in which we chose for this position. Now I'm sure that there are other individuals on that list, all of them are qualified but I'm sure there's other ones that you will see again in the near future. Likely, we are going to see a retirement within the next two, two and a half years of one of our captains, which will open up a spot at that level, which everybody...will in time. Again, you know it wasn't an easy process. It wasn't taken lightly, and you know, I can see what Chief Babineau was talking about when he said this is not something he looked forward to. I'm happy, really happy that we're moving the department forward with these positions, but you know you see a lot of guys that have given their blood, sweat, and tears to this department but unfortunately you can't promote everybody. So, that's where we're at and I really thank all of you for spending the last two nights together here, taking time out of your busy schedules to help us along with this process. So, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Excellent.

Mr. DeBarge: Thanks Chief.

Mr. Gennette: Any questions for the chief?

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Mr. Goncalves: No, I mean I don't know if we're going to go through a drill here or we're just going to make a motion, but it's kind of funny that, and I had the same four people, maybe a little different order, but there's no question, Dooley's a machine. You can just see it. He's there, he's on top of everything. I thought he was exceptional for sure and Bud and Dan and Mr. Bienvenue, they're the type of, they were the four guys that I think if tomorrow you said we've got to pick four chiefs for four departments in the area from these nine guys, those are the fours guys I would say. No question. I think they're up to it, they're ready. They're all good and you should be proud of every one of them really, but I'm a hundred percent with your decision or the way you guys have ranked it.

Mr. Silva: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Silva.

Mr. Silva: I agree, I had the same four and my ranking status is just one to five and I have them all very close and they did come out the same way. The only question I'm having is, does it matter if we are appointing 1, 2, 3 and 4 or are we just going to appoint the four.

Chief Pease: I don't think, you know I don't think and…

Mr. Goncalves: That's an HR question.

Chief Pease: So, with our department you don't particularly get any advantage over another person when you are appointed in a certain order.

Mr. Silva: Okay.

Mr. Goncalves: What if you have two of these guys end up on the same shift?

Chief Pease: So, they won't. We need one on every shift and I will choose the shifts, which they will go to. They don't just get to pick. So, they won't, and you know, I think that I can say one of them had a particular, and I'm not playing favorites here, but I'm just saying one of their interviews was pretty remarkable. That was Bud Ellison, I mean you guys all saw him, and you know if I had to rank them in order of their interview, I'd probably start with him, but I think for the consistency in the process, Carrie, that you know, we don't want to jump around. We probably want to stay with department seniority the way that we appoint them, just to be consistent in some form or fashion about the way that we're going here. However, it really doesn't stand for a lot of bearing inside the department itself. One of them won't have an advantage over any of the other ones for you know, selecting vacation or getting chosen for overtime or a detail or anything else, but you know I think it was pretty, I think it's something to mention that you know everybody had a great interview. Buds' kind of stood out in the back of my mind.

Mr. Silva: Yeah, I'm just questioning because before we've had police officers where it did matter.

Chief Pease: I think it matters for shift selection there because,

Mr. DeBarge: It does there.

Ms. Ribeiro: So, you have third, first shift, second, third shift. So there that matters.

Mr. Silva: So, it does somewhat.

Talking over each other.

Chief Pease: Yeah, it certainly matters in the police world.

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Mr. Silva: And now, as we all know, I've always taken a lot of stock in whatever, what you guys do when you come up with a committee or call them whatever you want, an assessment and I mean you, the chiefs know what it is you do. I mean we sit up here, and we can, you know, talk to them. We get some, you know, good feeling about them and stuff, but we don't really, I don't at least know what it is they do, how good they are in their job. You do. So, I take a lot of stock in the recommendations, and I have no difference in the recommendations that you're putting forth. Like I said, the only thing is maybe the positioning that we're doing. I mean I'd rather see all four of them just get appointed and be done with it, but if it matters maybe we'll have to,

Chief Pease: Yeah.

Ms. Ribeiro: I honestly don't think it really does matter, but from a civil service standpoint, it doesn't, they don't need first, second, third, fourth appointment. We've had a habit of doing that in the PD and it happens more there because of the shift. So here, I mean, you know the Chief and I talked about this earlier when was the last time we promoted multiple management positions? It hasn't happened. So, I mean, and when's the next time we're going to have four Lieutenants. This is kind of a unique situation because they're new positions. Whatever we do tonight, I think we need to be consistent moving forward, whether we take it off the civil service list, whether we take if off seniority or a multitude of different things whether it be interview, experience, that kind of thing. You know, in our conversation, one of you may feel like one candidate interviewed the best. So, that's more objective, whereas you know,

Chief Pease: Subjective

Ms. Ribeiro: subjective, whereas seniority date is not.

