

**Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting**  
**At Eastside Station**  
**980 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT**  
**Tuesday, July 21, 2020**

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, Brennan and Weber were present. Also, present was Chief Douglas Edo and Assistant Chiefs Begley and Fabrizi. Commissioner Stanford was not present.

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

None.

3. **Consideration of Minutes:**

None.

4. **Communications:**

Commissioner Smith reported that the Department received the following communications:

- i. Three letters received from the Town of Orange Volunteer Fire Department thanking the MFD for honoring recently deceased Town Fire Marshal Tim Smith and for providing coverage to the town on March 23, 2020 and June 26, 2020.
- ii. Thank you letter from Jim Goggin for EMS services provided to him on February 4, 2020.
- iii. Thank you letter from Robert Lupus for EMS services provided to him on January 21, 2020.
- iv. Letter from Dr. Kyle Floryan and Dr. Autumn Cussen of Specific Chiropractic thanking the department for all it does for the community.
- v. Thank you letter from the Milford Rape Crisis Center for the gift provided by the department for their annual indoor golf tournament.
- vi. Thank you letter from the Campagna family with a \$250.00 donation to the "Dinosaurs" special services unit.
- vii. \$25.00 donation received from Jarry and Margaret Popel
- viii. \$2,500 donation received from NRG Energy Group.

Commissioners Stein and Brennan made and seconded a motion to accept the \$250.00 donation from the Campagna Family that has already been forwarded to the "Dinosaurs" Special Services Unit. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners Stein and Smith made and seconded to accept the \$25.00 donation from the Jarry and Margaret Popel and deposit it into the “Good and Welfare” fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioners Stein and Riso made and seconded a motion to accept the \$2,500.00 from NRG Energy Group and deposit it into the Chief’s “Special Equipment” fund. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Chairman's Report:**

Chairman McGrath wanted to thank the Chief, Assistant Chiefs and everyone in the department for everything they have done and continue to do during the pandemic. Everyone has done a spectacular first-class job. He asked the Chief to pass on his sincere thanks to everyone further indicating that it was his intention to send a letter to all members of the department from the Board of Fire Commissioners.

6. **Committees Reports:**

- a) Personnel Committee: None
- b) Maintenance & Equipment Committee: None

7. **Chief's Report:**

Recruits – Chief Edo reported that it was expected that the current recruits who had their training interrupted will finish their training this week. There will be no graduation ceremony. Everything will be virtual.

Budget – The Chief reported that the department significantly reduced budget was now in place as of July 1. The current operating budget is \$300,000 less than last fiscal year. He noted to the Board that the department finished this past year’s budget in a deficit. He expects the deficit to be worse when we complete this new current fiscal year. He further indicated that the Board of Finance knows that there will be a deficit. Chairman McGrath asked the Chief to comment on current OT expenses as it impacts the budget. The Chief indicated that the department is currently has 4 shift vacancies. In addition, unexpected retirements together with injuries is causing a significant increase in OT that will be problematic towards the end of the fiscal year. The Chief did note that the FD revenue stream has increased due to EMS billing and restructuring the fees in the Fire Marshal’s office.

New Engine - Chief Edo reported that the new engine will be on-line in August or September. It is identical to Engine 6. He reiterated that the department is in need of 2 new engines and a tower due to age and deterioration issues with current department apparatus. The Chief reported that the Mayor indicated that the department could address these needs on a five year plan.

Possible New Pick Up Truck – The Chief indicated that rather than acquire a new Chief’s Car, the department may look to replace the department’s Utility Pick-Up truck. Commissioner

Brennan commented that a pick up bigger than the current truck would be a good idea so it could tow the Marine units.

COVID Q & A – The Chairman opened the floor to Commissioners to ask the Chiefs any questions they had regarding the department's response to the COVID pandemic.

Commissioner Riso asked about current staffing levels. The Chief indicated that with the 2 new recruits that are about to graduate, the department has 4 vacancies.

The Chief indicated that at the high of COVID, the department was running 3 full time ambulances in addition to Nelsons. He indicated that the department is capable by its license of running up to 5 ambulances.

Asst. Chief Fabrizzi indicated in response to a question on the new portable radios that all radios are in place and the all personnel have been trained.

Chief Edo concluded by providing some statistics to the Board regarding COVID calls. He indicated that there were 694 cases of COVID in Milford with 90 COVID related deaths. Of the 694 cases, 455 were community based and 239 cases from Milford based nursing homes. 79 of the 90 COVID deaths were from Milford based nursing homes. The other 11 were from the community. Overall, the Chief noted that call volumes were down. He attributed this to people staying home during this crisis. The Chief noted that only 1 member of the department tested positive for COVID during this time. The Chief thanked the Asst. Chiefs and Battalion Chiefs for the overwhelming time they put in during this time. He also thanked the Union and every department member for everything they did during this unprecedented pandemic. He indicated he was very proud of the way the department handled this. The Chief wanted to specifically thank Chief Ron Wetmore and Captain Brian Colwell for going above and beyond on the EMS side during this crisis. He indicated that they deserved special recognition for a job well done.

- a) Comp days to carry forward - Chief Edo indicated that he and his Asst. Chief's worked around the clock with no time off during this health and public safety crisis. He and Asst. Chief Begley have unused comp time that they will lose and they are asking for the Board to authorize that those unused comp hours carry forward into the new fiscal year. Chairman McGrath indicated that he discussed that with the City Attorney's office and that this Board is permitted to take such action.

Commissioners Stein and Weber made and seconded a motion to authorize the department to carry forward the comp days for Chiefs Edo and Begley into the new fiscal year. Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. New Business:**

- a) Executive Session (Chief's contract) - Chairman McGrath asked for a Motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussion of the Chief's contract.

Commissioners Riso and Stein made and seconded a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussion of the Chief's contract. Motion carried unanimously.

The Commissioner went into executive session at 7:57 pm. The Chairman asked the Chief to remain close by in case his testimony or opinion was necessary.

The Chief was invited into executive session at 8:00 pm.

The Chief exited executive session at 8:20 pm.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:35 pm.

Commissioner Stein noted that no votes were taken in executive session.

Commissioners Stein and Riso made and seconded a motion approve the contract entitled CHIEF OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CITY OF MILFORD between Kevin McGrath, Chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioner and Douglas A. Edo dated July 21, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Unfinished Business:**

None

10. **New Equipment:**

None.

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

Commissioner Stein wanted to thank the members of the Department who provided services to him during a health issue in April. He indicated that due to the circumstances he couldn't remember who the departmental personnel were. He asked the Chief to provide him with a list of the names of the department personnel who responded so that he could properly thank them.

Commissioner Riso wanted to Thank and commend Chairman McGrath for his commitment and leadership as Board Chairman during this very difficult time.

12. **Adjournment:**

Commissioners Smith and Brennan made and seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:40. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Notes taken by Commissioner Stein  
Minutes prepared and recorded by Diane Stein