

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

Call to Order: Chairman Riso called the meeting to order at 1904 hours. A quorum was present.

1. Roll Call

Commissioners Thomas Riso, Kevin McGrath, Richard Smith, Joseph Weber, Aaron Sanner, and William A. Brennan. Also present were Acting Chief Robert Healey, Union President Michael Dunn, and Union Vice President Todd Ricci.

Commissioner Howard Stein was excused.

2. Public Statements limited to the function of the Board of Fire Commissioners:
None.

3. Swearing In:
None.

4. Consideration of Minutes:

Regular Meeting - January 15, 2013

Commissioners Smith and McGrath made and seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the January 15, 2013, Regular Meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Special Meeting - January 17, 2013

Commissioners Smith and McGrath made and seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the January 17, 2013, Special Meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Communications:

- a. Thank-you letter from Ellen Fitzgerald to the Fire Department for their assistance in shutting off her alarm recently. She included a check for \$25.

Commissioners Smith and Brennan made and seconded a motion to accept the \$25 donation and deposit it into the Good and Welfare Fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Riso noted that was a nice gesture by Ms. Fitzgerald.

6. Committee Reports

East Side Fire Station

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

Commissioner Brennan reported the East Side Fire Station is nearing completion. The Fire Department is in the process of moving in, and there should be two companies operating out of the station by the end of the week.

He noted there are a few glitches with the station that will be remedied; A-shift has compiled a list.

Commissioner Brennan explained that a power surge had knocked out the generator during a recent weather event, and that issue is being investigated.

Commissioner Brennan opened the floor to questions.

Fire Chief Selection Committee Report

Commissioner McGrath reported the Committee has made progress. He said the position has been posted throughout the City in the Sunday edition of the Connecticut Post and is also on the City of Milford website. He explained all applications will need to be postmarked by March 15th in order to be considered. He commented the process is moving ahead of schedule. He added the job posting has been reviewed, approved, and signed by the Milford City Attorney.

Commissioner McGrath opened the floor to questions.

7. Chief's Report

Acting Chief Healey provided the Commissioners with a letter. He explained Inspector Jack Geary has decided to return to working on the line. He said the Department will run another inspector's test to fill the open position.

The Chief reported the City is working to take possession of the property on Seemans Lane. He said the Department will utilize the space as a warehouse for equipment.

Acting Chief Healey said Quint 9 has cracks in its frame and is going to Five-Star for repair.

Acting Chief Healey reported the Lieutenants list was posted properly earlier in the day with ten candidates listed. He added five new recruits would be entering the academy next week.

The Chief commented all who worked during the recent blizzard did a great job and all calls were responded to. He noted he has to thank the pay loader drivers and hopes the Department can acknowledge their hard work somehow.

Commissioner Brennan inquired if there is a specific design for the property on Seemans Lane; Acting Chief Healey said the Police Department will also be utilizing the space. He added that the Department is focusing on emergency management, but there is potential to house classrooms and to house the Department Dinosaurs as well. Chairman Riso said he is glad the property transfer has gone through as it has been in the works for a long time. He added that this will enable the Department to house all spare equipment in one location.

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

Commissioner Brennan inquired after a report in which a young citizen should be acknowledged for an emergency call. Captain Waknoris explained a seven- or eight-year-old girl called 911 on behalf of her grandmother who had collapsed. He explained the Department responded and were able to revive the grandmother, who was then sent to St. Raphael's Hospital. He said that the young girl did a great job calling 911 and should get the Citizen's Award.

Acting Chief Healey added the work performed by the responders to the accident on Bridgeport Avenue where the family of four was struck by a vehicle should receive the Special Commissioners' Award.

Commissioner McGrath inquired if the Department and Commission hold a yearly award ceremony for such instances; Acting Chief Healey said there have been awards ceremonies in years past but unfortunately have ceased recently. Commissioner McGrath stated he would be happy to put something together as this event should be held yearly. Chairman Riso agreed with that sentiment.

8. New Business

None.

9. Unfinished Business:

Rules for establishing an Eligibility List

Acting Chief Healey reported the current list expired at the end of January. He said the new criteria will have to be set down firmly before a new list is compiled. He added that if the Department utilizes the CPAT physical ability test plus a separate swim test for the compilation of this pending eligibility list, the next list compiled should utilize a new Milford physical ability test as used in years past. He said the next class begins in the end of August.

Commissioner Brennan noted that the age limit element of the list needs to be discussed further. Chairman Riso explained he contacted the City Attorney about this issue, along with including or excluding potential candidates with felony convictions. He said he has not yet heard back from the City Attorney on either issue. He added he discussed this with Acting Chief Healey, who agreed to take up those issues at the next regular meeting. Commissioners McGrath and Smith made and seconded a motion to table the remaining issues regarding the Rules for Establishing an Eligibility List until the next regular meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Grievance 12-006

Chairman Riso confirmed that all the Commissioners were in receipt of a draft copy of the definitive policy of the use of Department vehicles. He noted this issue had been tabled from the previous regular meeting to see if a resolution could be reached. He asked for the Union's input on the draft.

Union President Dunn explained this draft policy was received by him on February 14th. He said he felt it was the intention for the Chief and the Union to meet and work together

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

to come to a resolution. He added this draft policy limits more members than the original policy. He commented if this policy is voted on and passed, it is likely another grievance will be filed by the Union. He reiterated he believed it was to be a joint effort and it has not been.

Chairman Riso explained policy is set by the Board. Union President Dunn noted this draft policy will take away the privilege from members who have it at present.

Commissioner Brennan said he does not understand where it is taking away any privileges. Union President Dunn said certain language in the policy, e.g., “personally responsible for damage”, will likely result in a financial burden to the membership.

Commissioners Brennan and McGrath made and seconded a motion to deny Grievance 12-006. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Riso said he has a copy of the grievance, not the original, and will sign the original on the next day. Union President Dunn explained the contract states the Board will respond in writing to any grievance within ten days.

Commissioner Brennan commented it is very difficult to look at four other departments in the area who allow three members the 24/7 use of cars.

Chairman Riso said the policy that was voted on by the Commissioners and approved is the one that the Department is working under now.

10. Comments and Concerns of the Commissioners:

Commissioner McGrath commented Lauren Pisacane from the Milford HR Department has been a big help to the Fire Chief Selection Committee.

Commissioner Weber commented there is nothing better than saving someone’s life, and he congratulated the Firefighters for a job well done.

11. Adjournment

Commissioners Smith and Brennan made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 1930 hours. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by C. Birney