

**CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2023
VIA ZOOM /TELE CONFERENCE**

ATTENDANCE: Harry Rilling; Mayor, Oscar Destruge; Fire Commissioner;

STAFF: Gino Gatto; Fire Chief, Mark Conte; Assistant Fire Chief, Edward McCabe; Assistant Chief-Operations, Broderick Sawyer; Fire Marshall, Linda Shields; Computer Specialist, Michelle Deluca; Deputy Director of Emergency Management, Joseph Coppola; Director of Training

OTHER: Tom Reich; Firefighter/EMT; Tina Fogell; Director of Personnel & Labor Relations

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting on Tuesday, October 17, 2023

Commissioner Destruge noted on page 2 that a reference was made to ODS and could be modified to Commissioner Destruge. Asst. Fire Chief McCabe indicated under staff that Asst. Chief Conte's title should be amended to Assistant Fire Chief.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES
** THE MINUTES CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AS AMENDED.**

ACTION ITEMS

There are no items

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Fire Chief Gatto presented his report

a. Budget Report

We have completed four months which is one-third of the year and we're still under the projected

33%.The only thing we have to continue to watch is the overtime budget because the number of vacancies that we have is creeping up. We're at 31.2% um for this first third of the year so we'll keep an eye on that

This time of year people are taking a lot of vacation time because they're trying to get it in before the end of the year so you'll notice the vacation time um jumped up like \$20,000 for October. The holiday code also jumped up the same amount 20,000 for the holidays so I think once we get into January and February those numbers should come down. overall we're at 29.1% for the first uh three months.

Mayor Rilling commented that they were lower in the firefighter's wage and salary and some of that money could be transferred to the overtime account.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief Conte presented his report..

a. Adashi Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) and Command Software Upgrade

1. C&C Command software build is in process.

Our MDT command software upgrade is uh moving forward we're uh receiving multiple upgrades a week every week at this point we're using uh we're building out the command software part of it.

2. Live training to be scheduled for the Command Software

There'll be live training after the station alerting upgrade.

b. Station Alert System Upgrade1. Final System Testing Process

They're doing final system testing right now with the cad. Everything's going well I'm told and then after that's done they will be doing training with the dispatchers with the firefighters and should be moving over to the automated dispatch system as soon as the training is done and they get the approval.

c. State Radio System Migration

1. New apparatus mobile radio installation completed

the state radio system migration is moving forward. The mobile radios have been installed. They were informed they would have to run training. PD is switching over DPW. We have a more complex system with our repeater systems that have all been installed in the apparatus so they're

going to do a training session, Norcom, with us prior to us switching over so we're all familiar with our system and he said he hopes to get that planned by the end of December.

d. Buildings

1. Station 3: Apparatus floor

i. Engineer contract process

What I was told yesterday for the buildings update uh for the Station 3 apparatus floor project. We have an engineer and it's over with legal right now to execute the contract. Legal's been very helpful and understanding that we want to get a move on this project. Hopefully, we can get that done and I can start working with an engineer and go out for bids to get a contractor. the goal is to start the project by springtime.

2. Station 5: Bathroom Renovation

i. The project is set to begin after all material has been delivered.

The station five bathroom renovation began this morning some materials didn't get delivered and we decided it was best or in everybody's best interest to wait till we had everything on scene at the firehouse. So they can just keep moving forward but it has started today and they're moving forward.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Asst. Fire Chief Macabe presented his report.

a. The administration would like to thank, on record, the fire departments who assisted with covering Norwalk's fire stations and answering our emergency calls on the day of Deputy Fire Marshal Feola's funeral. Stamford, New Canaan, Westport, Rowayton, Fairfield, and Bridgeport all sent firefighters and apparatus to assist.

Chief McCabe wrote them a letter thanking them for their assistance on behalf of the city.

b. The Norwalk Fire Department continues to work with the MTA as the Walk Bridge project progresses. Both the Railroad and the construction companies on the site want to ensure that the NFD can operate safely within the construction zone in the event of an emergency. A joint confined space rescue drill inside the bridge structure, utilizing multiple agencies, will be held in December.

c. Three firefighter recruits have begun onboarding for the February 2024

Connecticut Fire Academy class. These will be the last candidates hired from the 2021 test list.

d. Applications opened on November 18th for our next entry-level test to be held the weekend of January 13, 2024. They will remain open until December 31st. In the last three days, they have already received 200 online applications.

Mayor Rilling commented about the signs around town.

Asst. Fire Chief McCabe stated the number of calls for October 2023 was 745 incidents averaging just over 24. day.

- 7 fires
- 67 rescues, 57 of them motor vehicle accidents
- 433 emergency medical responses
- 35 hazardous conditions
- 24 service calls
- 54 good intention
- 125 fire alarms

so looking at the cumulative statistics from January through October 31st for 2023 we are at 7,291 incidents which is 363 over last year and we are at 11,380 total responses which is 456 over 2022.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

Fire Marshal Sawyer presented his report

a. Summary of Activities

Fire Marshall Sawyer reported in October they had 198 inspections. There's been an increase in the certificate of occupancy inspections for new businesses opening. They had 37 notifications, public event seven 15 plan reviews were completed, and two liquor license inspections.

Fire Marshall Sawyer noted that being close to fully staffed would help in increasing the number of inspections. Mayor Rilling asked about two occupancies with foam insulation. Fire Marshall Sawyer said it had to be removed or the places would be closed down.

Mayor Rilling Noted the inspections were finding illegal apartments and asked for a monthly report. He then asked if he was correct in the assumption that they had to pay to relocate people. Fire Marshall Sawyer said yes and it was covered by the Health Department.

Mayor Rilling stated it might be wise at some point to explain to those who don't understand the process that we might have a brief Fire Commission meeting and get it out on YouTube and their Facebook Page.

b. Fire Reports

We had five fire investigations and one code Hazard issue.

c. Fire Marshal Fees

We had a total fee for plan review of \$700 and liquor license fees of \$130 for a total of \$830.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ms. Deluca presented her report

a. Emergency Management Update

Ms. Deluca stated last month we participated in the Statewide emergency disaster exercise that was held as a region. Fourteen towns got together and had the meeting in one space which worked out well and added they were considering doing the same going forward. She mentioned the winter briefing for the Emergency Management Team on December 5th where they go over snow removal operations and employee notification of cancelations. She also discussed the Holiday Safety Spotlight for Thanksgiving and December. She explained the Snow Center will also go up so residents can keep an eye on delayed openings and the status of city operations. She finished by saying after the new year they would work on resilience and continuity planning with SHERKA.(?)

TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Mr. Coppola presented his report

a. CURRENT ACTIVITIES

1. Utilizing YMCA vacant properties for both ladder companies to train together
2. "Q" Licensing training for new drivers ongoing
3. New building construction walk-throughs and tours (Monroe St/S. Main & West Avenue projects)
4. CFA Fire Instructor 1 class with 3 Norwalk members enrolled
5. CFA Building Construction class with a site tour of the 467 West Avenue project
6. Cold Water/Ice Rescue Equipment Training

b. COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

1. Hose Testing
2. SCBA Fit Testing
3. Standpipe Training Evolutions at River Street Parking Garage
4. Walk Bridge Construction Site Tour with MTA/MNRR scheduled for December 11th.

Deputy Chief Coppola stated this item belonged to an upcoming/scheduled

5. SCBA Confidence Training and emergency evacuation maneuvers
6. DCT Coppola has been named a DMV “Commissioner’s Designee” for Q licensing credentialing
7. Fire safety training with Norwalk Hospital (vacant wing)
8. RTF Training with PD/EMS (Active Assailant)

c. UPCOMING/SCHEDULED:

1. MTA/MNRR Confined Space Drill at Walk Bridge site on 11/29/23
2. Flashpoint Prop training (Fire Behavior Lab) 12/5/23 – 12/8/23
3. Working with COSTCO to utilize the vacant Doubletree Hotel for training evolutions
4. N-95 Respirator Fit Testing
5. Next round of Department NFPA Compliant Physicals in process
6. Trauma Recovery Network orientation for newer members is scheduled for January
7. EMS Certification Refreshers begin January 2024

Deputy Chief Coppola said there was a typo we did a site tour uh already and we're going to be going out there on December 11th to do the Evolution.

Mayor Rilling commented on the police and fire departments and their dedication to their training. Deputy Chief Coppola extolled the virtues of joint training.

LOCAL 830 REPORT

There are no items

OLD BUSINESS

Update on a New Entry-Level Exam

Fire Chief Gatto discussed what had been put forth earlier about the registration portion of the entry-level test and reiterated that they already had a diverse group of 200 applicants. He also mentioned that Michelle from the Mr.'s office put out the press release and made up posters and banners to get the word out. He then asked the Mr. if he wanted to continue to advertise. Mayor Rilling Said they were doing a good job and suggested a press release to the Hour and approaching the churches to let him speak. Commissioner Destruge asked for posters for places like La Fitness. Ms. Shields said they had already done that as well as lawn signs and packets of Haitian, Spanish, and English postcards.

Update on Sale of MU-238

Fire Chief Gatto proceeded with his update on the marine unit. He stated that they advertised on the nationwide of Bolton Harbors for mariners buying and selling boats. he indicated there were two separate agencies interested in their boat and hoped that one or the other would purchase the boat.

NEW BUSINESS

There are no items

CORRESPONDENCE

There are no items

Drop Pension for Captain Thomas Reidy

Mayor Rilling asked if there was any paperwork on the drop request for Captain Reidy. Fire Chief Gatto stated he believed it had all been submitted to personnel. Mayor Rilling indicated he wanted a copy and asked Ms. Fogell if she could send it.

Retirement Letter from DFM Philip D'Acunto

Fire Chief Gatto read the retirement letter of Deputy Fire Marshall Phil D'Acunto. Mayor Rilling asked if he was on the drop plan. Mayor Rilling asked if there was any paperwork on the drop request for Captain Reidy. Fire Chief Gatto said yes but was leaving early. Mayor Rilling unsure of the process asked Ms. Fogell to look at the contract about that. Mr. Reich indicated that once you enter the drop you can' leave the drop but you can leave early any time during the five years.

**** MAYOR RILLING MADE THE MOTION TO ACCEPT
** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE INDICATED SO MOVED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Executive Session

o Personnel

Mayor Rilling requested more information. Fire Chief Gatto stated it was a discussion on a disability pension.

**** MAYOR RILLING MADE A MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION.
** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE INDICATED SO MOVED AT 3:35 PM.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mayor Rilling stated it was 3:49 pm and they were back from the executive session. No motions were made and no votes were taken,

- ** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE
DISABILITY PENSION WITH 20 YEARS OF SERVICE FOR FIREFIGHTER
LUCA FIOLA.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MAYOR RILLING MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE INDICATED SO MOVED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3: 49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
China Mayhew
Telesco Secretarial Services