

**CITY OF NORWALK
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Commissioner Oscar DeStruge,
Commissioner Irene Dixon

STAFF: Fire Chief Denis McCarthy; Assistant Fire Chief Laurence Reilly;
Michelle DeLuca, Emergency Management Deputy Director; Fire
Marshal Chris Hansen.

OTHERS: Emmet Hibson, Personnel Director; Benen Blessey, The Teddy
Bear Fund; Vladimir Romano, The Teddy Bear Fund

CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES.

Regular Meeting - November 18, 2014

The following change was noted:

Page 1, under **FIRE CHIEF REPORT**, paragraph 1, line 2: please change “was a
increase” to “was an increase”

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON MOVED THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2014
AS CORRECTED.**

**** MAYOR RILLING SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2014 AS
CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS.

Approved 24 Hours Shift Trial Period MOU.

Chief McCarthy distributed copies of the MOU to the Commissioners. He then reviewed the details of change. There will be the same number of hours, but the shift hours would change to have them more compressed. Mayor Rilling said that he had discussed this with the Council President and the Personnel Director. It was agreed to table this item at this time.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT.

Budget Report - Both the capital and operating have been completed. Chief McCarthy said this budget would have a 1% increase. He reviewed the increases, which includes three new hires at the Academy. These positions would be hired in September of 2015. Mayor Rilling thanked Chief McCarthy for coming in so low. Chief McCarthy explained that in the operating budget, there was some paving at Broad River that was incomplete due to issues with Grasso paving.

Cadet Program - Chief McCarthy said that the third meeting has gone well. He spoke about how the class members tried on support equipment.

Firefighter Recruitment - The search for a consultant continues. Chief McCarthy said that the goal was to have academically prepared candidates recruited in order to increase the number of candidates that pass.

Fire Station Renovations - Chief McCarthy said that there was a balance of funds because the Westport Avenue station was not completed. After that account is closed out, a Capital request will be done for the Broad River station. Once the draft is finalized, it will be sent to Finance and BOE. Commissioner DeStruge said that the work at the Van Zant Street station was beautifully done.

Teddy Bear Donation – Chief McCarthy explained that the representatives from the Teddy Bear Fund had not yet arrived.

ACTION ITEM CONT'D.

Mr. Emmett Hibson, the Personnel Director, distributed copies of the signed stipulation. He reviewed the details of the agreement with the Commissioners. He said that there was a sunset date because this was a trial period. If the contract is not settled by the sunset date, an agreement can be enacted. Mayor Rilling asked if this type of schedule was common for Fire Departments. Mr. Hibson said that the vast majority of departments have moved to a 24/72 schedule and it is working out well. Mr. Hibson said that the department will be monitoring to see how this will affect time off and sick time.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE 24 HOURS SHIFT TRIAL PERIOD MOU.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FIRE CHIEF REPORT CONT'D.

Teddy Bear Donation – Chief McCarthy then introduced Vladimir Romano, and Benen Blessey from The Teddy Bear Fund. The boys came forward with two boxes of stuffed

animals to be distributed by the department when children are transported by ambulance to the hospital. Vladimir explained that he had been very ill with a 105 temperature and the firefighter who was with him in the ambulance put a teddy bear on his chest, which made him feel better. During the summer, Vladimir and Benen had run a lemonade stand and also had sponsored other fund raisers.

Vladimir explained that he met the Norwalk Firefighters at Maplewood when a birthday cake accidentally set off the fire alarms on Thanksgiving Day. He said that when the firefighters found out what happened, they gathered around and sang Happy Birthday to the resident.

ASSISTANT CHIEF REPORT.

Assistant Chief Reilly then gave an overview of the November incidents including two major structure fires, one small gas explosion and two carbon monoxide incidents.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT.

Fire Marshal Hansen said that most of his work was focused on Wall Street. Fire Marshal Hansen said that he had 133 page list of potential violations on Wall Street alone. Because there was no follow up, he engineered a small computer program to remind the marshals to follow up 30 days after a violation is issued. Fire Marshal Hansen said that the department was looking to increase the fines for non-compliance since the marshals are visiting some locations a number of times because of non-compliance.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

Ms. DeLuca gave an overview about how the department worked with the Red Cross and the City's relocation program when residents have to be relocated. The school safety planning is still underway. The Superintendent has already signed off on the plan.

There was a recent meeting with a vendor about a potential system for the City Hall Emergency Plan.

She then distributed copies of the Fire & Ice Toy Drive scheduled on December 20th, a joint effort between the Fire Department and Human Services Council.

TRAINING REPORT.

Chief McCarthy reviewed the following high points of the training program as outlined on the agenda.

UNION PRESIDENT REPORT.

There were no items to consider at this time.

OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business consider at this time.

CORRESPONDENCE.

There were no items to consider at this time.

PERSONNEL.

a. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Salary Increases for AC Reilly and Chief McCarthy
2. Employment Contract Renewal for Chief McCarthy

b. Review and approve a request from Firefighter Joseph Malizia to withdraw from the D.R.O.P. Pension Plan.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS ALL THE PERSONNEL ITEMS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, Mr. Hibson, Assistant Fire Chief Reilly and Chief McCarthy entered into Executive Session at 4:44 p.m. They returned to public session at 5:15 p.m. During Executive Session, no motions were made and no votes were taken.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ALLOW FIREFIGHTER JOSEPH MALIZIA TO OPT OUT OF THE D.R.O.P. UPON THE COMMISSION RECEIVING A FORMAL REQUEST ASKING TO BE RELEASED FROM SAID PLAN.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services