



COMMISSION MEETING

December 12, 2023

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on December 12, 2023. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Turner and T. Bysiewicz. Commissioner Plummer joined the meeting @ 6:36 pm and Commissioner Balch joined the meeting @ 8:15 pm. Commissioner Peterson was absent.

Others present were: Deputy Chief (DC) Lube, Assistant Chief (AC) Coco, FDA Linda DeManche and Ross Andrew.

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. Alderman seconded by Comm. Turner it was approved to accept the agenda as published, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Comm. Alderman seconded by Comm. Turner it was approved to waive the reading of the November 14, 2023 regular meeting minutes as accepted as written; all in favor.

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

Tax Collector's Report

-On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Turner the November Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Cynthia Augeri was reviewed and approved, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Turner it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$422.70, all in favor.

Fire Marshal's Report

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

Chief's Report

-AC Coco reported the installation of the additional entry access keypads to the two south doors started today and should be completed on Wednesday.

-The Chiefs are demoing personal CO meters as the ones currently in use are nearing end of life. They will be looking to replace four.

-On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Plummer it was approved to purchase eight (8) impress batteries in the amount of \$1,624 for the portable radios, this would come out of the Chief's communication budget, all in favor.

-AC Coco shared that 7 maybe 8 members are interested and ready to commit to the schedule for the FF1 course that is being hosted at Westfield starting Jan 24th. On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Turner it was approved to send the members to the course being offered thru the Middlesex County Fire School in the amount of \$1,250 per member, all in favor. As Westfield is hosting the class there is an anticipated credit for two spots.

-The status of training classes for members was reported as follows: FFI-Initial – member Sorenson's live burn practical is this weekend; FFII-Initial – member Connole is finishing up the course; EMT-Initial – (4) members are enrolled (Sept-Dec), the course is finishing on Dec 13th and practical's are scheduled for Dec 16th; members can then schedule their written, (1) member has withdrawn from the EMT initial course.

-DC Lube stated they are working on specifications for the replacement of the Chief's vehicle (car 5). It was also suggested that the Fire Marshal's vehicle be considered for replacement. Chairman Amy recommends the department put a committee together to work on both specifications and present numbers for consideration in the 2024/25' budget process.

-The department Santa run parade is schedule for Saturday, December 16th.

-Westfield is hosting the December County Chief's meeting on December 12th.

-The department intends to continue using Priority Urgent Care in Cromwell for their annual periodic physical exams. The Chief is exploring the specifics on adding testing for baseline cancer screening.

-On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Turner it was approved to purchase four (4) sets of gear for active members at total cost of \$22,463 thru MES, Inc., all in favor. This will come out of the Chief's budget. Due to very long lead times on the current gear spec the department is considering a different manufacturer.

Commissioner(s) Report

-It was reported that Westfield's application to FEMA for the 2022 AFG & 2022 Safer grants were turned down for funding. AC Coco shared that he intends to participate in an upcoming FEMA seminar in New Haven that will talk about the priority items for the 2023 AFG.

-Linda reported that AR Mazzotta is still searching to fill the part-time position in the tax office. They indicated holiday time is difficult. They have found their current client base is not interested in part-time for the long term in addition to having a higher salary request. She will keep us updated on the progress.

-The Fire Marshal office is looking to replenish their fire safety education material that is used for schools, open houses, etc. in the amount of \$925. They will move forward with the order which will come out of the fire prevention/education budget line item.

-The topic of a fire marshal weekend rotation schedule was discussed. The Board would like FM Kotowski to come up with a proposal for their consideration

-On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Turner it was approved to follow the past practice of giving the employees a holiday bonus in the amount of \$200 for the 10 permanent employees and 2 part-time DFM's, all in favor.

-Linda will reach out to Hometown Benefits, the firm that assists with the management of the LOSAP benefits to set up a meeting to review the Charles Schwab investment portfolio account.

-The June 30, 2023 financial audit was not available for this meeting. Upon receipt from the auditor Linda will email it to the Board members for their review and approval.

-A legal notice will be posted in the newspaper, on the WFD website and in the station accepting letters of interest from those who wish to be considered candidates for the elected position of Commissioner at the Annual meeting on February 6, 2024. The deadline to receive those letters is January, 19 2024.

Commissioners Amy, Peterson, Plummer are up for re-election.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

MOTION to go into Executive Session by Comm. Alderman seconded by Comm. Plummer at 7:18 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel; new hire/firefighter and tax office 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, Plummer, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Turner, T. Bysiewicz, Balch (@ 8:15 pm) and FDA Linda DeManche.

MOTION to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Amy seconded by Comm. Alderman @ 8:37 pm, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Alderman and seconded by Turner it was approved to increase the per diem stipend to \$220.50 for a whole day and \$110.25 for a half day effective at the next pay period, all in favor.

A **MOTION** was made by Amy and seconded by Plummer to; 1) to offer Leanna Harris the position of Tax Collector at a rate of \$24.80 per hour effective January 1, 2024; 2) work schedule hours for L. Harris will continue at the 4 days a week (Tues-Fri) for approx. 20 hours per week; 3) instruct AR Mazzotta to increase the salary offer for the Treasurer position up to \$24.00 per hour, work schedule hours will remain at 3 days per week for approx. 16 hours, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Amy and seconded by Turner the following was approved effective 1/1/2024; 1) **remove** Cynthia Augeri from the Signature Card & Agreement at Liberty Bank for the account ending in 1530; 2) **remove** Leanna Harris from the Signature Card & Agreement at Liberty Bank for the accounts ending 6825 and 6959, also to the CT Short Term Investment Account ending in 0270; 2) **add** Leanna Harris to the Signature Card & Agreement at Liberty Bank for the account ending 1530, all in favor.

The Board discussed at length the concept of hiring an agency that would provide Westfield the services (knowledge test, oral board review, etc.) which would result in recommendations based on scoring of the current slate of candidates for the open Firefighter/EMT position for the Board consideration. The District would host internal physical abilities testing. Comm. Amy made a **MOTION** seconded by Turner to retain services with MissionCIT, LLC for services outlined in the proposal for a total of \$7,000; Comm. Amy, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Plummer, Turner T. Bysiewicz in favor, Comm. Scarrozzo & Balch opposed, motion passed. AC Coco will make the arrangement to get the process going ASAP.

MOTION to adjourn @ 8:42 pm by Comm. Alderman and seconded by Turner. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche
Fire District Administrator
as Recording Secretary