



COMMISSION MEETING

May 9, 2023

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on May 9, 2023. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Scarrozzo, Alderman, Plummer, Balch and Turner. Commissioner Bysiewicz joined at 6:41 pm; Commissioner Peterson joined the meeting at 6:49 and Commissioner T. Bysiewicz joined at 7:07 pm.

Others present were: Chief Ponzio, Deputy Chief (DC) Jason Lubee and FDA Linda DeManche.

Chairman Amy made a **MOTION** to open the public session, with no public comment closed on a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Balch it was approved to accept the agenda as published, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch seconded by Comm. Turner it was approved to waive the reading of the April 11, 2023 regular meeting minutes and accept as written; all in favor.

The bills for April 2023, including the detailed Liberty statement were reviewed; after all questions were answered, the bills were approved on a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch and seconded by Comm. Alderman, all in favor.

Tax Collector's Report

-On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Plummer the April Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri was reviewed and approved, all in favor.

-The Tax Collector requests to suspend the following; 1) uncollectible motor vehicle and supplemental motor vehicle taxes for the 2018 Grand List in the amount of \$4,769.12; 2) uncollectible personal property for the 2018 Grand List in the amount of \$1,317.75 (total tax & interest as of 5/04/2023) – these amounts are subject to change if any accounts are paid prior to the posting of the suspense list, this was approved on a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Turner, all in favor.

-The Tax Collector presented a list of the four delinquent accounts currently totaling \$2,066.21 that meet the criteria for collection/foreclosure. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Turner it was approved to turn the accounts over to the attorney for collection, all in favor.

-It was reported that the District received from the City Assessor certificate of change (COC) on three real estate properties for GL 2017 resulting in a \$7,525.29 tax refund on the properties. This change is the outcome of the stipulated judgement the properties were awarded on their legal action. The judgement directs the Tax Collector to apply the appropriate refund/credit to the GL 2022 tax bill.

-It was reported that the District is currently aware of five (5) real estate properties contesting their GL2022 assessments and have filed legal action to appeal. The tax office will keep track of these cases and will notify the Board of the outcome.

Fire Marshal's Report

-The Fire Marshal's (FM) monthly report for April was distributed and accepted on a **MOTION** by Balch seconded by Turner, all-in favor.

Chief's Report

- The Chief stated the department's annual Memorial Day parade is on Sunday, May 28th; they are scheduled to step off from the station @ 2:00 pm.
- The Chief reported that Westfield hosted an informal northern Middlesex County Fire Chiefs meeting on May 9th. They covered various topics, updates and discussed reviewing the current mutual aid agreement to see if they need refreshing. The plan is for the group to meet quarterly, the next one is scheduled for August.
- The Chief offered a training update on completed and future training events: the department completed Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) training as part of a two-day course, it was very successful and well attended; the department is hosting a Traffic Incident Management (TIM) training course on Saturday, June 24th. Area departments have been invited to participate, members as well as employees are strongly encouraged to attend especially considering the department response to I-91.
- The Chief stated the 2023 Spartan tanker is pretty close to being done. A suspension issue was discovered which Custom Fire is working to resolve; the final inspection will be pushed off for several weeks. Comm. Scarrozzo asked what was going to happen with the existing tanker. The Chief stated more information needs to be obtained on the value of the 1999 Spartan. The Chief doesn't anticipate it being ready to sell until the end of the summer.
- The Chief would like to acquire some equipment for the new tanker out of his 2022-2023' budget. On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and second by Balch it was approved to purchase a 20" electric fan from the Blowhard Company in the amount of \$4,800 plus S&H, all in favor. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Turner it was approved to purchase a new Stihl chain and cut-off saw from Cofield's in the amount of \$1,536.18, all in favor.
- The status of training classes for members was reported as follows: FFI-Initial – member G. Terry is enrolled in a class that runs thru May; Fire Instructor – members Greenwald & Scarrozzo are enrolled in the class that runs thru May; Aerial Operator – FF Arroyo has completed and passed the course; Pump Operator – FF D. Passamano has completed the course and scheduled to test next week.
- The departments incorporation process for a 501c3 status is still moving forward. The by-laws have been sent to the members of the nominating and incorporation committee; the Chief is waiting on final comments. He intends to meet with those members soon to answer any questions. The goal is to have the updated by-laws posted for review of the entire membership in enough time for a department vote in July.
- The Chief stated they are still exploring the option of switching the fire station alerting system (FSA) to Bryx versus the current Active 911. Members have been trying the app on their phones, fire hydrant locations can be added to the software, the last step would be to demo the display features on the monitors in the station. He intends to report back next month with the results and any related costs.

