



COMMISSION MEETING

June 13, 2023

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on June 13, 2023. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Peterson, Scarrozzo, Alderman, Bysiewicz, Turner, T. Bysiewicz. Commissioner Balch joined at 7:08 pm, Commissioner Plummer was absent.

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. Alderman, all in favor.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Scarrozzo seconded by Comm. Turner it was approved to waive the reading of the May 9, 2023 regular meeting minutes and accept as written; all in favor.

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

Tax Collector's Report

-On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Peterson the May Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri was reviewed and approved, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

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

Chief's Report

-The Chief stated he in favor of switching the fire station alerting system (FSA) to Bryx versus the current Active 911. They have been demoing the Bryx software and are pleased with the services. The fee is \$500 for the monitor display which is approx. half of the annual cost of Active 911.

-Westfield 5 is out of service, there is an issue with the power steering pump. The assist pump is in the process of being rebuilt with the hope of the apparatus being back in service in a week or so.

-The active shooter/violent incident gear is in service and all training is complete. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed with the other emergency response entities in the city. The department has their SOG in place and all officers have completed training on it. It's a step forward in the service they can provide to the community if required.

-The Chief reported that three truck committee members are scheduled to head to Custom Fire for the final inspection on the 2023 Spartan Tanker next week. In addition to reviewing all specifications they will look at the correction to the suspension issue that Custom feels they have addressed.

-On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved to: 1) offer Rockwood Fire Rescue in Rockwood, Maine the right of first refusal to purchase Westfield's 1999 Spartan Tanker; 2) the purchase price is \$50,000; 3) as-is-where-is condition; 4) there is no commitment date as to when the tanker will be available for release, this will be determined by Westfield after receipt of their new tanker, all in favor.

-The status of training classes for members was reported as follows: FFI-Initial – member G. Terry passed and is FFI certified; Fire Instructor – member Greenwald has passed the course, Scarrozzo is scheduled to test next week; Pump Operator – FF D. Passamano has completed and passed the course.

-The Chief reported that Westfield will be hosting an EMT course in the Fall. First Approach EMS Education & Staffing is the company running the program, they will open up the class to other departments as well as Westfield members.

-The Chief reported that Bill Balch is trying get approval for Westfield to be an official facility for CDL/Q endorsement classes. If that goes through there are five or six members that are interested in the class.

Commissioner(s) Report

-Leanna Harris has passed her CCMC IV tax collector class, the plan is for her to enroll in CCMC I in September.

-FF's DiCostanzo, D. Passamano, Ahern are requesting to take a tanker shuttle ops class in the amount of \$110 for the course, the class is hosted on the weekend of 8/26 & 8/27. Comm. Scarrozzo made a **MOTION** to pay for the class and pay the employees for hours worked to attend, there was no second therefore motion failed. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Alderman it was approved to pay for the course for each employee; their attendance will not be considered hours worked, all in favor.

-The users on the Verizon account were reviewed. The Board is in favor of the line for FM Higgins to remain on the account even after his pending retirement in July. The account will be reviewed again at the end of the year.

-As the Board does not meet in July, on a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Balch it was approved to pay the June bills, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch it was approved to upgrade the operating systems on the servers due to end of life in October, the amount of \$2,498 and will come out of the CNR computer life cycle account, all in favor.

-The committee members will meet with the broker from Raymond James on June 27th to review the District investment portfolio.

-Eversource's posted generation rate for July-Dec is considerably lower than the first half of the year. Direct Energy was contacted for their latest rate which is 13.19/kWh, lower than the rate of 15.59/kWh contracted in January. The District will contract for the lower rate with a 48 month term, no termination fee applies.

-The printer/copiers in the tax office and admin office need to be replaced. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded Alderman the following was approved; 1) enter into a 60-month lease agreement for a Savin IM430f in an amount of \$45 per for the tax office; 2) direct purchase a HP E47528f off of the St of CT contract for \$895 for the admin office; 3) both printers will be on master agreement for service and toner supplies thru A&A Office Systems, all in favor.

-The District received group health insurance renewal rates for the 2023/2024 fiscal year. The existing plan under Anthem BCBS is still being offered with slight changes in the out-of-pocket limit; otherwise benefits remain the same with an overall premium decrease of -3.2%. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch the following was approved; 1) the health insurance plan will remain with Anthem BCBS, the Gold Pathway CT PPO 2000 plan and; 2) the employees will contribute a cost share of 13% towards the premium which is the same rate as last year and; 3) employees can upgrade to the Platinum Pathway CT PPO if they wish but will pay 100% of the difference in additional premium between the Gold & the Platinum and; 4) the Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) will remain at a \$1,000 total reimbursement rate towards the deductible of the employee or an insured family member, all in favor.

-The Board reviewed the renewal rates for the business insurance lines. The property & casualty (P&C) had an approx. increase of 5%. The agreed values on the apparatus were reviewed and it was thought the value on the 1996 Spartan ladder should be increased. On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Peterson it was approved to: 1) to renew the P&C and A&S with ESIP thru Smith Brothers Insurance, Glastonbury; 2) increase the agreed value on the 1996 Ladder from \$1 mil to \$2 million subject to the premium increase, all in favor.

-The Board reviewed the calculations for the 2022 PPC Bonus Incentive, 6 members qualified for the program based on their participation % and mandatory drill attendance.
-It was reported that Wespro, LTD is available to start the sidewalk projects the week of July 3rd and anticipates completion within the month.
-The Board reviewed the contractor proposals for the project of paving the rear and side parking lots. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Peterson it was approved to award the contract to American Pavement Specialist, LLC out of Danbury in the amount of \$108,800.00, all in favor. They will be contacted with regards to scheduling, the Board would like to see this work begin in September.
-On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Peterson it was approved to participate in the “buy a brick” campaign for the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$250, all in favor.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Balch seconded by Comm. Peterson at 7:42 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel; staffing, job description, salaries and new hires 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, Turner, Balch, T. Bysiewicz, FDA Linda DeManche; Chief Ponzio and DC Lube joined for a portion of the executive session.

On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch it was approved to extend an offer to Scott Kotowski for the full-time position of Fire Marshal per the employment details agreed upon, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Balch it was approved to: 1) extend an offer to two of the applicants that have been interviewed; 2) employment details & schedule to be arranged with the candidates; 3) starting salary for these two candidates will be at \$21.00 per hour, all in favor.

The guidelines for the weekend summer staffing incentive program needs to be updated and redistributed to the Commissioners to review for future approval at a potential special meeting.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Peterson @ 10:05 pm, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 10:06 pm by Comm. Balch and seconded by Turner. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary