



## COMMISSION MEETING

August 14, 2018

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on August 14, 2018. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:28 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Scarrozzo, White (Brenda), Zieller, Augeri and Peterson. Commissioner White (Brian) arrived at 6:35 pm; Commissioner Bysiewicz arrived at 6:47 pm. Commissioner Alderman was absent.

Others present were: Chief William Balch, FDA Linda DeManche and Ross Andrew.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Scarrozzo and seconded by Comm. Zieller it was approved to waive the reading of the June 12, 2018 regular meeting minutes and to accept the minutes as written, all in favor.

- The bills for July 2018, 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. Brenda White, all in favor.

### **Tax Collectors Report**

-The June & July Tax Collector reports submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri were reviewed. On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Zieller the reports were approved, all in favor.

- It was reported that the refund amount was unusually high this month due to fact that the escrow file from Core Logic was incomplete resulting in taxpayers receiving bills that were also escrowed; this resulted in double payments received from the taxpayer & the escrow company. On a **MOTION** by Brenda White and seconded by Peterson it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$9,115.95, all in favor.

### **Fire Marshal's Report**

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

### **Chief's Report**

-The Department walk-thru at the new FedEx facility is scheduled for Tuesday, August 21<sup>st</sup> @ 7:00 pm.

-The status of training classes for members is as follows: EMT Initial - O. Andrew has passed the practical's and need to schedule the written; Kloc & Lemay are in the process of doing ride-along training as part of the their accelerated EMT Initial; FF1 – all five members have passed and are now firefighter one certified;

EMR Initial - 11 members took the course, 10 have passed and 1 needs to take the written exam; Q Endorsement: members Silverman & Aronne have passed and now have the Q endorsement on their license.

-The Chief is going to order some new saw blades thru WL Construction; he will order sawzall blades for the Rescue in the amount of \$429.85.

-The Chief reported the Department received the grant from the Gary Sinise Foundation for the replacement of the tank on Westfield 10 in the amount of \$21,564.86. The Chief received confirmation from the Foundation that they will pay the equipment cost directly to the vendors.

- The Chief reported that in the last 3 months they have had 3 Firefighters dropped from the roster due to relocation out of the District and one member was hired by Middletown Fire. LT Kloc just returned from his deployment to Colorado to assist with the forest fires in that area.
- There has been no word from FEMA on the status of the 2017 AFG application for the cardiac compression device.
- The Chief would like to order pink t-shirts in support of breast cancer awareness for the month of October. He would like to order three shirts per daytime staff and one shirt for each of the volunteer members. On a **MOTION** by Brenda White and seconded by Zieller it was approved to purchase those quantities with a max cap of \$750, all in favor. The cost of shirts for the volunteer members will come out of #8577/Misc Dept-Other Expenses.
- The Department is hosting a blood drive on Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 11:00-4:00 sponsored by the American Red Cross.
- During the Department's open house on October 13<sup>th</sup> the Chief & DFM Kotowski will be available for car seat installs. The car seat station is stocked from the Grant program and Kotowski has done at least 6 installs since becoming certified.
- The Chief has reported that the furniture in the center room is starting to show its age and is pretty worn. He would like the Board to keep that on the radar for replacement.
- The Chief presented a quote on a new car 5 that was brought up at the last Commission meeting. He has a quote from Jackson Chevy (Ford couldn't touch it and be comparable) and with the municipal & state discount the price is \$57,755, MHQ comes in at \$9,100 and the cost of EMS supplies is \$3,440. Linda stated that a committee was supposed to be formed to discuss this vehicle.
- The Department picnic is Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> from 4 to 10 pm.
- The Departments banquet is scheduled for Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at Falcon's Pavilion.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Zieller it was proposed to move excess funds in the amount of \$4,500 from the 2017/2018 Chief's budget, line items 8101/Fire Chief's Expense (\$100) & 8104/Turn-out Gear (\$4,400) and move to line item 8111/Physical Plant, Building Repairs in the 2018/2019 budget for the replacement of the first floor men's bathroom partitions; Comm. Amy, Scarrozzo, Brenda White, Zieller, Augeri, Peterson in favor, Comm. Brian White opposed, Bysiewicz abstained; Motion was approved.

### **Commissioner(s) Report**

- The Tax Collector is proposing a switch in vendors for processing credit card payments from Official Payments to Point & Pay. Additionally the tax office would like the Board to consider adding a tax record web hosting service (QSearch) thru QDS, the fee is \$900 annually. This would allow taxpayers to search for their bill amount 24/7. Both City & South Fire have moved to Point & Pay. More information needs to be obtained and will be reported back for the Board's consideration.
- On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Brenda White it was approved to add Karen Hebert to the Signature Card & Agreement at Liberty Bank for the accounts ending 1976 and 6959, also to the CT Short Term Investment Account ending in 0270, all in favor.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Augeri it was approved for Josh Leary to take the CT Fire Academy's Aerial Ops class being hosted at South Fire, for a cost of \$320, all in favor.
- On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Brenda White it was approved for Art Higgins to be reimbursed the \$200 for the EMT Refresher course that he passed, all in favor.
- Linda presented for the Board's consideration a Leave Sharing/Donation Policy for sick time. The Board was in favor of the idea but requested more information and a draft of some general guidelines for their review.
- On a **MOTION** by Brenda White and seconded by Bysiewicz the following was approved; 1) the per diem rate will increase from \$19 to \$20 per hour effective 8/14/2018; 2) for the paid employees – at the end of the calendar year the District will pay out unused vacation days up to 8 days without effecting the 2 week rollover.

-Linda reported that the investment portfolio with Morgan Stanley has been transferred to Raymond James (RJ) Financial. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Peterson the following was approved; 1) give the RJ agent the go ahead to proceed with the investment strategy as presented to the sub-committee; 2) to liquidate assets from the Liberty Bank Overnight Investment to RJ via an ACH transfer, maintaining approx. \$450,000 for cash flow in the Liberty account, all in favor. The Board would like the RJ agent to meet with the investment sub-committee on a quarterly basis to review strategies.

-It was reported that Westfield received a member's equity distribution check from CIRMA in the amount \$1,826, this will be applied against the existing workers compensation budget.

-After the District's 2018 contribution to the SAT plan there were enough funds for Hometown to recommend an investment opportunity for an annuity purchase in the amount of \$100,000 thru American National Life. A penalty free withdrawal of \$60,000 will be taken from the existing First Symetra annuity contracts and the remaining \$40,000 is available from the annual contribution. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Peterson it was approved to move forward with the annuity as outlined above and to name E. Gregory Amy the annuitant and to make Comm. Amy, Scarrozzo & Brenda White the trustees of this investment, all in favor.

-The sub-committee members for the proposed new employee schedule are Commissioners Amy, Scarrozzo, Brenda White, Bysiewicz, Brian White and Peterson. A meeting date and time to be determined

-The sub-committee members for the DC vehicle are Commissioners Amy, Scarrozzo, Bysiewicz, Brian White and Peterson. A meeting date and time to be determined.

-FedEx grand opening is scheduled for Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> – Commission should get an email invite.

-Andrew & Passamano visited Custom Fire in June for a pre-build conference. Custom is waiting for the cab & chassis to come in. The next inspection will probably be in November.

-The Department's training Smart Board requires a dedicated PC for the software installation. DC Ponzio donated a PC, keyboard, mouse, etc. On a **MOTION** by Augeri and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved for Telserv to update the PC to Microsoft Pro and there will be approx. two hours of engineer time for a total cost of \$299, all in favor.

-The 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter pay-per-call percentages were presented for review.

-The Department's Officer meeting minutes for July & August were presented.

-Chairman Amy presented for the Board's consideration the idea of replacing the underground storage tanks (UST) with above ground tanks sooner rather than later. He stated with insurance and various testing costs over the remainder of the UST's seven years (est. at \$30,000) it may more sense to replace them sooner and is suggesting hard costs be obtained. Comm. Bysiewicz says the cost could be explored but feels you are throwing away the remainder of the 7 year life span on the current tanks. Linda was asked to contact United Concrete to get an updated quote.

-Comm. Brenda White wanted to discuss with the Board the property identified as Town Place Apartments. Of the seven building, 4 complete buildings and half of one of the buildings is within Westfield Fire's boundaries, the remaining buildings are part of the City Fire District. The Westfield FMO has been inspecting all the buildings annually and she feels this could be a liability issue. A letter will be drafted to Middletown Fire stating what buildings Westfield will be responsible for moving forward and suggest the Fire Marshal Office's work together on future inspections.

-It was reported that Middle Street LLC sent a letter dated July 25<sup>th</sup> to the Administrator stating they are protesting the assessment as shown on the 2018 tax bill. The letter accompanied payment for their real estate taxes based on the net assessment pursuant to their abatement agreement with the City of Middletown.

-Comm. Brenda White asked the Chief for WFD's live burn on June 16<sup>th</sup> who covered Westfield's medicals. He stated two WFD members stayed back to cover. She asked if there was a reason why Middletown Fire didn't come out to cover us in station. The Chief stated it was cheaper, it's the end of the budget year and they had spent a lot on OT so they were just covering the fire calls. They have come out to cover in the past and typically do for the live burn in the Fall.

### **Telecommunication Committee**

-Ross Andrew reported stated the public service telecommunication committee does not meet during the summer months so he has no current update. He knows things are still moving forward and they are still striving to be ready around Thanksgiving.

**MOTION** to go into Executive Session by Comm. Peterson, seconded by Comm. Zieller at 8:21 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Legal issue on tax abatement matter; 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, Augeri, Peterson, Brian White, Chief Balch and FDA Linda DeManche

**MOTION** to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Peterson seconded by Comm. Augeri @ 8:40 pm, all in favor.

Chairman Amy stated that the Westfield Fire Commission agrees to handle all delinquent tax accounts using standard protocol including 1125 Middle Street.

**MOTION** to adjourn @ 8:42 pm by Comm. Scarrozzo and seconded by Comm. Brenda White. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche  
Fire District Administrator  
as Recording Secretary