



COMMISSION MEETING

April 10, 2018

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on April 10, 2018. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Scarrozzo, White (Brenda), Bysiewicz, Zieller, Alderman, Peterson, White (Brian). Commissioner Bysiewicz arrived at 6:40 pm and Commissioner Augeri was absent.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, FDA Linda DeManche, Mechanic Dana Andrew.

-The Chairman wished to welcome new Board members Brian White, David Peterson and himself. He thanked the Board members for their trust in electing him Chairman this year; he hopes to continue the great work. Comm. Zieller said it was good to have him back.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Scarrozzo and seconded by Comm. Zieller it was approved to waive the reading of the February 6, 2018 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as written, all in favor.

- The bills for February & March, including the detailed Liberty & Lowes statement were reviewed. Comm. Scarrozzo inquired about the bill for Plummer Landscaping and whether this came before the Board for approval. Linda explained it was for the lawn fertilization program; the amount was carried in the 2017/2018 budget and a purchase order was written and signed. Before renewing again Comm. Scarrozzo would like it to come before the Board for approval. With all questions answered the bills were approved on a **MOTION** by Comm. Zieller and seconded by Comm. Scarrozzo, all in favor.

Tax Collectors Report

-The February & March Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri was reviewed. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller the reports were approved, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo 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 \$ 1,341.69, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

-The Fire Marshal's (FM) monthly reports for February & March were distributed and accepted on a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Brenda White, all in favor.

Chief's Report

-They are working on replacing and updating Officer shirts and working on Class B uniforms for all the new members.

-The FFI class that the Department is hosting is going well, there are 5 WFD members.

-The EMT refresher is done, all but one passed the re-cert but he will be re-taking the written again.

-The Department's annual chicken BBQ is scheduled for May 5th.

-The Department wanted to thank the Commission for the annual banquet, everyone had a good time.

- The smart board is upstairs and is installed. The Department is requesting the District pay for the installation charge of \$595. The total for the whole project was \$6,055 and was paid for out of the fund drive money and will be used for Department training. On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Brenda White it was approved to reimburse the Department for the installation, all in favor. As this is attached to the interior it will go under physical plant, equipment repairs.
- The Chief reported various training that is coming up in the future – Live burn, bail-out, RIT and elevator training. The elevator training is scheduled for June 23rd & 24th, there is limited space for the hands-on session on the second day. The Board encourages the daytime staff to participate in this training event and will be paid their regular wages.
- They are doing a bail-out train the trainer on a Friday & Saturday – they are working out dates now.
- Life Star is scheduled on June 19th at 7:00 pm for those who wish to see this training event.
- It was reported that LT. Dan Lubees feels it may not be appropriate for him to attend Command Officer Boot Camp in May as he is in the process of looking for a house that is out of the District limits and may be leaving the Department. As there will only be a minimal refund and it is not certain at this point that he is moving the Board still supports him going if he still wants to. Linda stated that there was a change this year on conference fees. If you book a spot on or before October the fee is \$250; after that it goes to \$450. If the Department wishes to continue sending LT's it would be beneficial to make that decision to hold a spot before October, the name of the specific member can always be added later. Due to the expenses involved in attending the COB conference in Florida (conference fees, flights, accommodations, meals, etc.) it was suggested that members' interested in attending future conferences put up a deposit. On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved to require a \$200 deposit for attending future COB conferences and it will be refunded if the members attends, all in favor.
- Comm. Scarrozzo asked the Chief for an update on any FF injuries resulting from the Town Colony condo fire. The Chief said he had not heard of any injuries. Scarrozzo asked if the Chief responded to the fire, which he did not as he was working. He did not respond after work but rather came to the station and ran medical calls. Comm. Scarrozzo stated he would like to see the Chief on scene whenever possible, even if after work.
- The Board recognizes that Deputy Chief Ponzio as the Departments public information officer (PIO) and the Chief can also take that role but they would like to recommend that in the Chief's absence daytime Lt. Andrew and DFM Kotowski can take on that role when necessary in the Chief's absence.
- The 1st quarter pay-per-call (PPC) percentages were presented.
- The EMS Rotation scheduling procedure required a change in January. Two of the current Lieutenants are not EMS certified so when they are scheduled for a duty night two EMS members are now scheduled to cover the shift. This will add some additional cost to the program for the balance of the fiscal year (approx. \$900) as there is a \$25 stipend per member for each EMS shift. The Chief stated there is an EMS training course scheduled for July and both LTs are seeking EMS certification.
- The Department's Officer meeting minutes for March & April were presented.

