

Board of Fire Commissioners' Regular Meeting

May 23, 2024

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 N Main Street Bristol, CT

Present: Commissioners Sean Moore, Anthony Benvenuto, Hal Kilby, Dana Jandreau and Joyce Ptak, Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano, and Fire Chief Richard Hart.

Absent: Council Member Andrew Howe

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Caggiano at 6:00 pm.

2. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

- a. None.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a. None.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Firefighter Donald DeForge submitted a request to retire effective July 29, 2024.
- b. The City of Waterbury's Fire Chief Terrance Ballou sent a thank you note to the department for their support following the passing of Fire Driver Joseph Bogdanski.
- c. Chief Hart expressed gratitude to the Bristol Fire Department, Mayor Caggiano, and the Commissioners for offering support and mutual aide to Waterbury for the funeral. Bristol's C- Shift Tower 1 assisted in covering the City of Waterbury during services to allow Waterbury fire member to attend the funeral.
- d. Firefighter Stephanie Barry was interviewed on the news speaking in support of keeping the CPAT, Candidate Physical Ability Test, for firefighters equal for women.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- a. On motion of Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner Ptak, it was voted: To approve the April 27, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

6. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORTS

- a. Chief Hart gave a summary of the reports to the board. He shared an update on repairs being done to Engine 4 and Engine 1. The new Engine 5 and Engine 1 specifications are being finalized. Chief Hart has been meeting monthly with the Family Fun Day Committee in preparation for their upcoming June community event which includes a touch a truck with many of the department apparatus and the HAP Barnes Fire Safety Trailer. He shared with the board that he attended a seminar with the Career Chief's

Association at Shipman's regarding legal issues for departments in Connecticut. There is discussion being held regarding the Southington Fire Department and lack of staffing and the impending OSHA compliance requirements. There is a class action law suit in discussion regarding PFAS and turn out gear. Chief Hart shared that the Dodge Caravan in the Fire Marshal's fleet is not unsafe as stated in the report and has been inspected and repaired by the department's mechanic. Chief Hart is looking to replace the vehicle in the new budget cycle.

- b. On motion of Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner Ptak, it was voted: To accept the April Monthly Reports. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. A summary of the Fire House 3 Building Committee Report was given by Chief Hart and Commissioner Moore. The fire department met with the Architect and team at station 4 to discuss and review heating and cooling designs. They shared that the estimates are in their favor and the project should come in on budget. The project passed the zoning board. The encroachment on the property is being resolved. The encroacher is a boarding neighbor who is in the process of purchasing the area. The right rear of the lot will be squared off and purchased. It does not impact the project.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- a. None.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. The Thomaston Savings Bank grant application was submitted late and not accepted.
- b. Commissioner Kilby shared a video to the board regarding PFAS and how it impacts our fire department. Chief Hart stated that the department has banned the use of Nomex uniforms which contain PFAS. He shared that a solution would be to replace the turn out gear with new technology, but it is not proven yet and replacement is expensive. The issue is the waterproofing component being the contaminate. The gear vendor is in the process of testing new gear with other departments like New York City. His stance is to wait and see how wear testing turns out before exploring new solutions. There is a bill in legislation regarding cancer in fire departments. Cancer is now considered a presumptive occupational injury. The department was offered early screening and bench mark scans which half of the department did participate in. He is hoping to come up with a way to offer this as an annual screening for department staff. The new NFPA Standards 1582 are being adopted by OSHA and this reflects medical screenings and testing. He stated he was speaking to a local gym that offers in-body screenings and a diet plan based upon the readings of the scan. The 1583 Standards mandate a wellness program for the department as well as a fitness training that is specific for first responders through an app to get a head start on these changes before they become mandated.

- c. On motion of Commissioner Jandreau and seconded by Commissioner Ptak it was voted: To approve the request of Firefighter DeForge for retirement and forward to The Retirement Board, and Comptrollers. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

10. ADJOURN

- a. On motion of Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner Jandreau, it was voted: To adjourn the meeting at 6:34pm. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Recording Secretary: Sara Bianchi