

**CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT**



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

**MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER RABBI ITA PASKIND
COMMISSIONER HOWARD DIXON
COMMISSIONER STEVE FERGUSON**

**FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 20, 2025**

Via Zoom /Tele Conference

ATTENDANCE: Commissioner/Pastor Oscar Destruge; Commissioner Howard Dixon;
Commissioner Steve Ferguson

ABSENT: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Rabbi Ita Paskind

OTHERS: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Assistant Chief Mark Conte; Assistant Fire Chief Edward McCabe; Fire Marshal Troy Donohue, Deputy Fire Chief Joseph Coppola; Michele DeLuca, Emergency Management, Linda Shields.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Destruge called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Destruge called the roll. A quorum was present.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: Tuesday, March 18, 2025

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2025**

MEETING AS SUBMITTED.

**** COMMISSIONER FERGUSON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2025 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. REPORTS

A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

1. Budget Report

Chief Gatto said that they are 10 months into the fiscal year and the budget is currently at 74%, which is much lower than the projected 83.3%. He reviewed the salary expenses and the overtime expenses, both of which are within the allocated amounts. Chief Gatto felt that the department should not exceed these budgets in the next two months. He then said that there may be some transfers from various other account for repairs and other items, but he anticipates finishing out the budget year with no overruns.

B. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION

Assistant Chief Conte presented his report to the Commissioners.

1. Buildings

a. Station 1: Apparatus Floor

Final project pricing has been submitted for approval.

b. Station 3: Apparatus Floor

The overhead door has been installed and the project has been completed.

c. Station 4: Building Renovation

Building/Facilities Management is drafting the RFP to contract an architect for the project.

d. Citywide: Overhead Door Replacement

All doors have been ordered. Installation will begin upon delivery.

2. SCBA Compliance Upgrade

- a. The final phase of the SCBA compliance upgrade was approved in the new Capital Budget. The final pricing for all components is being obtained to submit for purchase approval.

Commissioner Ferguson asked how long the air bottles last and if the expired canisters were donated to a third world country. Assistant Chief Conte said that they have been discussing this recently. The cylinders only last 15 years due to hydrostat. They can't be refilled after the 15 year limit. This is also true of the Scott Air Packs. They will be discussing various options

C. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Assistant Chief McCabe presented his report.

1. Calls in April 2025

For April 2025, there were 655 incidents, averaging almost 22 per day.

The April Fire Calls included 26 fires including 5 building fires and 40 rescues of which 35 involved motor vehicles. The Department responded to 405 EMS calls, 20 hazardous conditions, 20 service calls; 112 fire alarms and 32 good intents.

2. Summary of Calls Year to Date

From January 1st through April 30th, there was a total of 2,642 incidents and 4,263 total responses. Both categories show a slight increase from 2024.

3. Operations

a. The week of April 1st, SOPs were issued and training took place on all shifts for the rescue and truck companies. This training covered priorities for coordinating truck-specific fireground operations such as forcible entry, search and rescue, and ventilation, as laid out in the new process.

b. AC McCabe and DC Reardon met with DC Alton from the Stamford Fire Department to discuss the location and logistics of a multi-agency tanker drill, which will be held in West Norwalk this summer. The drill will put into practice Norwalk FD's new procedures for providing water supply to fires in low-water areas of town.

c. Four new probationary firefighters completed orientation training on Monday, May 19th, and will be starting on shift at the end of the week.

4. Notable Incidents in March and April:

a. March 6th, Structure fire, 40 Allen Rd. – The fire involved chimney and involved part of the roof. The blaze was extinguished before it created extensive damage in the house.

b. March 7th, Mutual aid response, Stamford FD 3rd alarm. – Mutual aid call and Norwalk crews provided coverage at headquarters and responded to EMS calls and an elevator rescue at the Stamford Train Station while the Stamford crews were fighting their three alarm commercial fire.

c. March 9th, Structure fire, 4 Tonetta Circle – Fire damage was contained to basement and one room on the first floor with heavy smoke damage throughout. No injuries.

d. March 24, Structure fire, 2 Morton St. – Well involved upon arrival. There was a fuel load inside the house. The structure was a total loss.

e. April 20th, Structure fire, 15 Lockwood Lane – Heavy smoke and fire on the first floor.

f. April 29, Structure fire, 30 Lexington Ave. – Started inside wall on 3rd floor and contained on 3rd floor.

D. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

Fire Marshal Donohue presented his report.

1. Summary of Activities
2. Fire Marshal Fees
3. Fire Marshal's Office Calls

Fire Marshal Donohue gave the total number of properties inspected for both months and said there were 42 requests for inspections. One new smoke detector was installed and five public educational events were held. There were 46 plan reviews done, which generated \$3,000 in revenue. Three liquor licenses were done resulting in an additional \$195 for a grand total of \$3,195.00.

The Department investigated 29 for the months of March and April. There were six coded hazard issues, and there were 35 total investigations. The transition from ESO software to First Due is underway with solid data. There was one temporary closure on Wall Street due to failure to supply Fire and Life Safety reports. They are continuing to apply for all their permits through Planning, Zoning and the Building Departments.

E. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Emergency Management Update

Ms. DeLuca gave a brief overview of the various events for summer safety such as heat waves that were being scheduled, including a tabletop exercise on May 22nd with Risk Management, Health, Police, Library and Community Services to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

Hurricane season starts on June 1st. There will be a safety fair for City employees at City Hall on the 21st from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Ms. DeLuca said that usually she would schedule a Zoom webinar hurricane program with the Emergency Management team but with so many pending changes to FEMA, such as damage assessment requirements or cost shares, she will let people know more. There will be changes on the State and Federal level.

F. TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Deputy Fire Chief Coppola greeted everyone and presented his report.

1. Current Training Activities
 - a. Advanced forcible entry operations utilizing specialized training prop
 - b. Truck & Rescue Company SOP training
 - c. Pre-Incident Planning for data for First Due
 - d. 1 3/4 " & 2.5 " hose line deployment for all Engine Companies
 - e. Ongoing Operator training on Engines & Trucks
 - f. EVOC Course Training for apparatus operator sign-offs
2. Completed Training Activities
 - a. Deputy Chief Promotional Examination Completed
 - b. Aerial Master Stream Deployment @ Matthews Park
 - c. Search & Rescue with SCBA Skills and Forcible Entry
 - d. New Gas Meter Orientation Training
 - e. Elevator Rescue using newly-acquired tools
3. Upcoming/Scheduled Training Activities
 - a. Deputy Fire Marshal Promotional Examination (May/June 2025)
 - b. Connecticut Fire Academy Advanced Search Maze Trailer (May 2025)
 - c. Fire Officer 2 Certification Course (October 2025)
 - d. Hazardous Materials Operational Refresher
 - e. Confined Space Refresher (Manresa Island)
 - f. Ongoing Medical Assessments (Physicals)

G. LOCAL 830 REPORTS

1. There are no items

H. CORRESPONDENCE

1. There are no items

I. PERSONNEL

1. There are no items

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one present who wished to address the Commission at this time.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Update on 29-Foot Metal Shark Boat

Chief Gatto said that they have been working on obtaining another boat through the Port Security Grant and they are scheduled to have an independent survey of the boat on June 3rd. If it passes the review, it could arrived in Norwalk during the middle of June.

Commissioner Dixon asked if anyone had seen the video of a young woman who was caught in a rip tip. A fisherman was able to hook up a fishing line to a drone and get a life vest out to her via that line, which saved her life.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

The Memorial Day Parade will be assembling at Veteran's Park and 10 a.m. is step off. Engine 8 will be in the parade, so children can ride in the back. Truck 2, Engine 1 and the new Trac will also be in the parade.

The next scheduled Fire Commission meeting is slated for Tuesday, June 20, 2025

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER FERGUSON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services