

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER IRENE DIXON
COMMISSIONER OSCAR DESTRUGE

FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 17, 2015

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

STAFF: Fire Chief Denis McCarthy, Michelle DeLuca, Emergency
Operations; Chris Hansen, Fire Marshal; Assistant Chief Lawrence
Reilly

OTHERS: Emmet Hibson, Personnel Director; Paulette Saddler, NFD staff.

CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE of MINUTES.

Regular Meeting February 17, 2015

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

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

ACTION ITEMS

There were no items to consider.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT.

Budget Report - Full analysis on budget will be done at the end of the 3rd quarter. The current figures are appropriate for this time of year. The overtime accounts have been within what is expected. The Department reconciled the budget with Finance for the BET meeting. Vacations will be scheduled by the end of the year but will be offset by the vacant positions. He pointed out that the budget was prepared almost 16 months ago and priorities change, which is why the money moves around towards the end of the year.

Chief McCarthy said that there had been a meeting with Allan Lo regarding the Broad River Fire Department. There have been discussions about how to allow the renovations while operating the Fire Department. There are also concerns about the PCBs in the window caulking.

Another priority will be to fix the exterior of 100 Fairfield Avenue, which is in desperate need of repair.

Firefighter Recruitment - Recruitment efforts continue. Chief McCarthy is working with Mr. Foley on the RFP in the near future.

Mayor Rilling said that there were concerns regarding the recruitment test. He pointed out that the written test had more situational questions rather than historical knowledge. Chief McCarthy pointed out that every firefighter needed to be able to operate a fire pump and that involves a significant amount of math. The test portion is not geared towards asking the candidate about the details of operating the fire pump, but towards whether they can do the math involved.

Chief McCarthy said that the passing grade for the test is 70, but those who score less than a 92 never get to the interview portion. Firefighters come from all different backgrounds, which is what the department needs. There are electricians, carpenters, plumbers and many other trades involved. Chief McCarthy said that the department will not be lowering standards, but that by working with the Personnel Director and Mr. Bovilsky, the process will be crafted to benefit the City.

Fire Station Renovations – This issue was previously discussed in the Budget Report.

Community Outreach - the department continues to do that and a tri-fold flyer is being created for career fairs. Norwalk Community College has offered a table on the campus

so the department can distribute information to the students. The dept. is also working on establishing a similar relationship with Housatonic Community College.

TRAINING REPORT.

Chief McCarthy said Chief Smith was not able to attend the meeting. He briefly reviewed the following training items listed on the agenda:

- a. CPR Completed with a few remaining members who were off still to be done
- b. Accountability Cards being updated replaced as needed
- c. Metro North High Rail work on March 16, 17 & 18
- d. Command for the Company Officer cancelled due to lack of paying registrants.
It has been rescheduled for May 12 & 13
- e. Confined space training for fall is being set up now
- f. Physicals completed with 3 to finish up
- g. Logistics Section Chief for regional IMT April 6 to 9, Hosted at Norwalk Fire

with the Commissioners.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – CONT'D.

Recognition of Paulette Saddler

Chief McCarthy said that the Department had received a phone call from a Spanish speaker who needed assistance. Ms. Saddler, who does not speak Spanish, used her tablet to translate the call and then translated the answer from English into Spanish and had it read the answer in Spanish to the caller. Mayor Rilling commented that often the firefighters are recognized but the support staff are not when they go the extra mile. He said that this confirms that the City has excellent employees because she was able to step in and help the resident out. Commissioner DeStruge said that he was glad that she was able to be innovative and creative.

Mayor Rilling said that he was pleased when he received a call about Deputy Fire Deputy Sawyer, who assisted a female resident in locating a beep in her home and then went back to shovel the walkway because the resident couldn't clear it herself.

ASSISTANCE CHIEF REPORT.

Operations Report - Asst. Chief Reilly reviewed the recent gas leak at 515 West Avenue. He also mentioned a recent bus fire where the bus driver evacuated the students and another incident where the Department provided mutual aid to the Rowayton Volunteer Fire Department for a house fire. Chief McCarthy said that after some discussion with the Rowayton Department, it was decided that when Mutual Aid is

required, NFD will offer leadership report. He gave the details of the discussion.

Asst. Chief Reilly then said that regarding equipment, last month the focus was digging out the hydrants, but with the sun and the rain, the project is completed.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT.

Fire Marshal Hansen reviewed the recent statistics for the department. He said that the department was working on having the inspectors coordinating with the Assessor and other city departments regarding whether a residence is a two family, three family or more when there is a finished basement or attic. Mayor Rilling said that he was working on having some kind of coordination with the various software packages that the different departments use. Currently, there is no way that the various data systems can talk to one another. Discussion followed.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

Ms. DeLuca said that there were 45 attendees at the tabletop exercise. She spoke about the overall media policies that are needed. A meeting will be scheduled on this. Chief McCarthy said that it would be important to have a Public Information Officer (PIO) to work with the Mayor's Office and scheduling regular updates for the media and general public. He said that since Mr. Diesel's departure, this was no longer being done.

In February, the department provided a canteen for the East Avenue Fire and another event.

On April 13th, there will be another event at the Doubletree Hotel. There are a number of organizations that would be talking about how to reduce errors in decision making and mitigating any errors that are made.

UNION PRESIDENT REPORT.

There were no items to consider at this time.

OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to consider at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business consider at this time.

CORRESPONDENCE.

There were no items to consider at this time.

PERSONNEL.

a. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, Fire Chief McCarthy and Mr. Hibson entered into Executive Session at 12:20 p.m. They returned to public session at 12:47 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services