



# COMMISSION MEETING

March 12, 2024

The Westfield Fire Commission met at the East Street Firehouse, Middletown, CT on March 12, 2024. Chairman Amy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following Commissioners present – Peterson, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Balch, T. Bysiewicz; Commissioners Plummer joined the meeting @ 6:33; Commission Turner was absent.

Others present were: Chief Ponzio, 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. 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. Peterson it was approved to waive the reading of the February 6, 2024 regular meeting minutes and the February 19, 2024 special meeting minutes and accept as written; all in favor.

The bills for February 2024, including the detailed Liberty and Lowes statements were reviewed; after all questions were answered, the bills were approved on a **MOTION** by Comm. Balch and seconded by Comm. T. Bysiewicz, all in favor.

## **Tax Collector's Report**

-On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Alderman the March Tax Collector report submitted by Tax Collector Leanna Harris was reviewed and approved, all in favor.

-On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Alderman it was approved to issue tax refunds to the various taxpayers on the list provided by the Tax Collector in the amount of \$ 308.09, all in favor.

## **Fire Marshal's Report**

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

-The Chief stated fire related calls have been at higher percentage over the last several months sharing specifics of the latest fires the department has responded to.

-Comm. Bysiewicz shared that the City of Milford has passed a first-of-its-kind ordinance that bans certain electric vehicle charging stations from underground garages in future developments because of concerns that they are a significant fire hazard.

## **Chief's Report**

-The 2023 Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) application was filed on March 7, 2024 for the purposes of PPE- (17) sets of turn-out gear. The total grants request was for \$125,152k with the District's cost share of 10% totaling \$11,375 of the application amount. The Chief wanted to thank AC Coco & Linda for getting this done.

-The department banquet is scheduled for Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> @ Falcon's Pavilion. The Chief was pleased that attendance was up, compared to previous years. He made the Board aware that he anticipates an overrun in the budget amount allocated. The Board was pleased to see more in attendance.

- On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Scarrozzo the costs related to Class A alterations (\$1,845) and complete Class A uniforms (\$4,434) for new members from Security Uniform were approved, all in favor.
- The Chief reported the need for more gear lockers. He presented a quote for approx. 11 lockers and they would be installed in the area of W6 bay for a cost of \$6,480. The Board would like the Chief to check on the lead time for these and report back next month, therefore this item was tabled.
- The Chief reported that oil leak was noticed on W2; Dana feels it is somewhere in the area of the transmission housing and it is scheduled to go to Cummins for diagnostics. This vehicle is now out of warranty and this is the second time an oil leak occurred; the first time was covered under warranty. The findings will be reported back once diagnosed.
- The status of training classes for members were reported as follows: FFI-Initial – member Sorenson needs to re-take just the haz-mat written portion; (8) members in the course which runs January-June; EMT-Initial – (3) members need to re-take the written exam.
- The Chief reported a live burn scheduled on the Tuesday drill night for March 12<sup>th</sup> hosted at the Middlefield Volunteer Fire Department.
- On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Plummer it was approved for approx. 9 members @ \$350/per for the TECC training scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup>, all in favor.
- On a **MOTION** by Scarrozzo and seconded by Peterson it was approved to reimburse the cost of \$1,629 to I. Albert for his successful completion of an EMT-initial course, all in favor. This will come out of the Chief's training budget.

### **Commissioner(s) Report**

- On a **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved for the employee's participation in rope rescue class schedule for April 9<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>; the class on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> will meet and be considered the employees mandatory drill requirement, all in favor.
- FM Kotowski is coordinating Westfield's participation of two events (1<sup>st</sup> Aid & Fire Safety Training on 4/20) & (Middletown Kids Health & Safety Day on 5/18). It was suggested a sign-up sheet be put up for any WFD members that wish to participate.
- Linda reported that Direct Energy was offering a new lower rate for electrical generation charges. The switch was made from 1.319 to 1.269/kWh for the same 48-month term with no early termination fees.
- The next budget committee meeting is scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> @ 4:30 pm.
- A reschedule date needs to be set for the portfolio review with Hometown Benefits, the firms that assists with the management of the LOSAP benefits. Linda will see if a zoom can be scheduled prior to a budget meeting.
- The Board was interested in the status of Westfield being approved as a CDL/Q testing facility. Comm. Balch stated it was a no-go as the State is not allowing any future expansion this year. They are accessing how they want it run, so it may be a possibility next year.
- Comm. Balch made a **MOTION** seconded by Alderman to renew the lawn fertilization program thru Plummer All Season Landscaping with the applied discount for an amount of \$1,757.50; Comm. Amy, Bysiewicz, Alderman, Scarrozzo, T. Bysiewicz, Balch in favor; Plummer & Peterson abstained, motion passed.
- The Board reviewed the calculations for the 2023 PPC Bonus Incentive. Comm. Peterson made a **MOTION** seconded Alderman to pay the 7 members identified that qualified for the program based on their participation % and mandatory drill attendance with the noted exceptions; Comm. Amy, Bysiewicz, Peterson, Alderman, Scarrozzo, Plummer, and T. Bysiewicz in favor; Balch abstained, motion passed.
- The City of Middletown has shared that effectively immediately, the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) Office now requires each municipalities to develop a five-year Local Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) of LoCIP eligible projects. Westfield will complete the necessary form that gives a general description, need for, estimated cost of, for each individual capital improvement project over these five (5) years and submit to the City by the required deadline.
- The Board discussed the growing need for future expansion in the form of maintenance, training and storage facility. The thought is to explore the options of placing such a facility in rear of the station. On a **MOTION** by Peterson and seconded by Bysiewicz the following was approved; 1) retain Benesch Engineering, Glastonbury to determine and how much and what is possible for a future building; 2) contract for a wetland delineation and survey in the amount of \$7,000; 3) the funds will come from the unassigned fund balance to cover this cost, all in favor.

**Old Business** – Comm. Amy still feels there is nothing in the charter or by-laws that will denote the secretary to cast one vote when a commissioner election is uncontested. Therefore, Westfield will continue to hold a commissioner election even when the number of candidates submitting their intent to place in nomination equals the total number of Commissioners to be elected.

**New Business** – None

**MOTION** to go into Executive Session by Comm. Peterson seconded by Comm. Balch at 7:31 pm, all in favor for discussions regarding: Personnel; new hires & salary 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, T. Bysiewicz, Balch, Chief Ponzio and FDA Linda DeManche.

Chief Ponzio left the executive session at 7:30 pm.

**MOTION** to come out of Executive Session by Comm. Peterson seconded by Comm. Balch @ 8:16 pm, all in favor.

On **MOTION** by Balch and seconded by Peterson it was approved to make an offer to contract hire Tracy Raicik through the A.R. Mazzotta Agency to the position of Treasurer at a rate of \$22.00 per hour, all in favor.

On a **MOTION** by Bysiewicz and seconded by Scarrozzo it was approved to increase the salary of FF T. Lemay to \$22.50 per hour effective at the next pay period; all salaries will be reviewed at the next budgetary analysis, all in favor.

**MOTION** to adjourn @ 8:18 pm by Comm. Balch and seconded by Plummer. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda DeManche  
Fire District Administrator  
as Recording Secretary