

Board of Fire Commissioners Regular Meeting
72 New Haven Avenue, Milford, CT
Tuesday, October 17, 2023

- I. **Call to Order:** Chairman McGrath called the meeting to order at 18:37 hours. A quorum was present.

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

Absent: Commissioner Cynthia Twiss

Chairman McGrath noted the recently approved appointment of new Fire Commissioner Cynthia Twist. She is unable to attend this meeting, but has been sent information and minutes to update her on the events of the department.

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

None

- III. **Consideration of Minutes:**

Regular Meeting Minutes – September 26, 2023

Commissioner Stein stated a correction is needed in VI) Committee Reports a) Personnel Committee. Stein was spelled incorrectly.

Commissioners P. Smith and Riso made and second a motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 26, 2023, after the amendment of the spelling of Commissioner Stein's last name. Motion carries unanimously.

- IV. **Communications:**

Commissioner R. Smith noted there was a donation of \$25 from Peter and Roberta Tavalacci. This was given to Senior Fire Inspector Marc LaBrecque during the installation of a smoke alarm.

Commissioners Stein and Riso made and second a motion to except and deposit the \$25 donation into the Good and Welfare account. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Chairman McGrath extended his thanks to the Fire Marshals Division for the propane collection day. He has sent a thank you note to Bob Smith about the use of his buildings for training. Meetings have been had with Mayor Smith, Chief Fabrizi will update the board on the status. Chairman McGrath and the Chief have planned for Commissioner Twiss to tour the fire stations.

VI. **Committee Reports:**

- a) Personnel Committee: None
- b) Maintenance Committee: Commissioner Brennan stated there are a lot of problems with apparatus, the main issue being there is no regular maintenance of the fleet. He mentioned Engine 3 being out of service for repair and the rust that was found on the outrigger and nuts on the ladder. Commissioner Brennan believes this would have been seen had there been a mechanic maintaining the apparatus. He also noted that this should have been reported during the daily checks by personnel. He provided specs for a mechanic to the city and as a taxpayer he is frustrated, as it is not the way to run an operation. Chairman McGrath stated that in the last 24 hours a mechanic has been approved, the hope is for the job to be posted the beginning of next week. Commissioner Brennan stated a better job must be done with inspections and washing underneath the apparatus. Commissioner P. Smith questioned if the position is certified. Chairman McGrath stated several qualified individuals were met with to composite a description of a certified mechanic that would be hired in Public Works but assigned the Fire Department.
- c) Safety Committee Liaison: Commissioner Brennan stated the city has a good safety committee. He stated it is a pleasure to go to the meetings as problems arise and are dealt with accordingly.
- d) Education Committee – Commissioner P. Smith noted he is working on a proposal to submit it to the Chairman and Chief. He hopes to present it at the next meeting.

VII. **Chiefs Report:**

Assistant Chief Waiksnoris spoke of the report that was provided by Bridgeport Hospital. Noting the performance indicators that were presented to the department regarding heart attacks. He stated the department is above the criteria set by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology. On behalf of the administration, he noted how proud he is of the job the Fire Department staff is doing. He continued to speak on the report noting the above average times paramedics in the department have recognized the signs of a heart attack and the life saving actions that helped patients. Noting that within two minutes staff can assess and recognize the signs of a suspected MI. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris noted Paramedic Matthew Schumann, Paramedic Kristin Stuart, Paramedic Tom Hope, and their crew's response times. Commissioner P. Smith stated the numbers are stunning and something to be proud of. Milford has a first-class EMS division. Commissioner P. Smith stated he has observed calls and the cooperation within the department is phenomenal. Assistant Chief Waiksnoris agreed this is not a small thing to do for a city. Stating the report speaks volumes about how much of an impact the members have on the community and the citizens that they serve and protect. Chairman McGrath asked Alderman Liaison Parente to present the report at the next Alderman meeting. Chief Fabrizi stated the budget status has been holding, he does think there will be a deficit at the end of the year. There is no wasteful spending being done, everyone is being mindful and doing their due diligence. Chief Fabrizi stated he has a great crew and appreciates the support with the mission of the department. Chairman McGrath questioned, if the overtime would see relief once the recruits in class start on shift. Chief Fabrizi stated it will ease the line item. He stated he was glad he took

