

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER RABBI ITA PASKIND
COMMISSIONER HOWARD DIXON

FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2024

Via Zoom /Tele Conference

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner/Pastor Oscar Destruge;
Commissioner Howard Dixon

OTHERS: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Deputy Fire Chief Joseph Coppola; Assistant Fire
Chief Edward McCabe; Assistant Fire Chief Mark Conte; Fire Marshal
Kirk McDonald, Michele DeLuca, Emergency Management; Linda
Shields

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2024

**** COMMISSIONER/PASTOR DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST
20, 2024 MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 20, 2024 MEETING.**

3. ACTION ITEMS

There were no items to consider at this time.

4. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

a. Budget Report

Chief Gatto presented his report to the Commissioners. The Department has completed the first quarter of the new year and remains within budget. He noted that there had been a meeting with the BET in the past week about the department's budget roll overs. He thanked the Mayor for this. Chief Gatto then reviewed the details of where the funding would be allocated. The Mayor said that the Department had been very responsible with their budget.

Chief Gatto explained that one firefighter had returned to the active roster from maturity leave, one firefighter out on long term illness, two on light duty and two on the injury on duty. He added that that there would be a swearing in and promotional ceremony on October 23rd. The Commissioners' invitations will be sent out soon.

5. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION

Assistant Chief Conte presented his report to the Commissioners.

a. Buildings

1. **Station 1:** Apparatus Floor
 - i. The Geotechnical Engineering Report has been received (attached). GZA will be submitting a plan and proposal for the recommended work.
2. **Station 3:** Apparatus Floor
 - i. Work began on 9/16.
3. **Station 4:** Building Renovation
 - i. Meeting with the Architect and Facilities Management on site to finalize the updated conceptual drawing.
 - ii. Guardian continues to perform repairs, as needed.
4. **Citywide:** Overhead Door Replacement
 - i. Door replacement will begin with Station 3 and continue through all of the stations.

b. Records Management Software Upgrade

1. The Software build and data migration continues.
2. Tentative go-live set for November.

6. ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Assistant Chief McCabe presented his report.

The September Fire Calls included 10 fires and 41 rescues of which 34 were motor vehicle accidents. The Department responded to 379 EMS calls, 30 hazardous conditions, 23 service calls; 143 fire alarms and 58 good intents. From January through the end of September, there was a total of 6,137 incidents and 9,702 total runs.

a. Non-Hydrant Districts

- i. Meeting with Stamford FD Tanker Task Force Coordinator and Wilton Fire Chief.

b. Highway Emergency Scene Safety

- i. Freightliner Attenuator Truck Status.
- c. Notable Incidents
 - i. Structure fire, 11 Fairview Ave.
 - ii. Mutual Aid to Monroe for flooding
 - iii. Structure fire, 2 Boxwood Rd.
 - iv. FFLD County Hazmat Comms Team response to North Carolina

7. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

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

Marshal McDonald greeted the Commissioners and presented his report. He stated that the Fire Marshal's Office figures had been fairly consistent for the last few months. There were 185 inspections in September. The number of notifications dropped from 24 to 19. There were two Public Education events including the Open House. The number of Plan Reviews increased to 34 from 27 and yielded \$2,500 in revenue. The Liquor Licenses remained the same. The total income for the month of September was \$2,695.

There were four fires that the Marshals were requested to investigate: two buildings; one car fire and one outside. There was also a code investigation due to a sprinkler issue. This was a decrease from last month, which had 10 requests. Four large multi-unit inspection sites were performed which totaled 674 units inspected.

8. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- a. Emergency Management Update

Ms. DeLuca greeted the Commissioners and presented her report.

The Open House was held on September 26th and there were between 1,300 and 1,500 attendees. This provided a great deal of food for the Open Door Shelter and was an excellent response from the Community.

Only a few residents reported flooding from the August 18th storm and no residential structural damage. Work on disseminating FEMA information continues.

