

CITY OF NORWALK
FIRE DEPARTMENT



BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

MAYOR HARRY W. RILLING
COMMISSIONER/PASTOR OSCAR DESTRUGE
COMMISSIONER LARRY L. BENTLEY

REGULAR MEETING
January 20, 2021

This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Harry Rilling, Chair; Commissioner Larry Bentley,
Commissioner Oscar Destruge

STAFF: Fire Chief Gino Gatto; Assistant Chief A. Bassett; Deputy Chief
McCallum; Michelle DeLuca, Emergency Management; William
Ireland, Local 830; Assistant Chief Edward McCabe; Assistant
Chief Al Bassett

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rilling called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

Regular Meeting – December 15, 2020

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 15,
2020.**

The following correction was noted:

Page 5, please change the following motion from:

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE
DISABILITY PENSION FOR FIREMAN KOSMAS KALMANIDIS.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

To:

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE
DISABILITY PENSION FOR FIRE INSPECTOR KOSMAS
KALMANIDIS.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2020
MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items to consider at this time.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT.

a. Budget Report.

Chief Gatto presented his report. He noted the December salaries will seem high because there were five weeks in December. There was an increase of 52 days in vacations and holidays during December.

Chief Gatto said that they will have ten vacancies after today's meeting.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

a. ISO – Insurance Services Office.

• Preparing for Audit.

Assistant Chief Bassett stated that he had begun working on the ISO report. The report will affect every commercial building in Norwalk.

b. Building and facilities

Assistant Chief Bassett is now working with Captain Hines on overseeing the building maintenance.

c. Public Safety Cadets

• Norwalk is going to be a model for NERLEEA (North East Regional Law Enforcement Educational Association)

NERLEEA is looking to expand their program and Norwalk will host the pilot program.

Mayor Rilling asked how many were in the program. Assistant Chief Bassett said that there were 40 on the roster, but there were only between 15-20 dedicated attendees.

The Commissioners congratulated Assistant Chief Bassett on his recent promotion.

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

Assistant Chief McCabe stated he was now supervising apparatus maintenance. The new ladder truck is being engineered and the project is moving forward on schedule.

Some Fire Protection equipment has been sent out for testing and maintenance.

There were 563 calls in December. Assistant Chief McCabe then reviewed the details of the various significant calls including an elevator rescue and vehicle extrication.

There were 6,673 calls for 2020, including 30 structure fires. In 2019, there were 7,228 calls, which indicates there was a drop from 19.8 calls per day in 2019 to 18.2 calls per day in 2020.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT

a. Summary of Activities.

b. Fire Reports.

c. Fire Marshal Fees.

Chief Gatto presented the report, which was included in the packet. One firefighter has been promoted to Fire Inspector. There are no part time inspectors at this time. There will be a total of 8 in the Department: Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal and 6 Inspectors.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT.

Emergency Management Update.

Ms. DeLuca presented her report.

The CT Food Bank will be a weekly event at Calf Pasture until further notice. It is scheduled to take place on the 21st. They are working with the non-profits to keep food flowing to their clients.

TRAINING'S DIVISION REPORT.

Company Training Objectives

Mayor Rilling asked if the firefighters who had opted for the vaccine received it. He was told that most of the first dose has been administered and the second dose will be given over the next few weeks.

Assistant Chief Bassett said that they were working on EMT training.

LOCAL 830 REPORT

There were no items to discuss.

Chief Gatto said that there were 3 positive cases reported over the week and now there are about 19 members in quarantine.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Building Repairs.

- Broad River – Station 1 – Construction continues. There were some problems encountered and the project is now behind schedule.

- Meadow Street – Station 5 – a budget request will be presented for a new roof. There have also been issues with Station 5's boiler, which is only 4 years old.

Mayor Rilling asked if there had been a date set for the dedication of the plaque. Chief Gatto said that they were waiting for warmer spring weather to schedule it.

NEW BUSINESS.

• Update on RFP for Firefighter Entry Level Exam.

Morris and McDaniel was the only vendor that responded to the RFP. Chief Gatto said that they should not be in a rush but should move forward with the company. The company would like to do in person testing, so Chief Gatto said that if they wait a few months, they might be able to hold the test in May or June.

Chief Gatto said that there had been some consideration and discussion about using Connecticut Certified Firefighters. Mayor Rilling reminded everyone that he had suggested this last year, but there had been no support for it.

Chief Gatto said that he did not want to steal firefighters from other departments. He also expressed concerns about the fact that most of the firefighters in CT were white males and wondered if they could maintain the diversity. Discussion followed about the number of vacancies expected. Chief Gatto said that they could look into the issue and report back next month.

The discussion moved to the number of applicants that could be sent to the Academy. Due to the problems that the Department experienced last year, they will be skipping this upcoming class.

A discussion followed about the Stamford, Hartford and New Haven Fire Academies. The Commissioners asked Chief Gatto to look at whether it would be possible to enroll some firefighters into one of the nearby academies, so the roster would not dip too low.

The discussion moved to the role of the company in regards to recruitment.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE NORWALK FIRE DEPARTMENT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH MORRIS AND MCDANIEL AS DISCUSSED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CORRESPONDENCE

There is no correspondence to consider at this time.

PERSONNEL

a. In Executive Session:

• Discussion on Disability Pensions.

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY MOVED TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS DISABILITY PENSIONS.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Commissioners, Chief Gatto and Mr. Ireland entered into Executive Session at 3:44 p.m. They returned to public session at 3:54 p.m. No motions were made or actions taken during Executive Session.

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM CAPT. ROOS FOR A DISABILITY PENSION.**

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUGE MOVED TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM FIREFIGHTER CHUCK CORBO FOR A DISABILITY PENSION.**

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY MOVED TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM FIREFIGHTER RYAN MCENANEY FOR A DISABILITY PENSION.**

**** COMMISSIONER DESTRUCE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER BENTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services