

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting
72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT
Tuesday, January 18, 2022

- I. **Call to Order:** Chief Edo called the meeting to order at 19:04 hours. A quorum was present.

Roll Call: In addition to the Chief, Chairman McGrath, Commissioners Stein, Riso, R. Smith, Brennan, P. Smith, and Soda were present. Also, present were Assistant Chief Fabrizi and Assistant Chief Waiksnoris

- II. **Election of Officers:**

Chief Edo congratulated the newly appointed and reappointed Commissioners and then asked if there were any nominations for the Board Officers.

Commissioners Riso and Brennan made and seconded a motion to nominate Commissioner McGrath as Board Chairman, Commission Stein as Board Vice-Chairman and Commissioner R. Smith as Board Secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman McGrath took control of the meeting at 19:07. He thanked the board for the vote of confidence.

- III. **Public Statements limited to the function of the Board of Fire Commissioners:**

None

- IV. **Consideration of Minutes:**

Regular Meeting December 21, 2021

Commissioner P. Smith questioned the absence of Commissioner Stanford. Chairman McGrath stated her name was on there until the appointment was filled. Commissioner P. Smith and Commissioner Soda abstained from voting as they were not members of the board in December.

Commissioners Smith and Riso made and second a motion to accept the minutes of December 21, 2021. Motions carried unanimously. With the two abstentions as stated above.

- V. **Communications:**

Commissioner Smith read a holiday card from Deborah DeCarvalho and family with a donation of \$35. He also read a card of thanks for the assistance with Charles which included a donation of \$100 from the Lippi Family.

Commissioner Stein and R. Smith made and second a motion to donate the \$35 and \$100 check to the Good and Welfare Fund. Motion carries unanimously.

VI. **Chairman's Report:**

Chairman McGrath welcomed the two new commissioners, as well as Assistant Chief Waiksnoris to their first meeting. He wanted to acknowledge Assistant Chief Waiksnoris on his promotion as well as, Battalion Chief Brian Colwell, Captain Adam Hansen and Inspector Brian Trenchard. He also noted Inspector Zickefoose's recent retirement. Chairman McGrath indicated the numerous amounts of correspondence regarding the Toys for Tots program that he received. He again acknowledged Local 944 for the great job they do every year with the program. He also recognized all personnel who worked the last 24 hours during the storm and thanked them for their service. Chairman McGrath started a dialogue regarding the time conflicts of current meetings. He stated going forward the new time for Fire Commissioner's meetings would be 6:30.

VII. **Committee Reports:**

- a) Personnel Committee: Nothing to report.
- b) Maintenance Committee: Commissioner Brennan spoke on Tower 1 and the repair of the ladder which passed inspection. He stated that it did not pass the annual DOT inspection and needs maintenance repairs. Commissioner Brennan noted that the tower was put out of service to run another ambulance and is now sitting. Chairman McGrath questioned the amount of the repair. Commissioner Brennan explained the cost is about \$14,000, with an additional \$2000 for parts. He acknowledged that it is normal wear and tear and the replacement of bushings have not been done in the life of the truck. Commissioner Stein questioned the life span of the truck. Commissioner Brennan then explained the Tower was 12 years old, a normal truck life is 15 which than can be used as a spare for the remaining 5 years. He stated the goal would be to gain 3 years by repairing it and not having to replace it which could cost about 1.7 million dollars. Commissioner P. Smith inquired if the \$14,000 expenditure would bring the truck up to code. He also questioned the miles on the tower. Commissioner Brennan stated the repair would allow the vehicle to pass the required DOT inspection. Acknowledging the age of the truck, Commissioner Brennan stated the miles are not as concerning as the hours on city streets that lead to the repairs. Chief Edo stated due to budgetary restraints the cost of the repair may have to wait until the next fiscal year, as the vehicle now is a reserve piece. Commissioner Stein inquired about the closest mutual aid town with a 100' ladder. Chief Edo noted the closest town was Stratford and stated after the repair he hoped nothing else would break. Commissioner Brennan spoke on NFPA requirements of quints and ladder trucks. Commissioner Stein inquired if not immediately repairing the tower would have any effect on the Class 1 status. Assistant Chief Fabrizi noted the 8-year time span between rankings. Chairman McGrath spoke on the timeline of budgeted capital expense for the replacement of the tower. He than stated the topic can be tabled until the next meeting after investigating capital expenses.

- c) Safety Committee Liaison: Commissioner Brennan spoke on the topic of maintenance of apparatus and how personnel are aware of completed repairs. He stated all personnel can go on Fire Manager and see of the repair. He noted if it was a safety problem, staff would be unable to use the item until repaired. The other item addressed at the safety committee was wintertime defensive driving. He noted the small incidents that have occurred during the recent weather. It was stated that Assistant Chief Waiksnoris will be overseeing a driver simulation course at Seemans Lane. Chief Edo mentioned the recent accidents due to the ice storm.

VIII. **Chiefs Report:**

Budget – The budget for the last 7 years has been flat although there was a slight increase, due to pay raises and maintenance there will be a deficit again this fiscal year.

COVID Update – The department has experienced a rash of COVID calls due to the holiday get togethers. Milford's positive cases seem to be going down. The Chief stated that due to the departments policies and procedures all positive cases within the department have come from outside sources.

Test Kits & Mask Distribution – Two distributions have been done with the city. The first distribution was crowded with the second being more streamlined. The next distribution will be for the most vulnerable population per state criteria.

Lieutenant Exam – The department held an exam for the position of Lieutenant on December 13, 2021. Out of the 13 candidates, 6 firefighters proceeded to the assessment portion, which will than provide the final list.

Year End Summary – The year end summary provided indicated spikes in responses due to the two tropical storms.

Recruit & Fire Academy Update – The State Fire Academy will have a class of 67 students broken into two or three groups which will allow for more hands-on opportunity. Chairman McGrath asked for the total number of Milford recruits attending the academy. Chief Edo replied that with the eleven positions offered, three declined. The three recruits who declined are all hired at different departments, with one department not sending applicants to the academy. Milford has eight recruits beginning the class in February. Commissioner P. Smith asked how many vacancies the department currently has. Chief Edo responded 17, 8 will currently go to the academy and another recruit test will be run shortly to get individuals into the next class. There is no current date for a new test. A discussion on other department's testing numbers and certification requirements ensued.

Commissioner Brennan commented on the recent number of mutual aid calls. Chief Edo explained that Milford is required to go to mutual aid calls for medical responses as well as fires. The recent increase in EMS mutual aid is caused by staff shortages most likely related to COVID. Commissioner Stein noted the time this requires the units to be out of town. Chairman McGrath wanted to thank the Chief and members who assisted with the test kit distribution.

IX. **New Business:**

None

IX. **Unfinished Business:**

Chairman McGrath stated the yearend report the Chief provided will go on the agenda for the February meeting.

X. **New Equipment:**

None

XI. **Comments and Concerns of the Commissioners:**

Commissioner P. Smith stated that his previous experience on this board and current experience has allowed him to view the department as top rate. He expressed his excitement to be part of the impressive operation with the quality firefighters that Milford has. Commissioner P. Smith also wanted to congratulate the department on doing such a good job during these difficult pandemic times.

XII. **Adjournment:**

Commissioners Smith and Riso made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 19:33 Motion carried unanimously.