

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting
Commissioner's Conference Room
At Fire Headquarters
72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT
Tuesday, April 30, 2019

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman McGrath called the meeting to order at 19:15 hours. A quorum was present.

Roll Call: In addition to the Chairman, Commissioners Smith, Stein, Riso, Stanford and Weber were present. Also, present was Chief Douglas Edo and Assistant Chiefs Gary Baker, and Bernie Begley. Commissioner Brennan was out of town.

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

None

3. **Consideration of Minutes:**

Regular Meeting – March 19, 2019.

Commissioners Smith and Stein made and seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the March 19, 2019, Regular Meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Communications:**

Commissioner Smith reported that the Department received the following communications:

- i. Letter from Arthur J. Murphy, III, Secretary IAFF Local 944 thanking the Commissioners and Chiefs for their support and work on the recent Memorandum of Understanding regarding the repair shop.

5. **Chairman's Report:**

Chairman McGrath wanted to let the Commissioners know that on May 28th there will be a golf fundraiser for Milford Firefighter Brian Connolly who was recently diagnosed with cancer. Chairman McGrath indicated that he was going to pass around a flyer containing information for anyone who wanted to play and/or make a donation.

6. **Committees Reports:**

- a) Personnel Committee: Commissioner Stein had nothing to report.
- b) Maintenance & Equipment Committee: Commissioner Brennan was not in attendance.

7. Chief's Report:

Ambulance returned – Chief Edo reported that one of the ambulances that was recently damaged and had to return to the factory in Ohio was repaired and is back in service. The other damaged ambulance was picked up for repair today and is expected back in a week or two.

New Recruits – New recruits have recently received their 2nd report card and are doing well.

Update Grievances - Chief Edo reported that a union grievance that was pending before the labor board was resolved pertaining to the closing of the repair shop. The Chief reported that 4 Lieutenant positions and a Fire Inspector position were created to replace the union positions lost by closing the repair shop. The new Fire Inspector Position will be assigned to the Fire Marshal's office. The other 4 Lieutenants positions will be assigned to Quint 5. The Chief reported that this agreement will be a savings to the City.

Budget – The Chief reported that the department is presenting its budget to the Board of Alderman tomorrow. For the most part, the budget is flat. The department is requesting an increase in the Vacation/ Relief Account to make up for a 5 year running shortage in that account. The Chief explained that there have been contractual increases over the past few years in firefighter salaries. While budget adjustments were made to the main payroll account reflecting the impact of these contractual increases, corresponding increases were not made to the Vacation/Relief Account. As a result, there is an on-going shortage in that account.

Fire Inspector Promotion – The Chief reported that the promotion process is expected to be completed and the new Fire Inspector will be named more than likely on Monday.

Swearing In/Awards Ceremony – The Chief reported that the department has not held a Swearing In and Awards Ceremony in sometime. He indicated that 2 Lieutenants recently traveled to fire houses around the City and discussed with the department members their thoughts on reinstituting these ceremonies. The Chief indicated that it was reported to him that the department members are very interested in seeing this reinstated for new hires and promotions and would like for any ceremonies to occur in Fire HQ on the same night as the Fire Commission Meeting. They would like to see it twice a year following recruit graduations from the fire academy. Chief Edo indicated that Unit Citations could be awarded by the Chiefs and present at each fire house as needed. Commissioner Stein indicated that the Personnel Committee handled this in the past and indicated that the Committee consisted of himself, Chairman McGrath and Commissioner Riso. Commissioner Stein indicated that he would call a meeting of the personnel sub-committee to schedule an award ceremony. Chairman McGrath indicated he would schedule a Swearing In/ Promotion Ceremony for June following the graduation of the current recruits. The award ceremony would be considered at a later date after award nominations are received for the Committee's consideration.

8. **New Business:**

None

9. **Unfinished Business:**

- a) Executive Session – LaVecchia vs. City of Milford / Board of Fire Commissioners – Discussion regarding pending litigation

Commissioners Smith and Riso made and seconded a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation pertaining to LaVecchia vs. City of Milford / Board of Fire Commissioners. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board went into Executive Session at 7:31 pm. The Chairman invited the Chiefs and Asst. City Attorney Debra Kelly to remain for the purpose of giving testimony or opinion.

Commissioners Stein and Riso made and seconded a motion to come out of Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation pertaining to LaVecchia vs. City of Milford / Board of Fire Commissioners. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board come out of Executive Session at 8:06 pm and reported that no action was taken while in Executive Session.

- b) Report from Assistant City Attorney – Final Decision in Docket # FIC 2018-0191, LaVecchia v. Board of Fire Commissioners, et al.

Asst. City Attorney Debra Kelly reported to the Board that a final decision of the FOI Commission was rendered with regard to the above-referenced matter, which ordered that this Board comply with FOI regulations going forward and further ordered that this Board create detailed minutes of the Executive Session which occurred in the March 20, 2018. Attorney Kelly indicated that she reviewed the sworn testimony of Chairman McGrath and Chief Edo given during the FOI hearing, which was given closer in proximity to that March 20, 2018 Fire Commission Meeting, and based upon this prepared a draft of the proposed amendments to the March 20, 2018 Board of Fire Commissioners Minutes, which was circulated amongst the Commissioners for the Commission's approval before posting.

Commissioners Riso and Smith made and seconded a motion to Amend the Minutes of the March 20, 2018 Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting consistent with the language presented by Attorney Kelly. Motion carried unanimously.

10. **New Equipment:**

None.

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

None.

12. **Adjournment:**

Commissioners Smith and Riso made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:20. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Stein