



COMMISSION MEETING

May 9, 2017

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on May 9, 2017. Chairman Jones opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Lockwood, Williams, Zieller, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Augeri and White. Commissioners Bysiewicz arrived at 6:43 pm.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, Deputy Chief (DC) Darrell Ponzio, Tax Collector Jean Newman, FDA Linda DeManche and Scott & Lindsey Kotowski.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Lockwood seconded by Comm. Scarrozzo it was approved to waive the reading of the April 11, 2017 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as written, all in favor.
- The bills for April 2017, including the detailed Liberty & Lowes statement were reviewed; after all questions were answered the bills were approved on a **MOTION** by Comm. Zieller and seconded by Comm. Scarrozzo, all in favor.

Tax Collectors Report

-The Commission reviewed April'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 White it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$ 316.72, all in favor.
-The Tax Collectors request to suspend the 2012 uncollectible motor vehicle and supplemental motor vehicle taxes in the amount of \$4,147.20 (total tax & interest *projected* thru 5/31/17), was approved on a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

-The Fire Marshal's (FM) monthly report for April was distributed and accepted on a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Alderman, all in favor.
-Scott Kotowski completed his Fire Marshal training and earned his State of Connecticut Fire Marshal Certification certificate. Chairman Jones read an Oath of Office and swore Scott into his new position of Deputy Fire Marshal/ Firefighter/EMT. The Board members congratulated him on his excellent test scores and on a job well done. Kotowski thanked the District and Commissioners for giving him this opportunity in this new position.

Chief's Report

-The Chief reported the rescue rope is in; all the hardware has come in except for the MPD and the TL-9 Stabilizer is on order.
-A Scott Air-Pak update with Middletown was done. DC Passamano and Captain Lube met with Middletown Fire to see how they liked the new air-paks. They love them, they are a bit heavier but the packs wear more comfortably.
-The Department has their live burn scheduled for June 24th and September 30th. The house on Middle Street on the FedEx property will be utilized for training.

- Some Class A hardware needs to be updated due to Officer Position changes and some Class B's need to be ordered.
- The Chief reported the repelling harnesses need to be replaced due to OSHA & NFPA guidelines. They range anywhere from \$350 to \$500. As these harnesses have already passed the life expectancy the Board is recommending they be taken out of service and the new ones ordered. On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by White it was approved to order the 8 new body harness from Rock n' Rescue ASAP, all in favor.
- DC Ponzio reported that the truck committee is meeting this evening after the budget meeting. They are moving slowly but they have a new set of drawings that is a close approximation of what they think they want to do. The next step would be to work with some potential suppliers to build out the RFP. They think they are pretty close on what they want the truck is to be like in terms of hose load, tank size, pump size, etc.
- The Department is in the process of doing fit testing on its members. The Dept. has owned the machine for quite a while, since approx. 2000. They seem to be having some issues with the results and the device may require maintenance and/or replacement. A new fit testing machine is approx. \$12,000. The Chief will report back on the status.
- DC Ponzio reported that the Department is presently working with nine Officers due to the resignation of Scott Kotowski. It was decided not to fill the vacancy and to continue the remainder of the year with the present officers.
- On a **MOTION** by Zieller and seconded by Williams it was approved to pay for the tumbler mugs that were distributed as a gift at the banquet out of the Department Banquet line item in the amount of \$721.00, all in favor.
- The status of training classes for members is as follows: Rescue Tech Vehicle I-II class – Kennedy & Kloc passed and are awaiting certificates; FFI class - Lemay is scheduled to re-test on Haz-Mat only; FFII – class is still in progress for member O. Andrew; EMT Initial - N. Davis still needs to schedule a retest for the EMT written, not sure on the date; EMR Initial – 6 members have completed the class and tested on May 7th, they are awaiting results.
- The Department's Officer meeting minutes for May was presented.

