

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER IRENE DIXON
COMMISSIONER OSCAR DESTRUGE

FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 21, 2015

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

STAFF: Fire Chief Denis McCarthy, Michelle DeLuca, Emergency
Operations; Assistant Chief Lawrence Reilly; Firefighter
Lefty Petrides, Firefighter Peter Brown, Deputy Chief T.
Smith; Deputy Chief Prescott

OTHERS: Emmet Hibson, Personnel Director

CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. A quorum was present.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Meeting March 17, 2015

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
ON MARCH 17, 2015.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON MARCH
17, 2015 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. ACTION ITEMS

City of Norwalk
Fire Commission
Regular Meeting
April 21, 2015

There were no items to discuss at this time.

3. FIRE CHIEF REPORT

a. Budget Report

The work is proceeding on the budget. There are a few capital projects underway such as an underground fuel tank removal, and driveway and drainage at Meadow Street. There will also be a replacement of the HVAC system at Meadow Street, which also involves asbestos removal. There will also be work done on the driveway aprons along with paving done. Design work is underway for New Canaan Avenue.

Mayor Rilling said that the Operating Budget looks good. He asked about the 24 hours shift change. Chief McCarthy said that there was a 20% reduction in overtime since the new shift times have started.

b. Firefighter Recruitment

An RFP has been submitted to Mr. Hibson and Mr. Bovilsky for review. The bids have been sent to Purchasing for review. The department is very interested in the company that did the New Haven Fire Department. Chief McCarthy said that the City of Stamford was dissatisfied with the pool of candidates due to lack of diversity and has decided to use the same company as New Haven did. Chief McCarthy said that this will be an excellent opportunity to observe the testing process that Stamford goes through. Chief McCarthy said that it was important for everyone who is a fire fighter to know that their partners are there and can maintain the standards. Discussion followed.

Mayor Rilling asked if the department was making every effort to have a diverse candidate pool. Chief McCarthy said that this was so. He added that there was an alert on the website for when the testing was about to be scheduled. Residents can sign up to receive the alerts.

c. Fire Station Renovations

This was discussed earlier in the report.

d. Community Outreach Update

Mayor Rilling asked if the department was making every effort to have a diverse candidate pool. Chief McCarthy said that this was so. He added that there was an alert on the website for when the testing was about to be scheduled. Residents can sign up to receive the alerts.

Commissioner DeSturge asked if it would be possible to have another round of the fire fighters reaching out to the community. The Union Chief spoke briefly about the difficulty of the testing process. Mayor Rilling said that with the new process, more candidates will be in the pool. Just making a decision on

the written test because the past practice has been to take only the very top of the scores. Commissioner DeStruge said that they need more diversity in the department. Discussion followed.

4. ASSISTANT CHIEF REPORT

a. Operations Report

Assistant Chief Reilly then reviewed the details of a recent fatal structural fire. Mayor Rilling asked for clarity regarding the 9-1-1 call. The health care worker mistakenly called 4-1-1 rather than 9-1-1 and then called a relative of the elderly person she was caring for. The relative called 9-1-1 and reported the fire. Once that call came in the department was there in under 4 minutes.

Mayor Rilling asked about a medical response call for someone who was not breathing. He wished to know if the patient had survived. Chief McCarthy said that he would check into this.

Mayor Rilling said that on June 20th, there would be a Hands Only CPR course held at Calf Pasture Beach.

b. Deputy Chief Prescott – Condo Fire Project Update

Deputy Chief Prescott then spoke about the mutual aid program for the larger residential buildings. He mentioned the Edgewater, N.J. apartment fire that involved 250 units and displaced 500 residents. The discussions with Westport and Wilton have been very good. Due to the construction techniques, these lightweight buildings have fires that are difficult to contain. There will be a regional training meeting at the NFD Connecticut station including table top exercises in the near future.

c. Active Shooter Project Update

Chief McCarthy said that Deputy Chief Gatto has worked on an active shooter project with the Norwalk Police Department. The discussion regarded access to floor plans, particularly buildings such as schools, which can change over time.

5. FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

a. Summary of Activities

Chief McCarthy gave a brief overview of the Fire Marshal's Report as summarized in the Commissioners' information packets.

b. Fire Reports

The fires at Ely Avenue and Dairy Farm Road had been discussed previously.

c. Home Fire Preparedness Campaign – American Red Cross

Chief McCarthy said that the outreach for this program was working well. He said that the department now installs the smoke detectors. Older ones from the 1980's may have lost some sensitivity and should be replaced. The newer ones have 10 year batteries and a list of where the new detectors have been installed.

Firefighter Petrides asked who was installing the detectors. Chief McCarthy said that the Fire Marshal's Department was handling the installations.

d. Fire Marshal Fees

There was no discussion regarding the fees at this time.

6. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

a. Emergency Management Update

Ms. DeLuca had laryngitis, so Chief McCarthy presented the information. He said that working with Steppingstones has worked out well. Steppingstones is in the midst of updating their exhibits and this is a good time to discuss incorporating safety tips.

The department has been working with NPS since 2013 and has advocated for an NPS Emergency Coordinator. NPS has recently hired someone with a military and education background, so it will work out well.

The schools in the State of Colorado are working on an Emergency Coordination seminar. NPS cannot send their staff member, but Ms. DeLuca will be attending.

7. TRAINING REPORT

Deputy Chief Smith then gave a brief overview of the training underway.

- a. Mutual Aid RIT (Rapid Intervention Team) Training with Westport FD.**
- b. Police Roll Call Training for Patrol Division, Fire Ground and Fire Safety. PD Training FD on Police needs.**
- c. Norwalk Hospital New Construction Familiarization.**
- d. Eversource (Formerly Yankee Gas and CL&P) Training.**
- e. Command for Company Officers Course.**
- f. FEMA / NIMS Logistics Section Chief for regional IMT was scheduled for April 6-9 and it was hosted at NFD.**
- g. NIMS 300/400 Train the Trainer scheduled for June 8-11 and hosted at NFD.**
- h. NIMS CT West IMT Liaison Class scheduled for May 7 & 8 and hosted at NFD.**

- i. **NFD is working with other Departments in the City on Hands for Life.**
Event scheduled for June 20, 2015.
- j. **NPD using small apparatus floor and large classroom for training on May 26, 29 & June 1.**
- k. **Norwalk Community College Recruiting Event**

At the suggestion of the administration, there will be a table at the College both during the regular school day and also while evening classes are underway.

- l. **Briggs High School Academy class for 4 days on May 1, 8, 15 & 22. It will be held at NFD.**
- m. **West Rocks Middle School Career Day scheduled for May 1, 2015.**
- n. **Norwalk High school Career Day scheduled for May 28, 2015.**
- o. **Brien McMahon High School Career Day scheduled for June 2, 2015.**

These Career Days involve the locally assigned engine company going to the schools with the various tools for the students to see. The on-duty fire fighters are there and it has worked out well.

8. UNION PRESIDENT REPORT

Firefighter Petrides said that there was a State Bill that was being presented in Hartford regarding the number of fire fighters that have come down with cancer after being exposed to burning cancer causing materials.

9. OLD BUSINESS

There were no items to discuss at this time.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chief McCarthy announced that a retired Norwalk Firefighter had passed away recently.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items to discuss at this time.

12. PERSONNEL

- a. **Executive session to discuss: Personnel matter.**

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER.**

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, Chief McCarthy and Mr. Hibson entered into Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue at 3:57 p.m. They returned to public session at 4:37 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COMMISSIONER DIXON MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services