

# **Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting**

**72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT**  
**Tuesday, February 15, 2022**

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman McGrath called the meeting to order at 18:31 hours. A quorum was present.

**Roll Call:** In addition to the Chairman, Commissioners Stein, R. Smith, Brennan, P. Smith, and Soda were present. Also, present were Alderman Liaison Michelle Parente, Chief Edo, Assistant Chief Fabrizi and Assistant Chief Waiksnoris.

**Absent:** Commissioner Riso.

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

Jason Stacoffe Co-Chairman of Milford Professional Firefighters Toys for Tots program informed the board of the 120 families the program helped this year. The support of the board is appreciated with the program, he stated that almost 200 children that were provide for. Chairman McGrath again spoke on the number of calls and letters regarding the outstanding work that was done. Firefighter Stacoffe noted the generous businesses that Milford has.

III. **Consideration of Minutes:**

Regular Meeting Correct Minutes – January 18, 2022

Commissioners R. Smith and Stein made and second a motion to accept the minutes of January 18, 2022. Motions carried unanimously.

IV. **Communications:**

Commissioner R. Smith read several correspondences:

1. A letter from New Haven Assistant Chief Justin McCarthy on behalf of the Fire Department of New York regarding the support that was provided to grieving department and family members.
2. An email stating a call was received from Ms. Patricia Taylor 45 Ocean Ave praising the efficiency and kindness the crews of Quint 3 and Nelson ambulance provided to her on Christmas Eve.
3. Chief Edo received a call from off duty MPD Officer Ken Cantino who wanted to mention the professionalism and skills of off duty Fire Lieutenant Bocchetta. LT Bocchetta was able to help an individual and keep everyone at ease until the ambulance arrived.
4. A letter from Margret Preto-Rodas of Stratford regarding the appreciation of the care that

was given to her father by Firefighters Jeff Platek and Kevin Frank. Stating they were professional, friendly, empathetic and displayed pride in their work.

5. A note from the Silvers 55 Governors Ave regarding the swift compassionate response to their home for a medical emergency on February 6.

#### **V. Chairman's Report:**

Chairman McGrath spoke on a follow up of the repair of Tower 1. He hopes to secure an appointment with the mayor within the next few days regarding the funding of the repair. Chairman McGrath stated that Chief will give a report of the bonding aspect. He stated under unfinished business any questions can be asked regarding the Chiefs yearend report. He also informed the board that Commissioner P. Smith will replace Commissioner Weber and Commissioner Soda will replace Commissioner Stanford on the Maintenance & Equipment Committee.

#### **VI. Committees Report:**

- a) Personnel Committee: None
- b) Maintenance & Equipment: Commissioner Brennan stated that the mayor would be talked to regarding the Tower situation.
- c) Safety Committee Liaison: Commissioner Brennan stated the lights on Marine 2 will have side LED lighting installed for vision enhancement. The safety committee also spoke on turnaround at the fire stations and staff should be igniting the stop lights for oncoming traffic. The manufacturer will adjust the lights on the back of ambulances. The turnaround sign on RTE15 N was also a topic.

#### **VII. Chief's Report:**

New Haven Communication – Chief Edo stated the letter that was received on behalf of the Fire Department of New York was due to Milford Fire Department members being on bridges on I95 with flags raised on January 19 as Christopher Viviano was transported to Long Island for his final burial.

Covid Home Test Kit Distribution – Faith groups were distributed test kits and masks. There may possibly be another distribution done.

Capital Budget – Chief Edo noted in this year's capital budget apparatus should be requested. He requested \$800,000 for a new Quint, funding for roof repairs, funding for the Training & Regional Distribution Facility at Seemans Lane and a few wish list items. The capital budget year 22-23 contained no funding for apparatus, but a new quint should be purchased in 2024. Funding for Seemans Lane improvements should be available in 2025. Chairman McGrath questioned the comparison of the capital budget verse bonding aspect. He explained the concern of missing a year and falling behind. Stating it would be three years before a new quint is physically attained. Chief Edo explained administration put all apparatus in the bonding package with the five-year plan. He also stated the different bonding format. Chairman McGrath asked if that decision is official. Alderman Michele Parente stated the capital budget was approved but it is just a place holder. She further explained budgets can be adjusted and redone each year. Chairman McGrath stated this would be reviewed further as a quint will be needed sooner. He also mentioned the decay of apparatus that

had been previously reported. Commissioner P. Smith asked the year of the current Quint 3. Chief Edo stated 2012. Commissioner Brennan remarked a quint should run first line for fifteen years and as a spare for five more years. Chief Edo noted that the department has been supplied with trucks and this year is an off year.