the gamble of having six attend the academy. Commissioner P. Smith appreciated the detail in the report noting all the disclosure is helpful. The comparison of EMS revenue is a helpful barometer, and the information is enlightening. Chief Fabrizi stated that the new recruits are doing well, they have been implored to sign up for extracurricular activities. Report cards are attached to his report for review. He thanked Battalion Chief Hansen and his involvement with the recruits. Chief Fabrizi noted Chad Cameron's retirement last month and Firefighter Tobias's exit this month. This will leave two open vacancies; he hopes to hire for the February class. Commissioner Stein questioned if there was an active list. Chief Fabrizi stated there is. Vehicle Fire Training evolutions have been completed. CAD training will begin in November for admin and dispatch. The Battalion Chief test is scheduled for December. Region II field day was held in New Haven allowing departments to see regional assets that are available. Roof materials have been delivered; Station 7 roof replacement has begun. Commissioner Riso questioned if the roofing would help with the heat. Chief Fabrizi stated the new material should help. The Fire Marshal Division have the opportunity to advertise the winners of the poster contest and split the cost of the billboard fees with Milford Prevention Council. Assistant Chief Rabel stated the feedback regarding the winner's artwork being on a billboard has been exciting. Chairman McGrath hopes to invite the winners to a meeting once announced. Probationary firefighters are doing well. Chief Fabrizi and Chairman McGrath met with Mayor Smith and Finance Director Peter Erodici regarding apparatus. He stated Mayor Smith has approved funding for the purchase of two 2023 Ford Explorers. Mayor Smith also agreed to bond for a new engine and ambulance in the capital improvement plan. Chief Fabrizi informed the board what was submitted for capital improvement, including SCBA equipment, as the grant was not procured. He appreciates Mayor's Smith's ability to listen and understand the challenges the department faces. This approval will help get over the hump with the struggles the department has been having. Chief Fabrizi noted the corrosion on the trucks and a plan will be put in place for washing the undercarriage of all apparatus. A discussion was had regarding shoreline, corrosion, and related expenses. Commissioner Brennan questioning sending individuals to the academy without an opening available. A discussion was had regarding budget, vacancies, and detailed firefighters.

VIII. **New Business:**

Commissioners P. Smith and Riso made and second a motion to amend the agenda and include VIII. New Business: E-One Engine.

Chief Fabrizi spoke of the approved funding from the mayor. He stated Greenwood has an E-One engine on the assembly line and would be available by bonding in February. The price being \$780,000. Although the engine is not custom built it is designed with most common aspects needed in the northeast area. Further modifications will need to be made. A signed contract is needed to secure the E-One. This is the same factory the new Quint is coming from which has an expected delivery date of late 2025. Commissioner P. Smith questioned the price of a new custom-built engine. Chief Fabrizi replied the last quote received was north of \$900,000 and a build time of 2-3 years. Chairman McGrath noted the bonding rate was lower than leasing. Chief Fabrizi stated the miles on spare Engine 8 are concerning. Chairman McGrath stated a document will come from Mayor Smith and be presented to the newly elected Mayor, which will lock it into the bond package. Chairman McGrath noted the movement that has been done on this engine and thanked all involved. He thanked the Chief who started working on this 60 days ago.

Commissioner Stein and Riso made and second a motion for the Chief of the department to sign a purchase order agreement with Greenwood Emergency Vehicles LLC for the purchase of an E-One Fire Engine with the purchase price of \$780,000 plus additional build out cost for EMS equipment and other equipment subject to approval by the city's legal department and appropriate financial bonding by the City of Milford. Motion carried unanimously.

IX. **Unfinished Business:**

a) Committee Assignments

Chairman McGrath stated if any board member is interested in serving on a subcommittee, they should contact him before the next meeting. If he does not hear from anyone, he will contact members before the next agenda goes out.

X. **New Equipment:**

None

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

Commissioner P. Smith stated the reports are great and the information is helpful. He also thanked Alderman Parente for her attendance and appreciates her effort, as it is important the message gets to the Board of Alderman. Alderman Parente believes they have a better understanding. Commissioner Brennan reiterated the need for a new fire house. He noted the number of calls in that area and the amount of buildings being added. Chairman McGrath stated preliminary conversations have begun.

XII. **Adjournment:**

Commissioners R. Smith and Riso made and second a motion to adjourn at 19:25.