

Board of Fire Commissioners

AMENDED REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

November 7, 2019

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

Others:* Chief Michael Thurz
Assistant Chief David Thurz
Deputy Chief Bruce Motowidlak
Deputy Chief Bernard Dännler Jr.
Captain Michael Yacka
Lieutenant Matthew Accornero
Lieutenant Joseph Elliot
Lieutenant Paul Kehoe

Commissioner Longo called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

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

Public Comment: None

Chief's Report:

Chief Thurz reported on the following items:

- Apparatus pump testing has been completed. Deputy Chief Motowidlak will review the reports with Vehicle Maintenance and determine what work will need to be done to complete any deficiencies.
- The first installment of 2019-2020 Unit payment was submitted to the Town Hall. Total fire and training units for the first six months was 8,724. The payout, which reflects partial payment of the stipends, was \$122,087.68.
- Station 2 hosted an open house on October 15th as part of Fire Prevention Week in which there were apparatus on display along with some educational demonstrations.
- Ten members completed Flashover training at the Colchester Fire Department training facility on October 15th.

- Facilities Maintenance has rekeyed Stations 1 and 2. Facilities will eventually rekey Stations 3 and 4. The goal is to limit the number of keys to personnel and utilize the key fob system.
- The north and west roof of the apparatus bays at Station 2 had been replaced. Fifteen pieces of sheathing that were damaged had been replaced as part of the repair. The next step is to sheetrock and repaint the rooms off of the apparatus bay. Commissioner Longo inquired as to the cost of the total project. Chief Thurz would need to follow up with Facilities to get the total cost for the initial work to correct the problem with the water leaking into the Captain's office, as well as the cost to replace the north and west portions of the apparatus bay roof.
- A meeting was held with the architect, Facilities Manager, Deputy Chief Dennler, Captain Cofield, Captain Kessler and Lt. Ruggiero to review proposed improvements at Stations 3 and 4, which would incorporate ADA compliance requirements. The work to be completed would be identical at both stations.
- The Department's grant application, as part of the 2018 Assistance to Fire Act Grant was denied. The application was to replace the Department's SCBAs.
- The Department's Annual meeting was held on Monday, November 4th at the Riverfront Community Center. 53 members and three Fire Commissioners were in attendance.
- Hose testing is scheduled for the week of November 18th at Station 4.
- Chief Thurz will be out of state attending the Volunteer/Combination Officer Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Conference from November 13th to 17th. Assistant Chief David Thurz will assume all duties while the Chief is out of state.
- Review of Department's monthly expenditures.

Committee Reports:

- Commissioner Spencer reported that he and Commissioner Quagliaroli met with the Chief officers and identified a number of areas to review and discuss as it pertained to the future of the Department. The goal is to be proactive as opposed to reactive. Chief Thurz advised the other Commissioners that he had asked for the Captains to be part of the committee.
- Commissioner Longo noted that with the recent election a new slate of officers would need to be nominated. Commissioner Longo assigned Commissioner Higgins to solicit nominees for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, which would be effective after January 1, 2020.

Old Business:

a) New Boat

- Chief Thurz reported that the new boat was delivered on October 23rd. While the boat would not fit inside Station 1, due to the overhead door height and heating system, it fits at Station 2 and will be stored there for the winter. The Chief advised that some

training had commenced prior to the docks being removed for the season at the Boathouse.

- Discussion then took place regarding the existing Boston Whaler, which is currently being stored at the Boathouse. Chief Thurz reminded the Commission that at the August Commission meeting he stated his intention was to retain the Boston Whaler and reassign it to Station 2. The Zodiac at Station 2 would then be reassigned to Station 4 and the Avon boat at Station 4 would be retired. Chief Thurz noted that he had this discussion with the Town Manager, and that he included it in his presentation to the Town Council and Board of Finance at their joint meeting in February. Chief Thurz went on to advise that Captain Yacka approached him about the opportunity to relocate the Boston Whaler to Station 2. The Boston Whaler provides better protection and safety for the firefighters operating on the Connecticut River in South Glastonbury. The Boston Whaler has the appropriate warning lights, radios and is a hard bottom vessel. The Zodiac is not a hard bottom boat, has no radios or warning lights and its navigation lights are battery operated. The current Zodiac is not a safe vessel to be operating on the Connecticut River, especially with the swift moving currents. The Zodiac is more suitable for the ponds, lakes and the Point Road area.

b) Fire Station renovation updates

- Kitchen renovation is schedule to commence at Station 1 on November 18th. The project is expected to be completed by first week of December.
- The contractor has begun ordering materials for Station 2's bathroom. A start date has not been determined. Station 1's men and women's bathroom will be completed once the work at Station 2 is completed.

c) New Fire Engine update

- Production of the body for the new engine has started. The manufacturer has established a link on their website to view the progress of the truck being built. The anticipated delivery to Connecticut will be after the first of the year, and placed into service in the spring.

New Business:

- Chief Thurz provided the Commission with a draft of the FY'2020-21 budget. The package included Capital Improvement, Capital Outlay and the operating budget. The Chief informed the Commission that the document is subject to revision and would not be approved until March 2020, with an effective date of July 1, 2020. Commissioner Spencer noted that he felt it was important for the Fire Commission to be present and to support the budget at the budget workshop.

Correspondences:

- None

Next Regular Meeting: December 5, 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 8:00 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