CT Fire Academy – Chief Edo stated there is a meeting scheduled with the Chiefs Association and recommendations are being made regarding the fire academy. Night classes have been removed and he feels the academy is just too long and he would like to shorten the weeks. He suggests sending a recruit for the first ten weeks and then train in house. He also noted the price increase for the next class in August. Chairman McGrath inquired of the current recruit's schedule. Chief Edo stated the class was delayed and were learning remotely at Seemans Lane due to Covid, they are currently at the academy for 19 weeks. Chairman McGrath then spoke on the recent newspaper article and clarified the amounts have been due to shortage of personnel and retirements. Commissioner P. Smith inquired about the class length and noted the strong points of going to the academy and inhouse training. Chief Edo stated this was just a discussion, but it is what he would like to do. He also spoke on the newspaper article and reiterated nearby towns had the same issue due to vacancies, Covid and not being able to test, noting it is not just a Milford problem.

#### **VIII. New Business:**

##### **a) New Hire Approval – Firefighters – Testing**

Chief Edo stated the department wanted to start a new test as soon as possible to fill current vacancies. He stated the department wanted to use the Firefighter App which allows a broader range of candidates to apply. Assistant Chief Christopher Waiksnoris spoke on the website and noted local departments that use it as well as Milford Police Department. He stated this had nothing to do with testing and was solely based on applications. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated the company would make the application as the department desires, noting the need for paramedics. Commissioner Stein inquired of the costs. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated the user will pay a twenty-five-dollar fee for the application to be forwarded with all pertinent information provided to the department. Chairman McGrath mentioned the application fee the department was collecting. He also questioned if the application would be available in two formats. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris believed the department would still collect the application fee the individual who fills out the application will be paying a fee directly to the site as well. The application for Milford Fire Department would only be available online through the Firefighter App. He also offered to show any interested Commissioners the website [Firefighter Jobs, Fire Chief Jobs, & Dispatcher Jobs | FirefighterApp](#). Commissioner Brennan suggested changing the wording in the application regarding EMT status. He suggested changing the wording to indicate prior to hiring an applicant must be an EMT. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated that would be changed as well as allowing a nation-wide application the wording would indicate that exceptions would be made regarding medical control and licensing. The timing of the process would begin as early as next week. After the application process ends the written test would begin, followed by the agility test. Commissioner Stein questioned if the list would be made available by July. Chairman McGrath noted building use and possible interruptions that may occur. He also stated the Personnel Committee should be involved. Commissioner P. Smith inquired if paramedics would get priority in hire. Chief Edo noted the application states the department holds the right to select Connecticut Certified paramedics on the list over EMTs if the need within the department arises. Assistant Chief Fabrizi noted that the goal is to make every avenue available to procure quality candidates by adjusting the application and making a wider

audience. Commissioner P. Smith stated he was in favor of the online component, stating a wider audience will allow the department more options. Chief Edo also mentioned getting the word to high school students. Commissioner P. Smith then spoke on high school programs geared toward certifications. Commissioner Brennan noted the CPAT requirement and swim test.

Commissioners P. Smith and Brennan made and second a motion to allow administration to start the beginning of the application process. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **IX. Unfinished Business:**

##### **a) Chief's yearend report**

Commissioner P. Smith commented on the numbers and the integrity of the EMS division within the department. He also questioned the comparison of pre-Covid numbers. Chief Edo noted that Milford was the first paramedic firefighters in the state. He also stated that during the height of Covid the response numbers were lower due to everything being shut down and less people were out having accidents. Commissioner P. Smith spoke on the tour of the stations that he and Commissioner Soda went on and the impressive Covid protocols that the department have in place. He also required on Covid numbers.

#### **X. New Equipment:**

Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated the department has received new battery-operated Hurst Tools. The training division will implement training with the new tools. Chief Edo stated the new lighter jaws of life tools that were purchased will go on the Squad. With the goal of purchasing another set for Engine 4.

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

Commissioner Stein commented on the Rutland Rd. fatality fire, as he was present representing the States Attorney's office. He noted the difficulties the firefighters faced with the fully involved fire. Commissioner Stein stated although there was a loss of life the crews did a great job with the multiple difficulties that were presented, allowing investigators to perform the needed investigation. Commissioner P. Smith thanked the Chiefs for the tours that he and Commissioner Soda received, it was enlightening noting the changes that have occurred over the years. He noted the phenomenal staff the department employs, he also commented on the lack of the department's presence on social media. He stated the department does so much good and should be communicated to the public. As a commission it should be expressed to the citizens of Milford how great the department is, he would like to see the public profile raised. Commissioner P. Smith also spoke on the STOP THE BLEED program that he would like to see the department implement.

#### **XII. Adjournment:**

Commissioners R. Smith and Brennan made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 19:05 Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Gloria Gouse UNAPPROVED SUBJECT TO CORRECTION