

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

Call to Order: Chairman Riso called the meeting to order at 1903 hours. A quorum was present.

1. Roll Call

Commissioners Thomas Riso, John Healy, Karen Craig, Kevin McGrath, Howard Stein, and William A. Brennan. Also present were Chief Louis LaVecchia, Assistant Chief Robert Healey, Union President Michael Dunn, and Union Vice President Todd Ricci.

Commissioner Richard Smith 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 - September 18, 2012

Commissioner Healy noted a typographical error on page 10, first paragraph, where Commissioner Stein should read Commissioner Smith withdrew his motion.

Commissioners Healy and McGrath made and seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2012, regular meeting as corrected.

Commissioner Stein commented the intent of the corrected paragraph was that he had reviewed the criteria for entry into executive session and had determined it was inappropriate at that time to enter executive session.

Chairman Riso stated for clarification purposes that on pages 9 and 10, he had incorrectly stated that the City Attorney gave permission to enter executive session at that time. He said the minutes should read the City Attorney had not approved executive session.

Chairman Riso and Commissioner Healy made and seconded a motion to amend the minutes to reflect the corrections as entered by Chairman Riso and Commissioner Healy. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Healy stated he had been sent a message from Chief LaVecchia regarding the use of the city vehicles from the previous meeting. He said his intent in the motion was for the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs to have use of the vehicles 24/7, and the remaining cars may be used as transportation to and from work. He added the minutes should remain as written, but he wanted to clarify the intent of his stated motion.

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

Commissioner Healy said he would discuss this issue further on in the meeting and will make the proper motion.

Commissioner Stein explained that the minutes should reflect what occurred at the meeting. He said if there had been a misunderstanding or need for clarification, the minutes should remain as written and the clarifications made under Comments and Concerns of the Commissioners. Commissioner Healy stressed he was not implicating that the minutes were incorrect, other than the typo on page 10. Commissioner Stein suggested not amending the minutes further than the correction of the typo.

Commissioner Healy agreed with that statement.

Chairman Riso stated he is concerned that the way the minutes read will reflect badly on the City Attorney. Chief LaVecchia said at the meeting he made a statement that the City Attorney did not approve entering executive session and his statement is not included in the minutes. Chairman Riso suggesting adding Chief LaVecchia's statement.

Commissioners Stein and McGrath made and seconded a motion to re-amend the minutes to include Chief LaVecchia's statement that the City Attorney's Office did not feel it was an appropriate use of executive session. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Communications:

- a. Letter to Chief LaVecchia from Frank and Elaine Rohrig, thanking the Department for their assistance during a flood on Naugatuck Avenue and pumping water out of their basement and the basements of their neighbors.

6. Committee Reports

Apparatus

Assistant Chief Healey reported the new Quint is in Hamden for installation of the key box. All other apparatus is in service.

East Side Fire Station

Commissioner Healy reported the project continues to get closer to completion. He said the contractor is working on "punch-list type" items, but have yet to reach substantial completion.

The Building Committee has hired an independent commissioning firm for all systems' analysis. Commissioner Healy said a preliminary report indicates some systems need review.

He said he is hopeful the project will reach substantial completion by the end of the month, with occupancy in early November.

Commissioner Healy opened the floor to questions.

7. Chief's Report

Chairman Riso confirmed that all the Commissioners received a copy of Chief LaVecchia's report.

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

Chief LaVecchia added a temporary agreement (TA) had been reached by Local 944 and the City. He said it would be presented to the Board of Aldermen on November 5th. The Chief said with the retirement of Inspector Geer, Firefighter Geanacopoulos had been promoted to Inspector. The Chief opened the floor to questions.

Commissioner Brennan asked why eligibility exams are questioned. The Chief explained the Union implements a 10-day appeal process for candidates who wish to review their tests. Commissioner Brennan asked if only 2 out of 19 candidates passed the Lieutenant test; the Chief affirmed that fact.

8. New Business

Grievance 12-005

Chairman Riso confirmed the Commissioners had the Grievance in their packets. Commissioner Stein inquired if the Commission should discuss the Grievance in executive session because it involves a personnel matter. Union President Dunn said the claimant is not currently in the country so the Commission should discuss the Grievance in open session.

