



COMMISSION MEETING

December 13, 2016

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on December 13, 2016. Chairman Jones opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Amy, Zieller, Bysiewicz, Scarrozzo, and Lockwood. Commissioner Bysiewicz arrived @ 6:43 pm and Commissioners Williams, Alderman and Augeri were absent.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, Asst. Chief (AC) Joseph Passamano, FDA Linda DeManche and Ross Andrew, Jr.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Lockwood seconded by Comm. Amy it was approved to waive the reading of the November 8, 2016 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as written, all in favor.

-The bills for November 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. Scarrozzo, all in favor.

Tax Collectors Report

-The Commission reviewed November'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 Amy 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 \$ 96.73, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

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

Chief's Report

-All four probationary members in the FFI class passed their practicals and the written is scheduled for next week.

-Two members passed their CDL practical test on December 6th; the three that tested on December 13th did not. Another test date has been set with DMV for January 4th. There was no charge for the Penske truck used on 12/13.

-Westfield was given a SKED extrication device for rescues (low angle/slope angle/confined space) after completion of their rope class from Middletown Fire. It is missing some components and to make it fully functional the Chief is looking to purchase the parts needed and the bag to keep it in for an amount of \$316.19. Middletown Fire had three and it was not being utilized and gave it to Westfield. There is no shelf life on the device and it does not need to be certified. All the ropes will be replaced. A new one would cost \$700. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Lockwood it was approved to buy the necessary parts, all in favor.

-The Departments Christmas party is scheduled for December 27th.

-This year Westfield has four adopt-a-families. The Department voted to allocate \$100 per child, per family. Local businesses have been solicited to see if they will contribute. The delivery date has not been set as of yet.

-Westfield will host and the Chief will proctor the EVT examinations in 2017. The Nationwide testing dates are June 10th and October 14th this year.

-The Department held a community fire safety and CPR event for Old Farms at the station. Unfortunately there was not a great turnout of residents. The plan is to host one for Tuscany Hills in the spring.

-As a result of the Officers meeting the Officers are asking for a new gear washer. AC Passamano stated the present washer shows signs of mold and is not washing the gear well. Various quotes were presented. The washer they are interested in cost \$6,275 and will wash 2 sets of gear at a time and should be able to handle washing the various lengths of rope.

The recently purchased gear solvent will work in this machine. The details of the warranty are unclear so AC Passamano will get more information. Plumbing and electrical is not included and will need to be factored in. The District applied for a grant thru the AFG program for a gear washer and dryer for the last three years and was unsuccessful. Due to the evidence of mold in the current machine the need to replace the machine is necessary. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved to purchase a Gear Washer for a total of \$7,275 which included the machine and the necessary plumbing and electrical work; the monies will be appropriated from the unassigned fund balance left from FY 2015/16, all in favor.

-AC Passamano is requesting that he and Captain Lubee be able to attend the Command Officer Boot Camp Conference on May 16th thru the 18th in Florida. The cost for the conference is \$175 per member but Westfield has one seat available from last year. Additionally there would be flights, hotel accommodations and meal allowances. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved for Passamano and Lubee to attend; Linda will make the flight arrangements; reserve the accommodations; the meal allowance is not to exceed \$75 per day per person (no alcohol); the cost will be carried under the Chief's training budget at this point, all in favor.

-Comm. Scarrozzo asked the Chief for an update regarding the HazMat response team for Middletown. The Chief reported we will be covered by Hartford Regional and that is who Middletown Fire went with as well.

-The Departments Officer meeting minutes for December were presented.

-The Chief would like to continue with the Holiday shift sign-up for members to cover the Christmas & New Year holiday. Like last year there will be 4 shifts with four members on each shift. The cost will remain the same at \$25 per member/per shift for a total cost of \$400 and will be paid out with the regular pay-pay-call.

-The status of training classes for members is as follows: N. Davis passed the practical for her EMT initial and has scheduled a retest for the written after the 1st of the year. Members Andrew/Balch/Lemay/Silverman has passed their practicals for the FFI class, written exam will follow.

