



COMMISSION MEETING

February 7, 2017

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on January 10, 2017. Chairman Jones opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Amy, Williams, Zieller, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Lockwood and Augeri. Commissioner Bysiewicz was absent.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, FDA Linda DeManche and Tax Collector Jean Newman.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Scarrozzo seconded by Comm. Lockwood it was approved to waive the reading of the January 10, 2017 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as amended, all in favor.

-The bills for January 2017, including the detailed Liberty & Lowes statement were reviewed; after all questions were answered the bills were approved on a **MOTION** by Comm. Amy and seconded by Comm. Zieller, all in favor.

Tax Collectors Report

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

-On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Amy it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$ 632.04, all in favor.

-Pursuant to CT State Statute taxpayers are no longer eligible to request a tax refund after three years from when it was due to be paid. Based on the Statute the Tax Collector would like to write off an amount of \$5,180.71 which represents the credit balances prior to 2013. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Zieller it was approved to remove this amount from the books.

-On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved to forward the delinquent accounts that meet the criteria over to the attorney; no more monies will be accepted in the tax office on the accounts turned over for collection, all in favor.

-Jean wanted to be upfront with the Board and let them know that she is concerned about her position and duties in the Tax office. It appears for fiscal year 2017/18 the District may not be collecting for motor vehicle (MV) taxes due to the mill rate cap set by the State. If that is the case she would be responsible for collecting the real estate and the last three years of delinquent MV taxes unless other duties can be assigned to her. The Board stated there have been no discussions on staffing changes in the tax office; they are pleased with her performance and will take her concerns under advisement.

Fire Marshal's Report

-The Fire Marshal's (FM) monthly report for January was distributed and accepted on a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Amy, all in favor. Additionally, the Annual Fire Marshal's Report for 2016 was presented and available for review by the Board

Chief's Report

-The truck committee met with two vendors thus far. They have taken copies of what the Department is interested in.

-The Cromwell FD's banquet is February 25th and Westfield will be covering from 6 pm to midnight.

- The Third Church on Miner Street is having a weekend carnival in October. They are asking if the WVFD is interested in running a food booth. The Chief wanted to let the Board know but they are going to take a vote from the membership to see if they are interested in working it. The Board's agreed it was up to the membership but they think it would be a community event. They recommend that if the Dept. moves forward to keep the food selection simple.
- The Chief reported he received an anonymous letter regarding a Facebook post that one of the members had put on their own personal page regarding the women's march. The letter was also sent to the City and the Mayor's office is looking for a response. The letter contained only a first name, no last name, address or phone number to contact. The Chief discussed the matter with the Officer's and at the monthly meeting will suggest members be mindful of derogatory comments that could be linked back to the Firehouse as they are members and Facebook followers of WVFD.
- A recruitment effort is being made by sending out another mailing to Certified EMT & EMR's in the District explaining some of the benefits of joining the Department.
- Since the MCI call the Dept. responded to last month the Chief would like to purchase triage command vests (\$450) & identification flags (\$210) from Common Cents Supply. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to purchase, all in favor.
- It was reported the Common Cents Supply had a left over model of a full EMS training manikin discounted to \$525 which will be good to use in training classes, etc. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to purchase with the funds coming out of the Chief's training budget, all in favor.
- Comm. Scarrozzo has suggested Chief Balch readdress the dual response coverage areas between Middletown and Westfield Fire to see if it is necessary to have both companies roll on every incident or whether an agreement can be reached to cancel either Dept. en route if additional resources are not required. Chief Balch will contact Chief Kronenberger.
- The status of training classes for members is as follows: N. Davis is scheduled to retest for the EMT written on February 14th. FFI class – Silverman passed and is FFI certified; Balch is retesting on HazMat Ops only and Lemay is taking a complete retest, both are scheduled to test February 23rd
- The 2017 Officer Responsibilities was presented.
- The Departments Officer meeting minutes for February was presented.

