



COMMISSION MEETING

November 8, 2016

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on November 8, 2016. Chairman Jones opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Amy, Zieller, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, and Lockwood. Commissioner Bysiewicz arrived @ 6:42 pm and Commissioners Williams and Augeri were absent.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, Deputy Chief (DC) Darrell Ponzio, FDA Linda DeManche and Ross Andrew, Jr.

-The Chairman opened the public session on a **MOTION** by Comm. Alderman, with no public comment, closed on a **MOTION** by Comm. Amy.

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Lockwood seconded by Comm. Zieller it was approved to waive the reading of the October 11, 2016 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as written, all in favor.

-The bills for October 2016, including the detailed Liberty & Lowe's statement were reviewed; after all questions were answered it was approved to pay the bills on a **MOTION** by Comm. Lockwood and seconded by Comm. Zieller, all in favor.

Tax Collectors Report

-The Commission reviewed October's Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Jean Newman. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller the report was approved, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$ 607.85, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

-The Fire Marshal's (FM) monthly report for October was distributed and accepted on a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Scarrozzo, all in favor.

Chief's Report

-The CDL practical test date is scheduled for December 6th and December 13th – DMV will test 3 members each day.

-The Moose Lodge gave the Department a contribution of \$300 for the adopt-a-family program.

-An email was sent out to members that are just at or just below their service recognition percentages for the year so they are aware to try and bring their percentages up and/or maintain for year end.

-The grant writer has made the recommendation that the RIT pack be removed from the 2016 AFG application. While the pack does not conform to the 5500 PSI SCBA's that are being applied for, the RIT pack is only 2 years old. The Board agrees to remove the RIT pack based on the recommendation. If the District is successful with the application, the RIT pack would need to be budgeted to be replaced along with the remaining 12 SCBA packs and spare masks that would not be covered under the grant.

-There is new gear wash solvent on the market since the cancer bill passed. The Chief would like to purchase a case in the amount of \$464.00. The Chief spoke to the gear, pack and fire hose reps and they are all okay with the product. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved to purchase, all in favor.

-The Department is having a Christmas gathering for members on December 27th starting at 6:00 pm, the Commissioners are invited. The Department voted at the monthly meeting not to have their regular annual party this year.

-DC Ponzio reported that there is a Regional HazMat drill in Middlefield on December 3rd. Several Westfield members will be attending. Middletown Fire is no longer going to be the HazMat response team, the Chief will have to contact Hartford or New Haven Regional and see who will be the response team for Middletown.

-It was reported that the Open House was successful – Ponzio stated there was approximately 150 people and he received one application for new membership.

-DC Ponzio stated that with respect to consolidation and all the conversations around that there are a number of things being done to try and better position ourselves as a Department. There are things being done right now, such as Community Outreaches; a community fire safety & CPR event already took place at Sonoma Woods and the same is scheduled for December 1st for Old Farms East & West. The Westfield Residents Association (WRA) is helping to distribute flyers to the residents in the Old Farms community. The WRA appears to be pleased with how things are currently run and seem to be in favor of keeping things the way they are for the Westfield Fire District. Darrell has also been working on an informational dashboard that gives a sense of how we are performing as a Department (ie: cost per call, cost per hour of coverage, response time and how that compares to NFPA standards, etc.). He welcomes any additional feedback.

-DC Ponzio updated the Board on the City wide radio project. There was another meeting with Wayne Bartolotta and Westfield's representatives a couple of weeks ago. Wayne reiterated he upgraded the mobile radios we would get from the single 800 band to the all band radios. He also upped the count of portables from 35 to 54. On the down side the paging is still going to be a gap and he does not see any way they would fund buying pagers for every member of the Department as part of this program. Wayne still maintains there is a 95% coverage guarantee from Motorola. The Chief reported there is still a shortfall of the 10 Officer mobiles. Ponzio said it was stated in the meeting that it is the position of the Commission that we as a District shouldn't have to foot the bill for anything if the cost is being spread over the entire City. Wayne stated they would try and work the best they could but basically we are getting is what we are getting. The bond referendum was being voted on tonight and they should know the results tomorrow. Ross attended the Telecommunication meeting on Monday and he report that as far as the coverage guarantee, the City plans to hold back monies until they go out and test the coverage areas and make sure it works. Lockwood said we may need to budget pagers over the next few years. The rough estimate for these pagers would be approx. \$60,000. Bysiewicz asked if the \$60,000 estimate also included the 10 mobiles, which it does not. The cost of the mobiles is not known, it depends on which one they choose.

