

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting
72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT
Tuesday, August 15, 2023

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman McGrath called the meeting to order at 18:30 hours. A quorum was present.

Roll Call: In addition to the Chairman, Commissioners Richard Smith, Thomas Riso, William Brennan, and Peter Smith were present. Also, present were Alderman Liaison Michele Parente, Chief Anthony Fabrizi, and Assistant Chief Christopher Waiksnoris

Absent: Commissioner Howard Stein

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

None

- III. **Consideration of Minutes:**

Regular Meeting Minutes – July 18, 2023

Commissioners R. Smith and P. Smith made and second a motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 18, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

- IV. **Communications:**

Commissioner R. Smith read a card from Margaret Maugeri thanking members for the response to her home on July 1. The quick attentive care helped her husband immensely.

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

Chairman McGrath extended his and the boards congratulations to the recent retirees and promotions. The visitations at the stations are halfway complete, due to scheduling conflicts. The money received from the sale of the old Quint 9 originally went to the general fund but since has been earmarked to an account for the department to access. A meeting was had with the mayor regarding the departments apparatus needs. Any revenue from the sale of Tower 1 will be also available to the department. The goal will be to use this money to pay for vehicles and the possibility of a new marine unit. Chairman McGrath thanked Mayor Smith for his time and attention to detail.

VI. **Committee Reports:**

- a) Personnel Committee: Chairman McGrath stated the personnel committee held interviews with recruits for the upcoming academy class. He stated it was a good group of candidates.
- b) Maintenance Committee: Commissioner Brennan stated he would like to speak on safety regarding maintenance.
- c) Safety Committee Liaison: Commissioner Brennan stated meetings have been focusing on the life cycle and inspections of equipment. He noted there is no on duty mechanic to maintain vehicles and feels it is imperative to appoint someone certified with a knowledge of electronics to maintain the equipment. He also noted the restraints it puts on the Chiefs to do this. Commissioner P. Smith questioned if this was proposed in the budget and when the last time there was a supervisor of apparatus. A discussion was had regarding the time frame of the new lieutenants and inspector positions. Vendor and mechanic availability, maintenance records and logs as well as budgetary restraints. Chairman McGrath stated that a new budget line item would be fantastic, as it currently is not feasible in the fire or public works budget. The board needs to determine what is the number one priority with the upcoming budget.
- d) Education Committee – Chairman McGrath stated this item will be on the agenda every month. Commissioner P. Smith will be the lead going forward.

VII. **Chiefs Report:**

Chief Fabrizi stated he has implemented monthly budget meetings to increase communications and take a more strategic approach to spending. He discussed the EMS revenue, stating the balance changes daily as the department uses it for equipment that is needed. Chairman McGrath questioned Assistant Chief Waiksnoris regarding the new EMS collections vendor. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated the process is ongoing with paperwork and changing everything but will produce a 3% savings which will increase the revenue. The recruit oral boards were conducted in July, thirty two candidates have passed the assessment and are now on the eligibility list which will remain in effect for two years pending the board's approval. Captain Tom Piskura retired the end of July, there are currently six vacancies. Which is why six applications were submitted for the academy which begins August 28th. Orientation with the department begins on August 21st. Lieutenant Brandon Edo was promoted to Captain and Firefighter Brian Carpenter was promoted to Lieutenant. A formal letter was sent soliciting for the Assistant Chief position. Battalion Chiefs Stephen Rabel and Peter Phelan have submitted their resumes, interviews are pending. A collaboration with Stratford Fire was conducted addressing diversity and recruitment. The safe boating certification course was completed allowing 14 members to operate Marine 1 & 2. Chief Fabrizi stated Assistant Chief Waiksnoris has begun the Incident Action Plan for the Oyster Festival this weekend. A propane collection day has been scheduled for October 14th at Seemans Lane. Probationary officers

continue to do well, and the six probationary firefighters continue to show progress. Chief Fabrizi gave an update on the current apparatus and informed the commission on the amount spent on apparatus repairs and maintenance last budget. He noted there are currently no spares and discussed his concerns with the current spares with the mayor. He spoke of the HME spec that has a shorter lead time although not fully custom it would be great for a spare. The E-One delivery time has been pushed back due to supply chain and demand issues. Chief Fabrizi noted that Tower 1 has passed its DOT and pump inspection the outrigger will be repaired prior to testing the ariel. The hope is for it to procure a large amount from the sale. His concern is the status of apparatus, and the number one priority is to keep the front-line apparatus running. Chairman McGrath stated it has been at least four years since trucks have been considered. He further stated due to Covid, factories closing and demand it's a nationwide problem. Considering the time, it takes to acquire apparatus, the hope is for bonding for a new truck in January, he would like to take all the Alderman for a tour to understand the department needs. Commissioner P. Smith commended Chief Fabrizi on his report and appreciates all the details provided.

VIII. **New Business:**

- a) Recruit Firefighter Hiring List Approval – Chairman McGrath provided the list of the candidates that have passed the testing process. Commissioner Riso questioned if the ones interviewed were selected numerically (i.e., 1-6). Chief Fabrizi explained that although they were on the list some of the criteria needed was not met by all. The individuals selected were selected numerically but also by certifications. He noted that some interviewed were from out of state and promptly got their CT credentials. Commissioner P. Smith stated he had the opportunity to interview the candidates the most notable thing was the reputation that Milford's fire service had with everyone. He stated that is a true compliment to all who work here. Chairman McGrath stated there were 28 Milford residents who initially applied.

Commissioners P. Smith and Riso made and second a motion to accept the Milford Fire Department Firefighter Eligibility List of 32 applicants starting with D. O'Brien and ending with K. Savino. Motion carried unanimously.

- b) Committee Assignments – Chairman McGrath stated this will be on the agenda for next month.

IX. **Unfinished Business:**

Commissioner P. Smith stated he noticed there was a tour of the dispatch center for Lieutenants and Captains. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris stated ongoing discussion are being had with PD regarding dispatch.

X. **New Equipment:**

None

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

Chairman McGrath stated great feedback was received regarding the city security meeting Mayor Smith had for employees. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris, Battalion Chief Hansen and Deputy Fire Marshal Suden did a presentation on behalf of the department. Commissioner Brennan stated since Milford has been growing with new developments planning needs to be implemented for a new fire house in Milford. Commissioner P. Smith questioned long range planning. Chairman McGrath stated he would like to institute a committee for long range planning for 2024. Commissioner P. Smith stated his philosophy is any ideas administration has should be put on paper. He further stated when the health department moves that building would be a perfect location for the fire department to occupy.

XII. **Adjournment:**

Commissioners R. Smith and Riso made a second a motion to adjourn at 19:26.