Chief LaVecchia explained Grievance 12-005 is identical to Grievance 12-004 regarding Inspector Vargo; Grievance 12-005 regards Inspector Geer. The Chief suggested treating Grievance 12-005 in the same manner as Grievance 12-004.

Commissioner Stein inquired if there is anything different between the two Grievances; the Chief said no.

Commissioners Healy and Brennan made and seconded a motion to deny Grievance 12-005. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Healy stated in the previous meeting he had suggested an investigation/audit is conducted to determine the correct pension calculations. He said he hopes the Commission will be informed of any investigation/audit results.

9. Unfinished Business:

Public Safety Answering Point 911 Center Consolidation

Assistant Chief Healey reported the consolidation is progressing. He said quotes for the equipment transfer had been submitted to the Mayor. The Chairman inquired what the quotes are. Assistant Chief Healey said there are a couple outstanding quotes; Chief LaVecchia there are other vendors waiting to bid.

City Vehicles

Commissioner Healy stated that after a review of the minutes from the September meeting, a mistake was noted in the motion. He said it was the intent of the motion for the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs to have the 24/7 use of the cars, and the remaining

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

cars to be utilized for transit to and from work. He added that the Chief rightly held up enforcing the motion due to the error in the motion. He stated he agreed that the motion, as worded, was not the intent.

In addition, the Chief made a request that the Training Officer be authorized the use of a vehicle for transit to and from work, and a policy change would be drafted in the Rules and Regulations Items 2 and 3. Commissioner Healy said he concurred with those requests.

Commissioners Healy and McGrath made and seconded a motion to rescind Commissioner Healy's motion regarding the use of city vehicles made on September 18th and adopt the drafted policy which states the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs are authorized for 24/7 use of vehicles, while the Superintendent of Apparatus, the Service Truck, the Captain of Training, and the Hazmat Officer be authorized the use of vehicles for transit to and from work and as authorized for other use.

Commissioners Brennan and McGrath made and seconded a motion to amend the previous motion to include that all the vehicles are subject to GPS tracking, subject to funding.

Commissioner Stein asked why Commissioner Brennan would include mandatory language in his motion when funding for such is not certain. Commissioner Brennan stated the Department has the equipment for GPS tracking for temporary use. He said by adding this language it ensures that GPS tracking would be utilized and ensures permanency. Chief LaVecchia commented that the new CAD system will have a tracking system for all cars and will most likely alleviate the GPS tracking issue. Commissioner Brennan stated GPS tracking is also for safety reasons.

Commissioner Brennan withdrew his motion to amend the previous motion.

Commissioner Healy and Commissioner McGrath's motion carried unanimously.

Rules and Regulations, Revision and Update

No report.

10. Comments and Concerns of the Commissioners:

Commissioner Stein complimented Union President Dunn on his comments regarding the fire in the Woodmont Synagogue. He added that the synagogue is very significant in the community.

Chairman Riso restated his comments earlier about his misunderstanding regarding the City Attorney and authorization of entering executive session. He apologized.

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting

Classroom at Fire Headquarters

72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT

Tuesday, October 16, 2012

Commissioner Healy addressed the Chief and asked if the Commission could be informed if he expects a large number of people opting to retire as a result of the TA with Local 944. He said it is important to know the impact on the Department, and if it is deleterious to the Department, the Commission should take appropriate action.

Commissioner Brennan inquired if there is a reason why the Commission cannot see a copy of the TA; the Chief yes, it is stated in the ground rules.

Commissioner McGrath addressed the Chief and said with the retirement of two Inspectors and the potential retirement of another Inspector, does he anticipate a delay in inspections. Chief LaVecchia stated there is currently only one certified Inspector, one new Inspector is in school, and one Inspector had just been promoted this week. He said he anticipates some issues and delays. He did add that the Fire Marshal does assist with some inspections.

Commissioner Healy suggested that the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs expedite the process by signing off on inspections and help prioritize. Chief LaVecchia said the Department is already working on it. He added that the Fire Marshal's Office is very customer-service minded and they are doing everything they can to help eliminate delays in inspections for new businesses in Milford.

11. Adjournment

Commissioners Healy and McGrath made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 1935 hours. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by C. Birney