Commissioner(s) Report

- Last month the Board approved the purchase of a parcel of land below the side parking lot, identified as Lot 103. For the Board members that were not present last month Comm. Amy summarized the discussions on the transaction. There seems to be some uncertainty if the City has any responsibility for repair work if the culvert fails. The City does have an easement to get to the Lot. The legal fees will be split with the seller. A **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Williams is to appropriate the cost of the land (\$15,000) and legal fees from the unassigned fund balance to AC #5013/Contingency; Comm. Jones, Amy, Williams, Zieller, Alderman and Augeri are in favor; Comm. Lockwood and Scarrozzo are opposed. Comm. Scarrozzo feels at this point and time it is not worth spending \$15,000, it doesn't do anything for the taxpayers and is just a piece of swamp land.
- The spring tax collector's certification course has an opening for Cindy to attend the CCMC 1 class. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller it was approved for her to attend, all in favor.
- It was reported that employee's Lube and Kotowski achieved perfect attendance in 2016 and were each given an additional personal day in 2017.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Lockwood it was approved for FM Higgins and DFM Holmes and Coco to attend the CT Fire Marshal's annual conference in March.
- Scott Kotowski is requesting to attend Advanced Fire Investigation School at the CT Fire Academy. The class runs a week in April and a week in May for cost of \$375. Comm. Scarrozzo stated it is a very good class and he feels it will be beneficial as he concludes his current Fire Marshal schooling course. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved for him to attend, all in favor.

-The City's 2016 Grand List (G/L) was released from the Tax Assessor's office. Westfield had a decrease of .01 over last year's 2015 G/L. However, the G/L lists the Net Total *excluding* Motor Vehicles (MV) which then results in the District experiencing an approximate 10% decrease over the 2015 G/L, unless they are able to recoup the MV revenue from the State. Linda spoke to Damon, the City Tax Assessor and he related that the decrease for Westfield was mostly due to the Aetna Data Center processing out approx. 18 million in computers. FedEx was given a distressed real estate abatement which translates to the City abating 40%, the State will reimburse 40% and the taxpayer will pay 20%; he believes it is a 6 or 7 year abatement. The property is still under construction and will go on the tax roll in phases until completion.

-The District's property & casualty renews in July. The Wilcox & Reynolds agency would like to offer a quote this year thru the ESIP insurance program. The Board is interested in a competitive quote for the renewal period.

-The parking lot replacement committee will hold off for another month or so before scheduling a meeting to discuss the project.

-The new gear washer extractor was delivered and installed on February 6th; the plumbing is finished and the remaining electrical will be completed on February 8th. Linda had previously emailed the Board information regarding the detergent auto feeder for the machine. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Williams it was approved to purchase the auto feeder in the amount of \$390 and will be funded in the same manner as the gear washer, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Scarrozzo the monthly meeting was adjourned @ 7:32 pm to attend the Annual Meeting scheduled for 8:00 pm

On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Scarrozzo the Board reconvened @ 8:36 pm after the conclusion of the Annual Meeting. Brenda White joined the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Commissioner Amy for his service, he has been a good addition to the group and he will be missed.

The following nominations and **MOTIONS** were made:

Comm. Augeri nominates Fred Jones as Chairman seconded by Williams;

Comm. Augeri nominates John Lockwood as Vice Chairman seconded by Scarrozzo;

Comm. Lockwood nominated Richard Williams as Secretary seconded by Augeri; all candidates accept nominations, all in favor.

-Commissioners Jones, Bysiewicz, Lockwood, Augeri and White will serve on the Budget Committee.

-Commissioners Jones, Alderman and Lockwood volunteered to serve on the Service Recognition Committee along with the Departments Chief & Treasurer.

-On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Augeri it was approved to remove E. Greg Amy and add John P. Lockwood to the following accounts: 1) Signature Card & Agreement at Liberty Bank for the accounts ending in 1976 and 6959; 2) the District's investment accounts at Morgan Stanley & Wells Fargo; 3) CT STIF account ending in 0270; and 4) Empire Bank, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:41 pm by Commissioner Scarrozzo and seconded by Commissioner Lockwood. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator as Recording Secretary