

Cotuit Fire Department

Fire Commissioner's Meeting
February 10, 2026 @ 5:30pm
Freedom Hall and via Zoom

Present at Freedom Hall: Chair Conley, Commissioner Ross, Chief Brown and Deputy Clark

Absent: Commissioner Zais

Public Comment

- No public comment

Previous meeting minutes

MOTION:, Approve the meeting minutes of January 13, 2026, as written.

Motion made by: Commissioner Ross Seconded by: Chair Conley

Motion passed unanimously.

Fire Chief Report:

January 2026 had a total of 84 responses:

- 40 rescue/EMS incidents
- 0 Station Walk-ins
- 5 Dispatched and cancelled en route
- 6 alarm investigations
- 8 public assists
- 6 community risk reduction calls
- 2 reassurance program calls
- 6 false alarms
- 1 good intent
- 6 hazardous materials responses
- 2 investigations

Mutual Aid:

- Provided Mutual Aid eight (8) times
- Received Mutual Aid three (3) times
- YTD call volume is up -12%% (compared to January 2025)

The Chief reported that the Fire Department, along with departments nationwide, has transitioned from the former NIFRS reporting system (National Fire Incident Reporting System) to the new NERIS (National Emergency Response Information System) platform. As a result, incident coding has changed significantly. The Chief noted that the Deputy Chief has devoted substantial time and effort to managing the transition and adapting the Department's reporting structure to the new system. This new platform requires customized, in-house report building to extract relevant data, report formats may continue to evolve over the next few months as staff refine how information is retrieved and presented. Comparative month-to-month analysis is not yet available due to coding differences and the absence of an overlapping incident report, but it is expected to be developed soon.

Administrative

The Chief reported that the Department continues to support the Negotiations Committee. Chief Brown participated in a Windward and Wildfire Preparedness webinar in advance of the upcoming wildfire season. Despite the current snowpack, drought conditions are expected to persist into the spring. Chief Brown and Deputy Chief Clark also attended multiple planning meetings ahead of the recent nor'easter, which ultimately had no significant impact on fire or emergency response activity. Chair Conley thanked the Deputy for keeping the community informed through timely social media updates before storms, noting that the posts help residents understand conditions and available resources.

Personnel and Training Activities

Captain Amento was appointed as the Mid-Cape Group Manager for the Cape & Islands Youth Fire Setting Prevention and Intervention Team. The team is made up of fire prevention personnel from across Cape Cod and is organized into Upper, Mid, and Lower Cape sections, each with a designated lead. The program focuses on providing services, education, and intervention to youth involved in fire-setting incidents. The Department received three thank-you letters this month recognizing the team's work. The program has earned positive feedback from communities across the Cape for addressing what was described as a challenging and sensitive issue. Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services is reportedly looking at the Cape & Islands program as a potential model for developing a similar statewide initiative.

Apparatus and Equipment

Engine 2 remains in limited service. Repairs began January 21, 2026, at which time additional mechanical issues were identified. Weather delayed further work, and the vendor is expected to return Friday to complete repairs. The Department has engaged a company specializing in older apparatus. A clearer assessment of the engine's long-term viability is anticipated following completion of the work. Replacement of Engine 2, previously scheduled in the FY25 Capital Improvement Plan, was deferred pending fire station construction. The timing of replacement will continue to be discussed with the Board. Current repair costs are estimated at approximately \$6,000; a final invoice is pending. The Chief concluded his report, noting that facilities updates would be addressed under Committee Reports.

Facilities

Not discussed.

Sub-Committee Reports

Commissioner Zais and Deputy Clark Website Sub-Committee

Not Discussed

Commissioner Zais - Policy Advisory Committee

Not discussed

Commissioner Ross - By-Laws Committee

It was reported that the Committee will meet again next week. Ms. Daly was elected President of the Committee. Additional discussion is anticipated regarding review of existing by-laws and related matters.

Renovation / Addition Report

Most of the excavation has been completed, and crews are currently working on the foundation. Temporary construction forms are in place at the school but will be removed by the end of the month. Some vehicles may be parked there to help reduce on-street parking near the station while construction continues. The Department is also coordinating with local utilities to relocate a utility pole as part of the project. Neighbors will receive advance notice prior to the work, which is expected to require a two- to three-hour power interruption. The pole relocation is anticipated to take place in the spring rather than during the winter months.

Policy Builders

Not discussed

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment.

MOTION: To adjourn

Motion made by: Commissioner Ross

Seconded by: Chair Conley

Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Gonsalves

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