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Chief Pease: Right and whether you chose to go straight down the civil service list or by seniority on the department, I don't think it really truly has any bearing. If you guys, you know, take my suggestion, that's fine. If you don't that's also fine. But I'd just like to piggyback on what Mr. Silva said about, I'm really happy that you guys trust our ability to make that decision and me being the Chief, yeah, I get to work with everyone of these firefighters and see them every day, but I don't, I'm not as much as I'd like to, on the ground with them and working with them on the day-to-day operations all the time, their captains are. So, that's, you know, just like you put your faith in me, I put a lot of faith in their captains and that's why I included them in making these decisions because again, who knows them better than anybody else. They work with them every single shift. I'm not there on the weekends unless there's a fire or somethings going wrong or there's an event going on and I'm not there all night. So, they see them a hundred percent of the time.

Mr. Silva: I thought the Chief had to do the 24/7?

Chief Pease: I'm available.

Mr. Goncalves: Spiritually.

Chief Pease: I'm available. My phone's always on and I have a pager that I carry, but those guys truly see them in and out every single day and again with that recommendation coming from our command staff I think it means,

Mr. Silva: I have no problem with that. Okay, thank you.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Rosenblum.

Mr. Rosenblum: Well, I mean I say it all the time is that who knows better than our Chiefs in this process and obviously the process that you go through in your department in particular definitely is way above anything that we do. And your point is, I was going to make the point also, is that your captains see what, how these gentlemen interact with each other inside the firehouse. They also see how they interact in, as Zac said, in the basement of a fire. You know and to your point

is with the interviewing process, I actually put in there, I put a thing called IQ, which is interview quality because I really think that it goes to show their leadership down the road as to how they're going to lead and just kind of seeing the demeanor in the way that they speak and thing of that nature because it kind of, we're talking leadership now. We're not talking about ground level firefighters coming in that just came out of the academy, which is most of the things that we do. But my list, I mean, again, Bud Ellison, you know, he commands a room. I think he was, Mr. DeBarge said he was intimidated. So, he commands a room.

Mr. DeBarge: I still am.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yeah, my four recommendations through my point process puts me with the same four. I just think Mr. Dooley, there's an air of confidence with him, which is great, you know, and he seems to be someone that can really motivate, when he says lift others up, things like that. Bud is Bud, he's just passionate and he's kind of the guy that's done everything. Mr. McKenney has been here for a long time. Same thing, I mean you can see the passion. The one thing I would say though is that you know, the one question that kind of caught me off guard was when I was saying where would you save money? I would hope in the future, this is just me, is that I think that they need to be more involved in how the budget process works coming up because that would be the question that all of us would normally ask is, do you see yourself being the Chief down the road?

Chief Pease: Sure.

Mr. Rosenblum: And you know maybe, I mean maybe that's something that happens when they get in the Lieutenant.

Mr. Silva: Maybe now that they will be Lieutenants.

Mr. Rosenblum: Yeah, and that's, because I mean a couple said that's the Chief's job. No, but in the same sense, that's something in the back of the mind. I mean, the great answer is training from within. The other thing is too is being able to watch what you're ordering, you know, rotating your supplies to make sure that anything that's aging out sooner is up in front and going to go first. But I mean otherwise, you've got nine people like you said, obviously you got a fourth, fifth-generation firefighter.

Chief Pease: Like I said, one of those nine or I'd even extend it to the 11 that passed; you will see them again and I'm sure you'll see one of them most likely sitting in my seat someday and I'd be proud of that.

Mr. Gennette: Yeah, all set?

Mr. Rosenblum: I'm good.

Mr. Gennette: You know, I got to tell you, your up and comers are really, you got some stars, you know. That entire group, what a great group of people. I didn't see much difference in what your recommendations were either. I was right with you there. So, if that's the case then, you know, can we get a motion?

Mr. Goncalves: Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. Goncalves.

Mr. DeBarge: Are you going to let me say anything?

Mr. Gennette: You always say stuff you know. Go ahead. I already spoke, but you can go.

Mr. DeBarge: Do you want to sit in my seat too, or…

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Mr. Gennette: No, you want to sit in mine though.

Ms. Ribeiro: If I may, you should include the effective date in the motion, which I believe we discussed to be June 4th.

Chief Pease: June 4th because there will be some crew changes that have to take place with changing their schedules.

Mr. Goncalves: Midnight?

Chief Pease: It's not something you can just snap your fingers and do with the four different rotating shifts.

Mr. Rosenblum: You need it in any particular order or no?

Chief Pease: I could say we could just appoint them all as noted.

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Mr. Gennette: Okay. Alright.

Chief Pease: Effective the week, starting the pay period, the week starting that date.

Mr. Gennette: Mr. DeBarge has the floor, please everybody. Go ahead.

Mr. Goncalves: He forgot now.

Mr. DeBarge: No, no, I didn't. I'm just trying to keep, you know, trying to keep my hand down. Listen, I just want to say something about everybody because I've worked with all of them except maybe Ethan, but from the ground up, I could say a ton of things about, we all could, about every single one of them and each and every one has a point to them that is different than the other that I think is very interesting. Matt is still working as a policeman in another community while he's doing this. Jason, as a matter of fact, I'm actually surprised he didn't bring it up. Jason's the building manager at Luso Federal and Bud and Zac, Ethan just being a straight shooter, no frills. He looks at you, he tells you, he tells you what he thinks. He's just like his family members that I know, and I've worked with. Dan McKenney is what you see is what you get. I worked with him quite a bit and he is, he can turn on a dime from someone that needs to be forceful to someone that can take care of a young child and be as caring as ever. Bill, what you said about Dooley, very motivated guy, unbelievable interview for what he said. Codding, again, certifications that these guys do on their own, online certifications, unbelievable and I've been on the other side with Bienvenu and with Zac in negotiations and extremely professional, they've always gone over well. This class is, I am, I cannot be more impressed with your department, Chief. As far as the order goes, I've said this before, this is, I would with the police and fire, this is the one step I'd give up to make it faster because your process is much more thorough and taking the bull by the horns and doing your assessment was a good step too. At least it gets us here. I am in total agreement with the four and I would, if you're going to make an order, I'd make an order by seniority. That would be my vote.

Mr. Gennette: Are you all set?

Mr. DeBarge: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Do you want to make the motion?

Mr. DeBarge: No.

Moved by Mr. Goncalves to appoint the following four candidates to the Lieutenant position effective June 4th at midnight in the following order, Mr. Daniel McKenney, Mr. William Ellison, Mr. Robert Dooley, Mr. Jason Bienvenue, seconded by Mr. Silva. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE:

58. Chief Valadas – request to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Police Officer as a result of an incident that occurred on April 26, 2023.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve to charge off medical expenses and lost wages to Chapter 41, Section 111F for an injury sustained by a Police Officer as a result of an incident that occurred on April 26, 2023, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

59. Veterans Center Donations – Vanished Valley - $1,000.00, Cynthia Lamacchia - $500.00, Vietnam Veterans of MA, Inc. - $3,000.00. Total - $4,500.00.

Moved by Mr. DeBarge to accept the following donations made to the Veterans Center and the Veterans Director is sending out thank you letters to Vanished Valley, Cynthia Lamacchia and Vietnam Veterans of MA for the total donation of $4,500.00, seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goncalves stated that he had received a couple of phone calls from residents regarding the authorization of spending this money. He was shocked that anyone in this town would have a problem with this facility. The Veterans need these services and they have given so much for all of us. He suggested that residents bring some food over to the food pantry instead of complaining about the new office.

UNFINISHED BUINESS

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum to approve and sign the contract between Preco Power Supply and the DPW, seconded by Mr. DeBarge. Vote 4-0. All in favor.

BOARD UPDATES/MISC.

Chairman to approve and sign all bills, warrants and abatements. A record of all warrants is in the Selectmen's office for perusal until provided to the Town Accountant's Office.

CLOSING COMMENTS

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Mr. Rosenblum reminded residents that Annual Town Meeting is this Monday at 7:30 p.m. at the high school and some articles on the warrant will be of interest to all residents in the town. This is what the town meeting is for, so that residents can take part in what is happening in the town.

Mr. Goncalves stated that the most important article will be presented at this town meeting, to lift the marijuana moratorium for dispensary and growing facilities. It's an important step for the town and he encourages residents to come to the town meeting and share your opinion either way.

Mr. Genette wanted to remind the residents that these Fire Lieutenant Interviews were approved two or three years ago and are now finally being filled.

Moved by Mr. Rosenblum, to adjourn this meeting at 7:03 p.m., not return to open session, seconded by Mr. Goncalves. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chairman

Ludlow Board of Selectmen

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.