



COMMISSION MEETING

September 12, 2023

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on September 12, 2023. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:32 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Peterson, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Turner, Balch, T. Bysiewicz. Commissioner Plummer joined the meeting @ 6:37 pm Commissioner Scarrozzo was absent.

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

Chairman Amy made a **MOTION** to open the public session; Ross Andrew, Middletown reported that Silver Petrucelli & Associates have been selected to design the new emergency services building on Mile Lane. The members of the public service telecommunication will meet with them next month to move forward from there. With no additional comment the public session was closed on a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch, all in favor.

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

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch seconded by Comm. Turner it was approved to waive the reading of the August 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes and accept as written; all in favor.

The bills for August 2023, including the detailed Liberty and Lowes 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 Turner and seconded by Peterson the August Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri was reviewed and approved, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Turner and seconded by Peterson it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$660.64, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

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

Chief's Report

-The Chief reminded the Commissioners of the department picnic on Saturday, September 16th starting at 4 pm, they and their families are welcome. It is possible it may be rescheduled due to the pending storm.

-The Department incorporation status is moving forward. The by-laws have now been posted for member review and comments, once that has been completed it will move to the next step.

-The Departments fire prevention Open House is scheduled for October 28th and will include a flu vaccination clinic. They are working with the Fire Marshal's office to get everything arranged.

- The Chief stated Dana is continuing to work on mounting various equipment in the new tanker (W4). Westfield 4 was used in a tanker shuttle drill a few weeks ago and it worked out great. The first lettering session is scheduled for September 13th and it should what it needs to be put into service. There will be one more subsequent lettering session required for completion in full. The delivery of the 1999 Spartan Tanker to Maine is tentatively set for October 20th.
- The Chief stated he shared some directives/reminders to department member at the last monthly meeting and would like the same to be shared with the daytime staff. The Chief reviewed the daytime call-back protocols for daytime staff. Both the directives and the call-back protocols will be shared with the staff at their next weekly meeting.
- The Chief met with a representative from Elkhart and went thru various fire nozzles, etc. The Chief is interested in replacement nozzles for some of the apparatus based on newer improved models and the statistical data for same. He will be working on getting a quote for what they would like to replace and will report back next month.
- Captain Kohl is working on getting a price & schedule info on hose testing for this Fall.
- Comm. Balch stated he is waiting to see if the State DMV will allow Westfield to make use of the commuter parking lot for CDL/Q testing if WFD hosts a class for members in the future as our parking lot is not large enough for the course.
- The Chief reported the department had a couple of major incidents over the last couple of weeks (structural garage fire & house fire). Both fires were handled very well by our members and mutual aid departments and there were no reported injuries. The garage fire was able to be contained and not spread to the occupants' home and the structural house fire is believed to have been caused by lightening. WFD's FMO is handling both the investigations.
- The weekend summer staffing program is still going well; the participation was slightly less in August but he anticipates participation to rise as the summer is ending. The Chief would like to; 1) include weekday holidays where the day staff is off-duty as part of this program and; 2) considering opening participating in this program to daytime staff that are members of the department. Commissioner Amy would like to see any analysis of the wholes that daytime staff would fill and what the cost would be if daytime staff participated. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Bysiewicz it was approved to; 1) extend this trial program thru 1/1/2024; 2) add weekday holiday coverage to the schedule (the coverage provided on Labor Day will be calculated in this program), all in favor.
- The status of training classes for members was reported as follows: FFI-Initial – member Sorenson is enrolled (Aug-January); FFII-Initial – member Connole is enrolled (Sept-November); Certified Pump Ops – FF Ahern is in a course (Aug-Sept); Q Endorsement – (4) members are enrolled (Aug-Sept); EMT-Initial – (5) members are enrolled (Sept-Dec).
- In addition to the outside training classes listed the Chief reported a great deal of training exercises at the station have also been going on. Over the last couple of months, the department has taken on 5 or 6 new volunteers that are currently on-boarding; recruiting efforts have been going reasonably well.
- Comm. Bysiewicz asked the Chief about the events typically planned for the open house. Comm. Bysiewicz would like consideration to be given for additional signage advertising the October 28th open house event. On a **MOTION** Bysiewicz and seconded by Plummer it was approved to design and have a sizable sign created for East Street and several yard signs (approx. 20) to place around the district, the budget for this would be \$750 and would come out of category #5019/Public Relations category, all in favor. The Chief will ask the FMO to orchestrate this signage project.

Commissioner(s) Report

- The States DAS Office of Education and Data Management requires a letter of intent of appointment as part of the application process for the Fall 2023 fire code inspector module which begins in November. The Board will supply FF Arroyo with a letter stating the District intend to appoint him to the position of Fired Code Inspector upon his successful completion of the certification program.
- Linda reported that FF Ahern is currently on workers compensation leave after sustaining an injury at the station on August 21st. His returned to work date is unknown at this time.
- It was reported that the premium to increase the disability benefit to \$1,000 for the Accident & Sickness (A&S) policy will be an additional \$568, there is monies in the budget to cover this increase.
- The District is still waiting on a quote for repair work to the existing sidewalks.

-It was reported that the request for LoCIP funding towards the District's capital improvement project for parking lot repairs was approved by Common Council on September 5, 2023 in the amount of \$50,000.00. The paving contractor was contacted regarding schedule and it was tentatively set for the first or second week of October. Linda will request a pre-construction meeting prior to the start. Next step will be to schedule the contractor for the extruded curbing.

-Linda reported the email migration to Office 365 for the District is taking place on September 13th. After the completion, the physical exchange server will be properly & securely decommissioned.

-After installing the latest diagnostic software on the mechanics laptop, it was discovered that the vehicle interface and adapters were no longer supported. On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Alderman it was approved to purchase the NEXIQ Diagnostic USB-Link 3; the cost is approx. \$964 thru an authorized distributor; funds will come out of #6626/Maintenance & Tools, all in favor.

-The Board will schedule Chief evaluations in September. Linda will inquire about the Chief's availability to set the date and let the Board know.

Old Business

-A quote for the replacement of office chairs in Commission office was not available. This was tabled until the October agenda.

New Business

-Comm. Bysiewicz & Peterson wanted to start discussions with regards to a possible future storage building in rear of the building on the far side of the parking lot. They intend to find a potential location for future electrical conduit that would need to cross the parking lot. This work would need to occur prior to the paving project beginning. The next step in the process would be to obtain surveying proposals from engineers. The Board was in support of Comm. Bysiewicz obtaining quotes and report back. Bysiewicz first shared the short-term idea for project; take down the existing training tower and install a 12x20 temporary storage building which would take care of the current need for storage. The long-term goal would be to potential have a future 15x30 building that would be for a new building and some area for some of the departments training exercises, such as demoing cars. On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded Balch it was approved to run conduit in the rear of the building; the cost is estimated at \$3,000; the cost would come out of the CNR-Parking Lot Improvements, all in favor.

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Balch at 7:46 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel; new hire, salaries; legal opinion findings – member applications 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, Plummer, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Turner, Balch, T. Bysiewicz, FDA Linda DeManche and Chief Ponzio.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Plummer @ 8:59 pm, all in favor.

MOTION to adjourn @ 9:00 pm by Comm. Plummer and seconded by Balch. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary