

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER CURTIS LANGLEY

REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 18, 2016

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Oscar Destruge,
Commissioner Curtis Langley

STAFF: Fire Chief Laurence Reilly, Deputy Chief Gino Gatto; Deputy
Chief Smith, Deputy Chief A. Bassett, Fire Marshal Broderick
Sawyer, Michele DeLuca, Office of Emergency Management

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. A quorum was present. He then requested a moment of silence in memory of retired Norwalk Deputy Fire Chief Robert Spielman who passed away on October 18th. He served the City for 36 years before retiring.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

Regular Meeting July 19, 2016.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF JULY 19, 2016.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 19, 2016 AS
SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS.

There were no items to consider.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT

• Budget Report

Chief Reilly stated that the budget is on track. Overtime is up but with the number of vacant positions, this will even out.

- **Master Mechanic.**

Chief Reilly announced that after a number of interviews, the position of Master Mechanic has been filled by the current Assistant Mechanic. The now vacant Assistant Master Mechanic position will be advertised.

Chief Reilly said that there would be a ceremony at the Exchange Club Salute to the Bravest to honor for Firefighter Steven St. Onge for his actions regarding a rescue on Wall Street. The Mayor said that due to a conflict in scheduling, he would not be able to attend. Commissioner Destruge said that he would not be able to attend either.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT AS PRESENTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ASSISTANT CHIEF REPORT

- **Operations Report**

Assistant Chief Gatto presented the combined calls report for July, August and September, which included a report on two marine incidents, a house fire, a multiple vehicle fire and another fire at Home Goods. During the month of July, there were 516 calls for assistance, August had 536 calls for assistance and September had 497 calls.

Among the calls was an incident on July 1st, where 10 children were stuck on the mud flats off of Veterans' Park. Firefighter James Lyons donned a survival suit and towed Police Officer Silva in a Zodiac through the mud to the stranded vessel twice to remove the children and made an additional trip to anchor the vessel until it could be retrieved. Firefighter Lyons has been recommended for a Certificate of Merit.

He also reported on the rescue of some ducklings from a storm drain. The firefighters were not able to remove the storm drain cover, but were able to flood the drain so the ducklings floated to the top of the drain and were reunited with their mother.

Assistant Chief Gatto said that Fire Marshal Sawyer had received an email from a Ms. McCarthy regarding the assistance she received from Engine Company 2 regarding a gopher under her shed that had trapped her dog inside the shed.

Another letter of appreciation was received regarding a young lady who passed out at a nail salon and one of the firefighters who responded was responsible for calming the frightened child until the paramedics arrived to administer care.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT AS PRESENTED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FIRE MARSHAL REPORT

• **Summary of Activities** – There were 207 inspections performed. One of the inspectors has returned to the line, so there is a vacancy in the Department.

• **Fire Reports** -. The Department continues to work on compliance with one of the fast food restaurants in Norwalk.

• **Fire Marshal Fees** – Fire Marshal Sawyer said that the department had made over \$6,000 in fees. However, Fire Marshal Sawyer said that the department has a great deal of information on in ground oil tanks and was similar to a clearing house for that data. Fire Marshal Hanson was able to upload a directory of the files for the public on the City website. This enables a member of the public to check the website to determine if the Department has information on the location. When a home owner comes to the department seeking information, the Department charges \$5.00 for the look up and then .50¢ per page for copying the reports. He felt that the department needed to increase the fees because it was not cost effective the way it is being handled now. The reports can go from 10 pages for a removal to over 50 pages for a removal and remediation. He said that he was requesting an increase from \$5.00 to \$20.00 or \$25.00. Mayor Rilling asked if there were any State statutes. Fire Marshal Sawyer said that the department was not even required to retain the information and there were no City ordinances as far as he knew. Generally, Mayor Rilling said that he believed that the Council would have to approve the increase. He asked Fire Marshal Sawyer to draft something up for the Commission with the justification and comparison of other municipalities. Fire Marshal Sawyer said that this was not intended to be a revenue stream. Mayor Rilling said that he would also like Corporation Counsel to review the proposal.

**** COMMISSIONER LANGLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT AS PRESENTED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

TRAINING REPORT

a. Monthly Training Objectives

- **Haz-Mat Operational Refresher – Decontamination completed.**
- **Incident Command Systems 100/700**
- **Ropes and Knots (Preparing for Annual Confined Space Refresher)**
- **Truck Company Operations (Forcible Entry and Search)**

b. Metro North Commuter Rail Road Safety Training

- c. Solar Energy Awareness Class
- d. Active Assailant/Threat joint training with NPD and EMS
- e. New Hires Started August 25th
 - Schedule Attached in September packet
 - First Evaluation delivered from the Connecticut Fire Academy

Deputy Chief Bassett reviewed the various classes and training sessions that had been held during the past few months.

Commissioner Destruge asked about Academic Probation for the Academy students. Deputy Chief Bassett explained that if a firefighter fails two quizzes, the student is automatically placed on academic probation. Discussion followed.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRAINING REPORT AS PRESENTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

• Emergency Management Update

Ms. DeLuca reported that the Open House on October 1st went well with about 2,000 people in attendance. About 800 pounds of food was collected for the Person to Person Food Pantry in South Norwalk.

She then reviewed the details of the relocations for the Platt Street Fire and said that the department provided hygiene kits along with gift cards for Walmart, Shoprite and Stop & Shop for the families.

A State wide Disaster Exercise will be held on November 2nd which will be focused on weather events. She gave the details.

The process continues on City Building Response Guide. It is basically finished and has been reviewed by various departments for additional input. There will need to be some training for City employees. Ms. DeLuca said that she hopes to complete that before Thanksgiving because it is too difficult schedule during the holidays. She gave a brief overview of how the system would work and said that she hoped it would be rolled out within the next week.

Norwalk Hospital will be hosting a bomb threat drill on October 20th.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT AS PRESENTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

LOCAL 830 REPORT.

There were no items to report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

Public Safety Cadets

Deputy Fire Chief Bassett gave a quick overview of recent activities by the Public Safety Cadet including event parking.

There was a late request for them to volunteer at the Norwalk Boat Show for help with sizing of children for life jackets. Volunteers in uniform work very well.

Monday night will be an award and promotion night at the Norwalk Police Department headquarters.

Mayor Rilling asked whether they received donations for their services. Deputy Fire Chief Bassett said that Police Chief Kulhawik and Officer Holmes handle that aspect of the program. This will be reviewed to make sure that it works smoothly. If the cadets are involved in parking assistance for an event, the organization usually makes a donation to the program. The donation goes into the PAL fund.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD AN ITEM TO THE AGENDA.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Fire Marshal Sawyer said that the Department had distributed a pencil with Fire Safety information on it to all the elementary school students during the week. This will be expanded in the future.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from NFD Retired Lt. Paul Harris

Mayor Rilling said that he had received the letter and that Lt. Harris (Ret.) was struggling to live on his pension. He informed the Commissioner that former Mayor Knopp had approved a process that allowed anyone making less than \$9,000 a year an increase to \$9,000. Mayor Rilling said that he was working with Mr. Barron, the Finance Director to review the pensions that are very low. He said that he was considering adjusting the

pensions to update the amounts. Any changes will have to go before the Pension Board. He cautioned everyone that if there was a Qualified Pension Plan involved, any increase would have to be across the board to everyone involved. Discussion followed about the details of the process.

PERSONNEL

There were no items at this time.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

**** COMMISSIONER LANGLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services