Commissioner(s) Report

-Ross Andrew reported the latest on the Telecommunication meeting. The Mayor has appointed certain people in the administration to be on the money end of the project to keep track of the funding of the \$12 million. Mr. Bartolotta put out a memo to the Chiefs to pick a representative from each Department that would have the authority to make decisions at meetings when decisions have to be made. The first meeting is December 30th. The intent is to award the contract, but the purchase order has not yet been signed. The project time frame is approx. 18 months. There have been discussions about a less expensive hand held radios to save some money. Wayne related to Ross that he is looking into ways to do something for Westfield as far as the paging goes but he has not come up with any answers yet.

-FF Kotowski has successfully passed the Fire Code Inspector class and is now able to perform inspections. The next class will be the Investigation module which runs from 2/22/17-4/5/17. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to appoint Scott Kotowski as Fire Code Inspector, all in favor. A letter will be submitted to the State reflecting this appointment.

-It was reported the District's waiver letter was approved by State of CT/OPM for the 2017 Municipal Grants-in-Aid and we are scheduled to receive \$10,801.00. The funds are dispersed annually and are expected to be received prior to June 30, 2017.

-The audit report for fiscal year end June 30, 2016 has been completed and reports are available in hard copy or electronic version. Commissioners Amy requested it be emailed to him. A copy is also on file with the Town Clerks office.

-On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Amy it was approved to appropriate \$5,600 from the unassigned fund balance to AC #5033 Printing/Processing service – Tax Collectors Expense, all in favor. This amount represents the

estimated cost for the 2016/2017 expense of MV & MV Supplemental tax bills that was not carried in the budget due to the fact that the State's decision on the Statute language for the motor vehicle (MV) tax cap was finalized after the budget was approved.

-The District insurance agent, VFIS is asking if Westfield will host a Emergency Vehicle Driver Training Instructor class on May 4th and 5th. Unless VFIS is able to move the dates the Board will have to say no as this is the day before the Department's Chicken BBQ fundraiser and a lot of preparation is going on during those days.

-On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to follow the past practice of giving the employees a holiday bonus in the amount of \$200 for the 9 permanent employees and \$100 for the 2 part-time employee, all in favor.

-Commissioner elections are coming up in February at the annual meeting. Commissioner's Alderman, Amy and Scarrozzo are up for re-election. Legal notices were put in the Press & Courant with a return date of January 17th for letters of interest.

-Dana is requesting an account be set-up at Tractor Supply on Newfield Street. On a **MOTION** by Zieller and seconded by Amy Linda will fill out an application for a credit card, all in favor. Statements will be included with the Commission Reports.

-FM Higgins is requesting to dispose of the original Aetna building plans/specs from back in the 70's given the building is no longer there. He will keep any tank removal or relevant site documents. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Lockwood it was approved to dispose of the Aetna plans as well as any other plans & specs from old projects that the Fire Marshal deems necessary, all in favor.

-CT adopted "ban the box" legislation effective 1/1/17 where employers can no longer ask prospective employees prior arrests, criminal charge or convictions on an initial employment application (some exceptions apply). Linda informed the Board the Districts employment application as well as the Departments Volunteer membership application will need to be revised. The Chief had some concerns as they generally do run a background checks on new members and he wonders if the fire service would be exempt as they are medical providers (R1) and retain keys to most businesses in the District. Linda stated the law doesn't say you can't ever ask for criminal records but it has to be after the initial hiring step. Linda suggests a legal opinion be obtained as to how this impacts Westfield. Comm. Lockwood will contact the City Attorney to see if they have an answer to this question.

-The parking lot replacement committee will meet some time after the first of the year and decide on the scope of the project so specific quotes can be obtained to report back to the Board.

-The evaluations on the three Chief Officers are set for December 20th with a tentative time of 5:30.

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Lockwood and seconded by Comm. Amy at 7:26 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding; 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, Scarrozzo, Lockwood, and FDA Linda DeManche.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Zieller @ 8:35 p.m., all in favor.

-With the successful completion of his EMT certification it was approved on a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Amy to make Joshua Leary a permanent full-time FF with all applicable benefits, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Zieller it was approved to; 1) increase the following pay-per-call rates to:

Chief Officers - \$16.00 per call / Line Officers - \$14.00 per call / Active Members - \$12.00 per call effective January 1, 2017 and; 2) implement an Officer Duty night stipend of \$24.00 per shift effective January 1, 2017, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:37 pm by Commissioner Lockwood and seconded by Commissioner Bysiewicz. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator as Recording Secretary