The major damage that the City sustained was the Keeler Brook Pumping Station on Connecticut Avenue. DPW is working on the issues and repairs will cost several million dollars. She said that this would qualify them for FEMA reimbursement, but reminded everyone that it is a long process.

Ms. DeLuca will be working with the Norwalk Library on providing residents with Halloween Safety Tips.

There are a number of scams that have appeared following Hurricane Helene and Ms. DeLuca is working with the City administration to inform residents how they can help the victims and avoid misinformation.

There will be a meeting regarding Election security in the coming days with a number of departments such as Health Department, Police, ITS and a variety of others.

9. TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Deputy Chief Coppola greeted the Commissioners and presented his report.

a. Current Training Activities

1. Hose Evolutions at Meadow Gardens Vacant
2. Portable Ladder Raising Evolutions at Meadow Gardens
3. Aerial Ladder Deployment at Meadow Gardens
4. Extrication and Stabilization at Training Tower & Station 2 training pad with Rescue Crews
5. Ongoing Driver Training for both Engines and Ladder Trucks
6. Planning for Upcoming Lieutenant and Captain Promotional Exams
7. King Industries Plant Familiarization Tours for all shifts
8. CT DOT Traffic Incident Management Class for all shifts (PD also attending)

b. Completed Training Activities

1. Physicals Completed, waiting on members on long term leave to return
2. Confined Space Drill with Michel's Construction at Walk Bridge Construction Site
3. Rescue Jack Tool Familiarization with Truck 1 crews
4. 3-Months Probationary Evaluations Completed by Officers, Reviewed by DCT Coppola
5. MTA Railroad Safety Class for all shifts

c. Upcoming/Scheduled Training Activities:

1. Bail Out Refresher Training, October 2024
2. Confined Space Refresher, November 2024
3. Elevator Rescue Hands-On Practical (Classroom completed in September)
4. 2025 EMTEMR Refreshers January 2025
5. Lieutenant Promotional Test, November 12, 2025, 9am
6. Captain Promotional Test, January 9, 2025, 9am
7. Wellness Program Annual Classroom Education Sessions (December 2024)

Deputy Chief Coppola noted that the Norwalk Fire Department was one of four recipients for CIRMA's Excellent in Risk Management Award as a result of the Department's work in health and wellness. This is a \$2,500 grant and may be possibly used for gym equipment maintenance.

Mayor Rilling pointed out that the Lieutenant Promotional Test was listed as being scheduled for November 12, 2025, but wished to know if the correct date should be 2024. Deputy Chief Coppola confirmed that the correct date would be November 12, 2024.

Commissioner/Pastor DeStruge commented that he had been present at the Retiree's Breakfast and one of the firefighters told him all about the many benefits from using the wellness program. This is

something that he really loves. Commissioner/Pastor Destruge thanked Chief Gatto for the invitation to the Breakfast because it was a good chance to meet many of the firefighters.

10. LOCAL 830 REPORT

There were no items to consider at this time.

11. OLD BUSINESS

There were no items to consider at this time.

12. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items to consider at this time.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

a. See Letters (Attached)

Chief Gatto said that there were two letters attached to the previous month's agenda, but that meeting had been cancelled.

One letter was from Probate Judge Stern regarding the small electrical fire that he experienced at his personal residence. Judge Stern was very grateful and thankful for the excellent job.

Chief Gatto then spoke about a letter from Mr. Paul Veneto, a former airline attendant, who created Paulie's Push in honor of the flight crews aboard the 9/11 flights. The airline crews on board the flights that day were the very first responders to the incidents on board. Mr. Veneto was scheduled to have been on one of those flights, but due to schedule changes, he was rotated out.

He pushes an airline beverage cart with photos of the crew members who perished that day along various routes. One of those routes took him along Route 1 in Norwalk and he spoke with a number of the Norwalk firefighters on duty when he passed by.

14. PERSONNEL

There were no items to consider at this time.

15. ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER/PASTOR DESTRUGE MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services