Commissioner(s) Report

- The District is still waiting to hear news on their 2016 AFG application. A grant writer specialist was assigned and they requested confirmation of payment for the grant writer fee. No award has been announced but it is positive news that the application is being reviewed.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller it was approved to pay the \$30 application fee for Scott Kotowski to test for a Fire Investigator CT Certification, all in favor.
- On a **MOTION** by Lockwood and seconded by Zieller it was approved to issue a District cell phone to DFM Kotowski, all in favor.
- The final proposed budget was presented to all those in attendance.
- The Chairman reviewed each of the categories. He reported that the insurance renewal numbers have still not been finalized. The District sought a competitive quote on the commercial package and it has not been finalized yet. The medical insurance on the current ConnectiCare policy went up 24% so it appears the District will be switching to Anthem BCBS. The employee's health insurance cost share contribution was calculated at a 1/2% increase, it would be going from 10% to 10 1/2%. The budget carries a 3% salary increase for all employees. The salary subcategories changed somewhat; a Deputy Fire Marshal position was added therefore reducing the Firefighter category. The volunteer salary category increased due to some new incentives and an increase in stipends. The CNR category increased due to the long term plan for replacing two more fire apparatus over the next 5 to 8 years so more was allocated into that line item. With respect to the Fire Dept. – Other category Comm. Scarrozzo wondered if it has ever been brought up to split the cost of the banquet with the Department. Comm. Lockwood recalls that this banquet was started as a way for the District to thank the spouses and significant others for the time and effort they are away from their families throughout the year. In the summary of revenue a State MV Grant was carried which would be paid by the State for the car tax cap offset. Due to this car tax cap which was set by the State, the District will not be able to bill for motor vehicle taxes.

- The Chairman asked if there were any further questions regarding the budget proposal; otherwise he would enter a motion of acceptance. On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved to accept the proposed budget of \$1,556,258 and set a mill rate of 1.550, all in favor - none opposed.
- The Mayor sent a letter to the District regarding the re-appointment of Ross Andrew, Jr. to the Public Safety and Telecommunications Commission. The Board is in favor of Ross continuing to represent Westfield Fire.
- Dana is proposing to start painting the inside of the North Bay. The color scheme proposed is a gray epoxy paint for the lower half and a red acrylic paint for the upper half of the walls. Color samples were shown. The estimated cost for the paint is approx. \$545. He intends to get started this spring. Next year's budget carries money to do the remaining indoor areas after July.
- The current lawn mower is in need of replacement. Dana has been looking a Turf Tracer eXmark 52" walk-behind mower. Cofield's Power Equipment has the State bid. The Board will see where the budget stands next month to see if it is something that can be purchased this fiscal year.
- The District is having an off-site shredding event to dispose of the appropriate tax collector and treasurer records as allowed by the State retention schedule. The exact date is to be determined. The Chairman is offering the Board members, employees and volunteer members to participate if they so wish.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller it was approved to renew the employee's assistance program with The Lexington Group in the amount of \$1,068.48, all in favor.
- AC Passamano and Captain Jason Lube will be attending the Command Officer Boot Camp conference in Pensacola, Florida next week. Linda will complete a credit card authorization form for the cost of the hotel and meals while that are there.
- The Chief was asked to check on the status of the Rescue Core certificates for the members that took the course thru the Middlesex County Fire School. It is the hope to have those on file at the CT Fire Academy so members do not run into obstacles taking subsequent rescue classes that require the core class as a prerequisite.
- The daytime staff is required to attend either one of the live burn trainings that are scheduled in June or September.

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Williams and seconded by Comm. White at 7:31 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel and EMS Training Stipend; 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, Lockwood, Williams, Zieller, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Augeri, White, Chief Balch and DC Ponzio and FDA Linda DeManche.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Williams seconded by Comm. Augeri @ 7:49 p.m., all in favor.

A **MOTION** was made by Lockwood and seconded by White to form a committee consisting of Jones, Lockwood, Augeri, White and Chief Balch to meet with Harold Holmes with respect to an EMS Training Instructor stipend. Information will be brought back to the Board at the next meeting, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Lockwood the monthly meeting was adjourned @ 7:50 pm to attend the Budget Meeting scheduled for 8:00 pm.

On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Bysiewicz the Board reconvened @ 8:31 pm after the conclusion of the Budget Meeting.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:32 pm by Commissioner Lockwood and seconded by Commissioner Augeri. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary