

CITY OF NORWALK  
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
Mayor Barbara C. Smyth  
Commissioner/Pastor Oscar Destrugé  
Commissioner rabbi ita paskind  
Commissioner Howard Dixon  
Commissioner Steve Ferguson

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 17, 2026 at 3:00 PM  
ZOOM AND 121 CONNECTICUT AVE, 3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**

**ATTENDEES:** Mayor Barbara C. Smyth, Pastor Oscar Destrugé, Rabbi Ita Paskind, Commissioner Howard Dixon.

**STAFF:** Chief Edward McCabe, Assistant Fire Chief of Administration Mark Conte, Assistant Fire Chief of Operations Timothy Reardon, Fire Marshal Troy Donohue, Training Director Roy Gagne, Michele DeLuca (Emergency Management).

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Fire Commission was called to order at 3:01 p.m. on March 17, 2026, by Mayor Barbara C. Smyth .

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Barbara C. Smyth conducted roll call. Present were Mr. Destrugé, Ms. Paskind, and Mr. Dixon. Commissioner Steve Ferguson had not yet arrived.

**III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the special meeting of Tuesday, February 17, 2026, were presented for acceptance.

**\*\* MR. DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AS PRESENTED.**

There were no corrections, changes, or deletions.

#### **IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mayor Barbara C. Smyth opened public participation and asked if anyone online wished to speak. Seeing no participants, public participation was closed.

#### **V. REPORTS**

##### **A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

Mr. McCabe presented the budget report for the first eight months of the fiscal year. The department is operating with narrow margins but overall doing well. The salaries account stands at 64.47 percent, placing the department 2.19 percent under budget or approximately \$291,000 below projections. The overtime account is at 65.55 percent and has been brought back under budget at 1.11 percent below target with a surplus of approximately \$51,000. Total budget expenses remain slightly over at 0.66 percent or approximately \$154,000, an improvement from 2.25 percent over the prior month. Mr. Destruge stated he had no questions and thanked Mr. McCabe for keeping the department well within budget.

##### **B. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. Conte presented updates on ongoing projects. For Station 4 building renovation the department is moving toward the final budget, ironing out details to be presented to the commissions, with bidding planned for May and construction targeted to begin in August or September. The citywide fire systems RFP has been finalized and will open for bid on March 26 for one month. IT updates include iPad upgrades for the Fire Marshal Division and Mechanic Division to accommodate the new software demands and larger screen requirements. The current iPads used by the marshals will be redistributed to the stations for inventory and asset management. The First Due records management software will include module upgrades for the exposure module, reports module, and scheduling module, with demonstrations scheduled for the beginning of April. Mr. Destruge commented that the activities will enhance reporting, viewing, and response effectiveness and thanked Mr. Conte.

##### **C. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS**

Mr. Reardon presented that in February there were 628 total calls, averaging 22.4 per day. Fire apparatus updates include two new engines ordered for headquarters and Station 4 arriving in summer, the 29-foot fire boat back in service at Vets Park after maintenance during the deep freeze, the 38-foot fire boat currently out of service for maintenance at Cove Marina, and the new rescue apparatus for Rescue Company 2 scheduled to arrive in early 2027. Operations updates include the new SCBA equipment placed in service last week following a successful

changeover by the mechanics and crews. A new after-action review program using an app and web-based platform was introduced, with a copy provided for the recent Clinton Avenue fire. Standpipe hose selection is being upgraded for use in new lightweight construction buildings. Notable incidents included the Clinton Avenue kitchen fire, which was rapidly advancing in a Cape Cod-style house and was quickly controlled after Fire Marshal Donohue observed the fire from across the street, called 911, and initiated response. A house fire near Canaan was assisted by a safety officer, commanding officer, and Engine 1 crew from Norwalk, which prevented spread to the remainder of the structure. A successful water rescue occurred in the Norwalk River where Rescue 2 deployed two tethered swimmers to retrieve a victim in distress at approximately 6:30 a.m.; the victim was transported and is stable. Mayor Barbara C. Smyth thanked the team for the outstanding work. Mr. Destruge expressed pride in the reports and media coverage of the department's efforts. Ms. Paskind seconded the appreciation for the team's ongoing work to keep the community safe.

#### D. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

Mr. Donohue presented that the office conducted 234 property inspections covering 4,885 units and received three requests for smoke detector evaluations and installations. Two public education events were held: an educational class for NOAA cadets on fire investigation origin and cause procedures and hands-on training with the electronic Bullocks fire extinguisher simulator, which also covered space heater safety, electrical hazards, lithium-ion battery safety, and evacuation procedures. Revenue included \$1,025 from 25 fire and life safety inspections, \$20 from one miscellaneous inspection, and \$750 from 24 reviewed fire and life safety plans, for a total of \$1,795. The office handled 18 incidents consisting of five investigations, one code hazard-related investigation, ten public service assists, and two non-emergency incidents. The newly promoted five deputy fire marshals have begun state fire investigation training at the State Fire Marshal's office in Hartford. Ms. Paskind noted that she was one of the three smoke detector requesters and thanked Mr. Donohue and Officer Jason McDevitt for the prompt installation.

#### E. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ms. DeLuca presented that following last night's windstorm, Eversource has approximately 15 customers still without power but repairs are in progress or en route, and no outages were reported for Snoo. A planning meeting was held with fire, health department, community services, and communications staff to follow up on the January incident and prepare for large apartment building events, including updating contact lists and scheduling meet-and-greet sessions with property owners and management to discuss expectations, resident communication, and preparedness materials. Public education events include the bunny hop this Saturday at Calf Pasture, additional small events, and preparations for hurricane season beginning June 1 along with employee safety and outreach. Regional and state meetings continue, and planning is underway for upcoming events including a large No Kings protest on March 28. Mr. Destruge had no questions.

#### F. TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Mr. Gagne presented that completed activities include the EMS refresher, new SCBA training and changeover, and hazardous materials refresher training conducted over two days for every shift. Current activities include company training allowing crews autonomy to address winter-

delayed skills and probationary firefighter task books, confined space walkthroughs by Car 2 and Rescue 2 at the Walk Bridge project this week, annual harassment training completed online, and continuous driver training. The Hot Wash after-action review app now incorporates SOPs and compares incident reviews to identify when procedures worked or require updates. Upcoming activities include QPR suicide awareness and prevention training from the health department in three weeks, ongoing company training, high point anchor, craning, and rope rescue training for ladder companies with new videos being added to the training video library accessible on the station iPads, resumption of Health and Safety Committee meetings, joint PD and EMS training on vehicle positioning at fires using body and vehicle camera footage, and preliminary planning for joint PD incident command training. Mr. Destruge agreed with the structure and asked whether additional budget resources are needed for the training video library. Mr. Gagne replied that he is creating videos using current phone and computer resources and expanding the library as time allows. No other questions were asked.

#### G. LOCAL 830 REPORTS

There were no items.

#### H. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

#### I. PERSONNEL

There were no items.

### **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

There were no items.

### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MS. PASKIND MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING WITH GRATITUDE TO THE ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL TEAM.  
\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Courtney Baldwin  
Recording Secretary