Commissioner(s) Report

- On a **MOTION** by Brian White seconded by Peterson it was approved for Dana to have the 20+ year old tool box top that is stored in the maintenance area, all in favor.
- The truck committee made their final recommendation to the Board for replacement of Truck #5 and has the final price for the apparatus. The Chief and Dana Andrew were asked if this pumper recommendation is what the truck committee wants to buy and if the specifications are inclusive, both stated yes this was the Committee's recommendation. Linda stated interest rates were quoted with a couple of lenders for the proposed financing. The following details were related: 1) CFA pumper on a 4-door Gladiator purchased from Custom Fire Apparatus, Inc., Osceola, Wisconsin; 2) the contract price would be \$708,911 which includes the \$2,000 in HGAC Program fees, delivery to the fire station and excludes gold leaf lettering; 3) the cost for a performance bond is \$10,633 if one is required; 4) there is a pre-payment discount of \$22,309 available if the District elects to pay in full; 5) apparatus shall be completed & ready for delivery within 10 months of the signed contract date. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved to enter into a contract with Custom Fire Apparatus, Inc. and to issue a purchase order for

\$719,544 for the purchase of the new pumper, all in favor. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo seconded by Bysiewicz the following was approved; 1) the District will enter into an agreement with Tax Exempt Leasing financing approx. \$435,000 for a term of 7 years at a rate of 3.68%; 2) the balance of the contract (approx. \$262,235) will be paid to Custom Fire from the District funds allocated in the CNR Fire Apparatus Replacement line item; 3) funds for the additional equipment needed and gold leaf lettering (approx. \$34,575) will be paid from the CNR Fire Apparatus Replacement fund, all in favor. The Chief estimates 3 inspection visits to Wisconsin over the course of the contract, those costs have not been determined at this point.

-Dana informed the Board he would like to remove the large pine tree on the corner of the District's property limits and 703 East Street. The tree is starting to die and Dana would like to remove it before there is an issue, he will talk to the owners of 703 East St.

-Linda sent out letters to the congressional contacts requesting letters of support for Westfield's 2017 AFG application.

-On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved to renew the Annual Grant Service package for 2018 with First Responders Grants in the amount of \$1,500, all in favor. The annual fee did increase by \$200 but with the renewal we will receive a 6-month free trial subscription for GrantFinder, a comprehensive electronic database tool allowing us to search and apply for grants for the fire department.

-FEMA will be conducting a desk-based financial monitoring activity of Westfield's 2016 AFG grant, this information is submitted electronically for review and is due on or about May 2nd.

-The Chief stated he has not heard any update on the Department's application to the Gary Sinise Foundation.

-AR Mazzotta is still searching for candidates to fill the open Treasurer position. Feedback from some applicants has been about the amount of limited hours for the position.

-The CCMC III that Cindy was enrolled in was canceled due to low enrollment. She will look to take that class again the Fall.

-On a **MOTION** by Zieller and seconded by Brenda White it was approved to re-appoint Sandra E. Welwood LLC, Danbury, CT to complete the audit for the fiscal year end of June 30, 2018 for the cost of \$5,800 (NTE), all in favor.

-It was reported that Comcast responded to the letter of complaint regarding Westfield's business cable price increase and loss of their municipal discount. Comcast will honor the discount and pro-rated the credit back to November 2017 when the increase occurred.

-It was reported the agent handling the District's investment account at Morgan Stanley has left and is now with Raymond James. The new agent for Morgan Stanley as well as the representative for Raymond James has expressed interest in meeting with some Board members to discuss the portfolio and get a better understanding of the goals for the account. Linda will try and arrange something soon.

-The District received a letter from SunTrust Equipment Finance & Leasing Corp, the lender for the 2015 Rescue. The letter informed us of an adjustment to the interest rate for our tax-exempt lease. Due to the corporate tax rate being reduced on 1/1/18 there is provision in the contract addressing the effect of a reduction which results in an increase to the interest rate from 2.99% to 3.63%. This increase results in an increase of \$1,576.55 in the annual payment effective on 8/1/18 for the remainder of the note. (7 years)

-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 was submitted requesting to use the funds towards their Capital Non-Recurring Reserve (CNR) fund like in years past. The letter also states these funds may or may not be available for distribution, dependent on State budget restrictions.

-On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller it was approved to "sponsor a flag" which will be displayed in downtown Middletown for a cost of \$25 thru the Chamber of Commerce, all in favor.

-The Board was presented with a draft of the 2018-2019 proposed budget prepared by the budget committee. There is still one more committee meeting left but they wanted the entire Board to see the working draft so any questions could be addressed. They are still waiting on insurance premium estimates. One of the biggest increases is in the CNR Apparatus fund. A line item was added for the scheduled payment for the new Custom Pumper and putting aside funds for future apparatus replacement.

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Zieller, seconded by Comm. Scarrozzo at 7:50 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: personnel (salaries & HR policy) and legal opinion on tax matters; 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 Amy, Scarrozzo, Brenda White, Bysiewicz, Zieller, Alderman, Peterson and Brian White.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Zieller seconded by Comm. Brenda White @ 8:55 pm, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Alderman it was approved to expend up to \$1,500 in legal fees to investigate some tax matters, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Peterson, it was approved to propose with respect to human resource issues to have some Commissioner volunteers to support and attend personnel meetings (when applicable) with the Administrator, all in favor. Specific Commissioners will be named in the future.

Comm. Bysiewicz stated that for the record the Commission has discussed and is interested in pursuing a potential new work schedule for the daytime fire personnel.

On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Peterson it was approved that the budget committee address employee salaries and bring a final recommendation to the full commission reflected in the budget proposal, all in favor.

Next Budget Committee meeting is set for Tuesday, April 17th @ 5:00 pm.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:58 pm by Commissioner Amy and seconded by Commissioner Brenda White. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary