

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER LARRY L. BENTLEY

REGULAR MEETING
October 19, 2021

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Larry Bentley,
Commissioner Oscar Destruge

STAFF: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Assistant Chief Edward McCabe; Fire
Marshal Broderick Sawyer; Deputy Chief of Training Adam
Markowitz; Michele DeLuca, Emergency Management, Raymond
Burney, Personnel Director

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

Regular Meeting – September 21 , 2021

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER
21, 2021.**

Page 2, under **Firefighting Foam Replacement/Disposal** – please change the following
from “PFOS foam”-- “PFAS foam”

Page 3, second paragraph, line 2, please change the following from “even if they area” to
“even if they are out of the building.”

Page 3, under **Assistant Fire Chief of Operations**, paragraph 1, line 2: please change the following from: “and the will start on shift” to “and the new recruits will start on shift”

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items to consider at this time.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT.

a. Budget Report.

Chief Gatto presented his report. He noted that September has five pay periods and this will impact the budget numbers.

Chief Gatto said that the vacancies had increased, but the sick days had been significantly reduced. The Mayor noted that there were 12 new firefighters and potentially six more hires, which will help reduce overtime.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF'S OF ADMINISTRATION REPORT

• University of New Have Fire Administration Interns

• Preplanning

• Creating database of Equipment in Facilities.

Chief Gatto said that Cpt. Conte has been working with the interns regarding the updating the database. The interns will be with the Department until December.

• Fitness Equipment Grant

The grant is for \$55,000 for new fitness equipment and the City match would be \$5,500. Chief Gatto then listed the various items and said that the item was going to be presented to the Public Safety Committee and then onto the Council for final approval. The matching funds will be coming from the Department's account.

Chief Gatto said that they had put in a request for a new fire boat and the Fire Department would have to put up \$60,000 for their 25% match. They will request that sum in the Capital budget.

• Buildings

- **Station 1 Update**

Corporation Counsel has come up with a new agreement, however, they missed the deadline for the Land Use and Building Management Committee's next meeting agenda. It will be included in the November agenda before going to the full Council for approval.

- **Security Camera Project**

The project is underway.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

- a. Training and Placement of 12 Probationary Firefighters on Shift**
- b. Working with LT. Blake and Captain Conte on Upgrades to Dispatch Procedures**
- c. Coordination of Support Counseling for Personnel After Passing of FF Geter**
- d. Development of Incident Action Plan for Mutual Aid Fire Coverage of the City on the Day of FF Geter's Services**

Asst. Chief McCabe presented a summary of his report. He thanked Chief Markowitz for the training he provided for the probationary firefighters.

Fairfield County Resources were on hand on to provide counselling the day of Firefighter Geter's services. Asst. Chief McCabe said that Stamford, Westport, Fairfield, New Canaan Darien and other Departments provided mutual aid coverage during the services.

Asst. Chief McCabe also reviewed the various calls, including the 126 responses to calls for service during Storm Ida. There were 9 fires, 42 rescues, 391 Emergency medical Responses, 33 Hazardous Conditions, and 77 Public Assistance.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

- a. Summary of Activities.**
- b. Fire Reports.**
- c. Fire Marshal Fees.**

Fire Marshal Sawyer reported that they completed 169 inspections, 129 notifications, 23 plan reviews, and 7 liquor licenses during September.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

a. Emergency Management Update.

Ms. DeLuca said that the focus has been dealing with the damage from Storm Ida. The application from the State should be submitted sometime this week. This storm impacted all residents, not just the residents who reported damage.

Ms. DeLuca said that the Library will be giving out reflective trick or treat bags for the children.

TRAINING'S DIVISION REPORT.

a. 24' Ladder Training

b. New Roof Prop Construction (see attached pic)

c. New Hire Mini-Academy (see attached pics)

Deputy Chief Markowitz reviewed his report and gave a summary about the mini-academy.

The Commissioners congratulated Deputy Chief Markowitz on a job well done.

The discussion moved to the new roof prop construction, which allows the firefighters to experience firefighting on a pitched roof and using the saws to vent a burning building.

LOCAL 830 REPORT

There was no report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

a. Discussion on a New FD Chaplain

Chief Gatto informed the Commissioners that Father Jeffrey W. Couture from St. Matthew's would be the new Fire Department Chaplain. He will be replacing Father Paul from St. Thomas. The Department has two other Chaplains Deacon Don Burr, and Commissioner Destruge.

Commissioner Destruge suggested Rev. Elizabeth Able of Community Church be included in order to integrate the Fire Department Chaplain. Mayor Rilling said that he would contact Rev. Able about this.

b. Discussion on Part-Time Fire Inspectors

Chief Gatto said that the Department had two part time inspectors a few years ago. There is one inspector who is on long term disability and another inspector that will be leaving in January. Having individuals who are already certified would be helpful because they would not require training.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE CHIEF GATTO TO START THE SEARCH PROCESS FOR PART-TIME FIRE INSPECTORS.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Bentley left the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chief Gatto reviewed a letter from Deputy Fire Marshal McDonald regarding a property on Fort Point Street. The Fire Inspectors identified 9 different major violation that required the tenants to vacate the building. Fire Marshal Sawyer All of the major violations have been corrected and only a few minor issues remain. The tenants have been allowed to return to the building.

During the summer, Stepping Stones Museum was building a community tile wall and the Fire Department purchased a tile. Chief Gatto displayed a photo of the tile wall.

PERSONNEL

a. Executive Session On AC Position

b. New Candidates

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE ASSISTANT CHIEF'S POSITION AND NEW CANDIDATES.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, Mr. Burney, and Chief Gatto entered into Executive Session at 3:42 p.m. They returned to Public Session at 4:03 p.m. No motions were made or actions taken during the Executive Session.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROMOTION OF CAPT. MARK CONTE TO ASSISTANT CHIEF, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE APPROPRIATE CONTRACT, AND LT. ROY GAGNE TO THE POSITION OF CPT. AND FIREFIGHTER EDWIN MOORE TO THE POSITION OF LIEUTENANT BASED ON THE SAME TIME FRAME FOR THE CONTRACT APPROVAL.
* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUCE MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services