-DC Ponzio participated in a recruitment & retention seminar sponsored by CT Volunteer Workforce Solutions on October 28th. There were two \$1,500 grants being raffled and Westfield won one of them. They are considering how best to spend this for the purpose of recruiting & retention.

-The gentlemen that Darrell spoke with last month regarding the fund drive made a generous contribution of \$300 to the Department. He is also interested in a fire safety & CPR event for Tuscany Hills that the Department has been doing for other various subdivisions.

-The Departments Officer meeting minutes for November were presented.

-The status of training classes for members is as follows: N. Davis passed the practical for her EMT initial and needs to schedule a retest for the written; Members Andrew/Balch/Lemay/Silverman FFI class is still in progress; and 6 members are working on obtaining either their Q endorsement or CDL license, the practical skills test is set for December 6th and 13th.

Commissioner(s) Report

- In preparation for the Chief evaluations an email was sent last week to the Officers core soliciting written constructive feedback on the three Chief positions and asked they be returned by November 10th.
- The LED lighting project is in progress and they hope to finish by the end of the week. There seems to be a noticeable difference in the inside and outside lighting, much brighter lights.
- On October 31st FM Higgins was in a minor car accident on Willowbrook Drive, Cromwell. A vehicle exiting the Willowbrook Plaza did not stop and hit the rear drivers' side on the Equinox; there were no injuries. The work will be done by Joseph's Autobody. The District has a \$1,000 deductible but VFIS plans to subrogate to the other parties insurance and will refund if successful in collecting damages.
- Dana Andrew will be out on sick leave for a minor medical procedure for approx. a week. We may need to hire per diem coverage for some of the days. The Chief asked if the Commission has ever considered buying back unused days off versus employees taking the time off. It is not something that has been done in the past but the Board could consider it if there was interest from the employees. Comm. Amy stated that many companies, if they even do buy back time it is at 50%, not the full reimbursement.
- The District is in receipt of a letter from St of CT OPM with respect to the Municipal Grants-in-Aid program. The General Statute language for these funds does not apply to the District therefore a waiver letter will but submitted requesting to use the funds towards their Capital Non-Reoccurring Reserve (CNR) fund.
- Three quotes were obtained to do crack sealing for the bay aprons only. On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Lockwood it was approved to have Prime Sealing perform the work in the amount of \$800; after discussions the motion was amended for approval that the cost not exceed \$1,000 and to make sure black beauty is included in the sealing proposal. Commissioners Jones, Amy, Zieller, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Lockwood in favor, Scarrozzo opposed. The parking lot committee will set a date to meet after November 15th to discuss the total parking lot renovations project.
- Linda reported that she spoke to Tina Gomes from the City Mayors office regarding LoCIP funds toward the parking lot replacement. She recommends we submit a letter for consideration for the funds. She states we should go on record for what the project entails and then wait a couple of months and see what happens with the State to see what the City may receive. Typically funds are allocated in March of each year.

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Lockwood and seconded by Comm. Alderman at 7:30 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding; 1) Personnel – volunteer stipends; pursuant to Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A) and Section 1-225(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended. In attendance at the Executive Session were Commissioners Jones, Amy, Zieller, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Lockwood, and FDA Linda DeManche.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Alderman @ 8:19 p.m., all in favor.

-Comm. Lockwood made a **MOTION** that we solicit input from the entire membership on the Chief evaluation and not just the Officer core and have it be returned by November 29th seconded by Scarrozzo, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:22 pm by Commissioner Lockwood and seconded by Commissioner Amy. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator as Recording Secretary