Commissioner(s) Report

- On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Peterson it was approved to upgrade the laptop for the mechanic in the amount of \$1,849 plus the install thru CB Technology Group (CBTG), all in favor. The old laptop can still be used for some of the diagnostic software applications that conflict when installed on one device.
- On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Alderman it was approved for daytime training officer DiCostanzo to attend the emergency vehicle operations course (EVOC) train-the-trainer on Saturday June 10th, all in favor. The course is sponsored by the District's insurance company and is offered at no cost to their insureds.
- It was reported last month the need to end hosting of the District emails on the existing exchange server and move to Microsoft 365. After review of the current emails approx. 25 licenses would be moved and will retain a westfieldfd.com domain address, the majority of volunteer email addresses will need to be grouped into a distribution list. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch the following was approved; 1) transfer the 25 email licenses for an estimated monthly cost of \$130.20; 2) the amount is based on Microsoft's monthly rate versus an annual commitment; 3) the data migration/support costs thru CBTG are a flat fee of \$3,499 for up to 50 end users, all in favor. Linda reminded the Board that almost all the District computers are currently on a supported Microsoft office product (2016 or greater) therefore only an email account is necessary at this time (\$4.80 per month/per computer). Once a PC is in need of an upgrade it will require the latest Microsoft Office

suite which currently cost \$15.00 per month/per computer; at that time the total monthly costs will be considerably more expensive.

-On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Alderman it was approved to retain Costello Company, LLC to conduct the fiscal year June 30, 2023 audit in the amount not to exceed \$8,500, all in favor. Linda will file the appointment of auditor with the State of CT OPM by May 31, 2023.

-The Board would like to schedule a meeting with Raymond James to review the portfolio, Linda will make those arrangements.

-The Board reviewed the proposals for three sidewalk projects that were spec'd with the contractors. A **MOTION** was made by Scarrozzo and seconded by Balch to award the work to Wespro, LTD provided his quote includes an 18" cheek wall and cement concrete (not fly ash) in the amount of \$18,405; Commissioners Amy, Scarrozzo, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Plummer, Balch, Turner and T. Bysiewicz in favor Comm. Peterson abstained, motion passed. Wespro will be contacted to confirm if their scheduling timeline is acceptable to the District.

-The proposals on the paving project are tabled until next month. Now that the install timeline has been pushed back the vendors need to be contacted to confirm if their pricing and scope has changed.

Old Business

Chairman Amy stated there was no updated information regarding the outcome of the April 2nd Freedom of Information Commission (FOIC) hearing.

New Business – None

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Balch seconded by Comm. Peterson at 7:31 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel; staffing, job description, salaries pursuant to Statutes Section 1-200(6)(A) and Section 1-225(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended. In attendance at the Executive Session were Commissioners Amy, Peterson, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Plummer, Turner, Balch, T. Bysiewicz and FDA Linda DeManche.

On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch the executive session at the monthly meeting was suspended @ 7:52 pm to attend the Annual Budget Meeting scheduled for 8:00 pm, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Peterson the Commission meeting reconvened at @ 8:11 pm after the conclusion of the Annual Budget Election Meeting. The Board continued the executive session that was suspended for the annual budget meeting.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Peterson @ 8:46 pm, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:47 pm by Comm. Balch and seconded by Peterson. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary