

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE

REGULAR MEETING

April 18, 2023
Via Zoom Conference.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Oscar Destruge

STAFF: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Assistant Chief Mark Conte; Assistant Chief Edward McCabe; Deputy Chief Jonathan Maggio; Fire Marshal Broderick Sawyer, Linda Shields

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

• March 21, 2023

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 21, 2023 MEETING.**

Page 4, please change the following motion from:

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO AFFIRM THE VOTE TAKEN AT THE MARCH 2ND MEETING REGARDING THE APPROVAL THE DISABILITY REQUEST FROM FIREFIGHTER ROOS.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO AFFIRM THE VOTE TAKEN AT THE MARCH 2ND MEETING REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF THE DISABILITY PENSION FROM FIRE INSPECTOR ROOS.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 21, 2023 MEETING AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS

There are no items to discuss at this time.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

• Budget Report

Chief Gatto said that the March report reflects a five week period. Overall, the budget is at 59.2% rather than 75%. Chief Gatto will be reviewing the budget in order to transfer some funding from one account to another.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION

Assistant Chief Conte presented his report.

- a. Adashi Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) and Command Software Upgrade
 - o Software build in process.
- b. Station Alerting System Upgrade
 - o System Build in process
- c. Buildings
 - o Station 3 Apparatus Floor
 - o Project planning in process
 - o Station 5 Roof Replacement
 - o Project nearing completion
 - o OSHA Compliance
 - o Compliance work over 85% complete

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Assistant Chief McCabe presented his report.

The Department's five Deputy Chiefs have all been assigned a sub-division within Firefighting Operations. Each Deputy will communicate with the company officers in their division on matters of training, equipment, and apparatus and will report back to the Assistant Chief. This system of organization will facilitate a span of control for communication and give the company officers a resource within their division at the chief officer level.

Fire Department Admin Chiefs and Hazmat Team liaison met with King Industries Safety and Management personnel to discuss the changeover to "Green" Foam in their fixed fire suppression systems and their purchase of an industrial fire apparatus. Their new truck is capable of quickly deploying foam or dry chemical extinguishing agents and can be operated as a quick response vehicle by a minimum number of King personnel.

The Department is investing in equipment and instruction in order to train our ladder companies and rescue company to perform rescues involving roof-deployed life safety rope. This procedure allows civilians to be rescued from a window when their escape is cut off by fire and they are out of the reach of fire department ladders. It will also allow trapped firefighters to be rescued when the height of the window is beyond the reach of their personal escape system rope.

During the month of March, there were 664 incidents for the month, which is an average of 21.4 per day. There were 15 fires including 2 building fires and 5 brush fires. There were 41 rescues with 37 of them involving motor vehicles. There were 422 EMS calls, 27 hazardous condition calls, 23 service calls, and responded to 84 fire alarms, the majority of which were unintentional false alarms. There were also 52 calls involving a smoke scare/good intent.

The cumulative statistics for January 1st through March 31st show the department having 2,069 incidents with 3,237 total responses.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

- **Summary of Activities**
- **Fire Reports**
- **Fire Marshal Fees**

Fire Marshal Sawyer reviewed the details of his report with the Commissioners.

Fire Marshal Sawyer said that he had realized that the Health Department is often aware of illegal apartments in one or two family residents. If the Health Department is aware of three things: smoke alarms, inadequate egress or illegal apartments, this may be a way to schedule an inspection for illegal apartments. The Fire Marshal definitely has jurisdiction on egress or smoke alarms for single or two family residences. The United General Statute 29-305 gives the Fire Marshal authority if they have an authentic source. Discussion followed.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- **Emergency Management Update**

Chief Gatto said that Ms. DeLuca was not present because she was on vacation.

TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Deputy Chief Maggio presented his report.

- a. **Current Activities**
 - 1. Wellness Coordinator - Daily Injury Prevention Program
 - 2. Vertical/Roof ventilation
 - 3. Vehicle Extrication

4. Metal cutting
5. Water Supply / Master Stream Operations
6. EVOC

b. Completed Activities

1. OUPV

c. Upcoming/Scheduled:

1. PES – Personnel Escape System Training
2. Standpipe Operations
3. Heavy Vehicle Stabilization
4. Rope Rescue

Mayor Rilling explained that although he knows it is necessary, he becomes nervous when he sees firefighters up on a roof due to the potential of collapse. Deputy Chief Maggio said that the firefighters are very careful and don't take unnecessary risks. There is always a level of risk when firefighting. Discussion followed about the standard practices and processes.

Fire Marshal Sawyer said that he has added a section about information on roof trusses for commercial buildings so that the firefighters will have the information available.

The discussion then moved to EV fires and the potential of using the King Industry dry chemical truck. Assistant Chief McCabe said that there were discussions about the potential use of a fire suppression blanket for EV fires. He also added that King Industries had said that they were willing to respond at any time they were needed. Chief Gatto said that the dry chemical mixture does not put out EV lithium battery fires.

There were concerns expressed regarding parking EVs in underground parking garages. Fire Marshal Sawyer noted that the cause of the recent garage fire had not yet been determined, but it was not caused by arson. Mayor Rilling suggested contacting the Zoning Commission and the Planning and Zoning Department to discuss these concerns.

Mayor Rilling said that between the Police Department and Fire Department, he felt that Norwalk probably had the best trained first responders.

LOCAL 830 REPORT

There are no items to consider at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

There are no items to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Chief Gatto said that the RTC had called because they want to honor the late retired Fire Commissioner Carol Andreoli by planting a tree and a plaque at Headquarters and they would like permission to do so. Mayor Rilling said that he did not have any issues with it. Chief Gatto said that she was the first female Fire Commissioner and served for 11 years.

CORRESPONDENCE

a. Retirement letter attached

Firefighter Jim Hebert had submitted a letter stating that he would like to retire at the end of May. Mayor Rilling said that there was no action required other than accepting the retirement letter with regrets.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH REGRETS THE RETIREMENT LETTER FROM FIREFIGHTER HEBERT.**

Chief Gatto said that one of the firefighters had contacted the Tunnel to Towers organization about the late Craig Saris. Chief Gatto said that the application had been accepted and Firefighter Saris' mortgage will be paid by the organization as long as the family occupies the house.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PERSONNEL

There are no items to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services