

**CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT**



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

**MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER RABBI PASKIND**

**FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 19, 2024**

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Oscar Destruge;
Commissioner Ita Paskind (3:21 p.m.)

STAFF: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Assistant Fire Chief Edward McCabe; Deputy
Fire Chief Joseph Coppola; Assistant Fire Chief Mark Conte; Fire
Marshal Broderick Sawyer; Michele DeLuca, Emergency
Management; Linda Shields, Tom Reich

CALL TO ORDER

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

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

• February 20, 2024

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 20, 2024.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 20, 2024 AS
SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items to consider at this time.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

a. Budget Report

Chief Gatto presented his report. The Department is doing well. The sick time balance is less than it was last year. On duties injuries have increased, 287 vs. 168. Commissioner DeStruge said that the increase was worrisome. Chief Gatto said that some injuries happen during training and others during the fire calls. Discussion followed. Assistance Fire Chief Conte noted that one firefighter retired after being out for a full year.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION

Assistance Fire Chief Conte presented his report.

a. Station Alerting System Upgrade

- 1. Final system testing nearing completion.**
- 2. System cut-over scheduled after all testing is complete.**

b. State Radio System Migration

1. The new system is in operation

c. Buildings

1. Station 1: Apparatus Floor

- i. Preliminary assessment of the scope of work to replace the floor is in progress.**

2. Station 3: Apparatus Floor

- i. Design work has begun.**

3. Station 5: Bathroom Renovation

- i. Project nearing completion.**

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Assistance Fire Chief McCabe presented his report.

a. **STRUCTURE FIRE:** The Norwalk Fire Department responded to 9-11 Park St. in the early morning of Tuesday, February 27, 2024. A kitchen fire was reported at 12:48 AM in the 68 unit, heavily occupied four-story apartment building. Residence were evacuated as the first fire companies arrived. There was smoke on the first floor with moderate smoke on the upper floor was encountered, which resulted in an immediate request for 2nd and 3rd alarm companies to the scene. Due to the number of apartments to be searched, in addition to non-ambulatory residence, fire companies from all stations in the city were utilized. A total of five Engines, two Trucks, one

Rescue and command. Staff responded to the 3 alarm fire. A few occupants were treated on-scene for smoke inhalation. All residents, except for the fire apartment were able to reoccupy the building. The fire was confined to a kitchen. The Fire Marshal's Office investigated. The New Canaan, Westport, and Rowayton Fire Departments provided station coverage during the fire.

b. **STRUCTURE FIRE:** The Norwalk Fire Department responded to a house fire on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 4:15 PM. The fire was located at 9 William St. in a 2-story single-family house. The initial call reported a fire on the kitchen. Upon arrival, Engine 4 encountered heavy smoke, coming from the front of the house on the first floor. The fire was extinguished in 25 minutes by a 1st alarm assignment consisting of three engines, 2 trucks, one rescue and command staff, totaling 25 personnel. The fire was contained to the kitchen and the hallway of the first floor. Significant smoke and heat damage on the 1st and 2nd floors left the house I'm fit for occupancy. Two occupants and a pet exited the house prior to the fire departments arrival. There were no reported injuries to firefighters. There were no reported injuries to civilians. The Fire Marshal's Office investigated.

c. With the new State radio system, now online, I am working with AC Conte and receiving feedback from the Shift Commanders and officers to draw up SOP's regarding best radio practices for the new technology.

d. Our three new recruits continue to progress at the Connecticut Fire Academy. Additional interviews are planned to add their class, which will come on shift in Late May.

There were 544 incidents in February of 2024, which averages out to 18.2 per day. There were 11 fires and 35 rescues of which 32 were motor vehicle accidents. The Department responded to 322 EMS calls, 30 hazardous conditions, 9 service calls; 88 fire alarms and 49 good intents. There were 152 fewer incidents this January thru February than the previous year.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

a. Summary of Activities

b. Fire Reports

c. Fire Marshal Fees

Fire Marshal Sawyer presented his report.

The Office still only has 1 part-time inspector. By the end of the month, the Office will have completed 1,000 dwelling unit inspections. Fire Marshal Sawyer noted that Hartford started a new fee based on the number of individual dwelling units and were able to hire more inspectors. Norwalk does not charge for individual dwelling unit inspections. The Health Department charges to register as a multi-family residence. Fire Marshal Sawyer said that he was in contact with Hartford about initialing this fee for future developments.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ms. DeLuca said that the Health Department contacts them about providing assistance to displaced residents following a structure fire.

There will be a Statewide training in May about Election Security.

Last month Ms. DeLuca, Lt. Lyons and Deputy Chief Coppola, attended the ICS-300, 3 day training. They will also attend ICS-400 which will be offered at the Fairfield Fire School on April 15th and 16th.

The Summer safety program is being reviewed and updated.

Commissioner Paskind joined the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

TRAINING DIVISION REPORT

Deputy Fire Chief Coppola gave a brief overview of the different items in his report.

a. Current Activities

1. New Driver/Pump Operator training on Engines 1 & 2
2. Truck 1 Driver Training and Familiarization
3. Mental Wellness Training with Fairfield County Trauma Recovery Team
4. Setup procedures for T3 (Spare Aerial) now that both tillers are in service.
5. Vehicle extrication and stabilization

b. Completed Activities

1. ICS-300 (DC Coppola, Lt. Lyons, Michele DeLuca)
2. Hatch & Bailey Lumberyard destructive training
3. New Radio System Training for all personnel
4. EMS recertification classes completed with 76 members recertified for 2 years

c. Upcoming/Scheduled

1. Confined Space Drill with Middlesex Construction at the Walk Bridge Construction Site
2. Water rescue drill with Middlesex Construction at Walk Bridge Construction Site
3. Extinguisher Training with Middlesex Construction at 4 Goldstein Place (4/1/2024 @ 7 am)
4. With HHC chosen as our new medical provider, NFPA Compliant Physicals are being planned to begin as soon as approval is given by HR.
5. Hazardous Material Technician Initial Class at Fairfield Fire School (Lt. Lyons & FF Agosto enrolled)
6. ICS-400 (Fairfield Fire School (4.15.2024 & 4.16.2024) DC Coppola, FF Chila and Michele DeLuca

7. Host CFA Pump Operator certification course scheduled for May 2024 (6-day class)
2 host seats filled.

Mayor Rilling noted that the Department was providing a significant amount of training to the Middlesex Construction Company and asked if Middlesex Construction had considered making a donation to the Department. Deputy Fire Chief Coppola said that he would suggest that to them.

LOCAL 830 REPORT

There are no items at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business to consider at this time.

PERSONNEL

a. Firefighter Deployment

Chief Gatto informed the Commissioners that one of the Firefighters would be deploying with the National Guard from April through August.

b. Executive Session

1. Discuss Future Hiring
2. Station 4 Project

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

**** COMMISSIONER PASKIND SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, and Chief Gatto entered into Executive Session at 3:32 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. They returned to public session at 3:55 p.m. No actions or votes were taken during the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services