

Board of Fire Commission

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 5, 2019

Present: Commissioner Charles Longo
Commissioner Richard Quagliaroli
Commissioner James Dutton
Commissioner Arnold Higgins
Commissioner Gilbert Spencer

Chief Michael Thurz

Absent: Commissioner John Cafazzo

Commissioner Longo called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Longo asked that a motion be made to approve the minutes from the August meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Dutton and seconded by Commissioner Spencer. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: None

Chief's Report: Chief Thurz made the following comments;

- Recommend the appointment of Engineer Bernard Dennler Jr. to the position of Deputy Chief effective September 6, 2019. The candidate interviewed with Commissioners Higgins, Dutton and Spencer on August 27th 2019. Commissioner James Dutton made the motion to accept the Chief's recommendation, which was seconded by Commissioner Higgins. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Longo thanked the Commissioners that served on the interview panel and the Chief. Commissioner Quagliaroli did have a concern that there are too few members applying for officer positions and suggested that this needed to be looked into as to why. In addition, Commissioner Quagliaroli suggested that the Department establish some short and long term goals and objectives. Further discussion was raised about the recent applicants that sought membership within the Department. Chief Thurz reported out of six interviewed, only three followed through on the initial requirements of becoming members.
- Based on the recommendations of Captains Cody, Yacka and Kessler the following members have completed their probationary period and be moved to permanent status;
 1. Damien Tyler – Station One
 2. Oliver Lipman – Station Two
 3. Conner Spencer – Station Two
 4. Matthew Daskel – Station Three
 5. Clint Williams – Station Three

A motion was made by Commissioner Spencer, seconded by Commissioner Dutton to approve the recommendation. The motion passed unanimously. A swearing in for the Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief and those that completed their probationary period will be held on September 18, 2019, 7 PM at the Riverfront Community Center.

- A Notice of Intent to file a claim against the Department has been received. The Notice of Intent is in regards to a motor vehicle accident involving a fire apparatus on July 15, 2019 while responding to an incident on Route 2.
- Hose testing has been rescheduled to November based on the initial vendor's unwillingness to provide the town with a waiver of subrogation.
- Pump testing of the apparatus still needs to be established with the vendor.
- Firefighter of the Year dinner recognizing Lieutenant Christopher Ferrall will be held on Thursday October 3, 2019 at The Gallery. This is the same night as the next regularly scheduled Fire Commission meeting. Commission members suggested that the meeting be rescheduled to Wednesday October 2, 2019, 6:30 PM at Station 1. Commissioner Spencer addressed the importance that all of the commission members should attend the dinner to show their support.
- Review of Department's monthly expenditures.

Committee Reports: None

Old Business:

Fire Stations renovations:

- Renovation of the kitchen at Station 1 will be taking place in the coming weeks. A vendor has been selected to fabricate the cabinets which town staff will install once delivered. The hope is that the work will be completed by mid-October.
- The cost to upgrade the men's room at Station 2 continues to be discussed between the Facilities Director and the contractor. Chief Thurz questioned the cost of the tile work and asked that the Facilities Director have the contractor give some alternatives in an attempt to lower the cost.
- There is no date as to when the restroom renovation work at Station 1 will commence.
- Chief Thurz mentioned that with proposed improvements for Stations 3 and 4 that he has requested the Facilities Director to establish a meeting with the architect.
- Commissioner Dutton inquired as to the status of the Eagle Scout project at the training facility. Chief Thurz reported that Assistant Chief Thurz was handling that project and that he would need to get an update from him.

New Fire Engine update:

- The cab and chassis are anticipated to be delivered to the factory within the next two weeks. Chief Thurz reported that he had been in contact with the representative from Northeastern Fire and that there were some production delays. However, the vehicle is still anticipated to be delivered in the November timeframe. Chief Thurz mentioned

that once the body was in production that weekly photos would be posted to the manufacturer's web site, which would be shared with members. Chief Thurz shared with the Commission a rendering of the vehicle with its graphics, and advised that members of the truck committee would be conducting a factory inspection prior to it being delivered to Connecticut.

New Boat update:

- The new boat is on schedule with an anticipated delivery around the third week of October. Weekly photos are being sent to the members. Deputy Chief Motowidlak and Captain Cody will be traveling to the factory in Superior, WI to witness the sea trial and to be trained on the boat's operation.

New Business:

- Commissioner Dutton noted that legislation recently passed to increase the tax abatement to \$1,500.00. Chief Thurz confirmed Commissioner Dutton's comment and stated that he has already had discussions with the Town Manager. The Bill also takes into consideration an increase to \$2,000.00 in 2021. However, the decision to increase the tax abatement amount is up to each municipality. Furthermore, it would require an ordinance change that has to go through the Town Council. Chief Thurz also stated that the current tiered system would need to be reevaluated. Commissioner Spencer mentioned that the Commissioners should attend the meeting if it goes before the Town Council to show their support.
- Discussion pertaining to preparation of FY'2020-21 budget
 - Chief Thurz reported that the Capital Improvement Program will be a continuation of items presented in last year's budget, which included the replacement of fire apparatus, (tanker and rescue pumper) self-contained breathing apparatus replacement bottles, as well as vehicle exhaust system being installed in each station.
 - Capital Outlay will include a storage shed for Station 1 in order to eliminate the existing trailer, replacing all of the rescue air bags within the Department, replacement personal protective equipment and updated office furniture for the administrative offices.
 - Operating budget will look to be kept within a 2% increase.

Correspondences:

- None

Next Regular Meeting: October 2, 2019 at Company 1, 2825 Main Street, 6:30 PM.

Meeting Adjourned: Commissioner Dutton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which Commissioner Longo seconded and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.



Deborah Torres
Recording Secretary

- c: Fire Commission (6)
- Fire Chiefs (4)
- Fire Captains (4)
- Richard J. Johnson, Town Manager
- Chris Siwy, Fire Marshal
- Mary Visone, Purchasing Agent
- Robert DiBella, Civil Preparedness