

Board of Fire Commissioners' Regular Meeting

February 27, 2025

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 N Main Street Bristol, CT

Present: Commissioners Sean Moore, Hal Kilby, Dana Jandreau, Joyce Ptak, and Anthony Benvenuto, Council Member Cheryl Thibeault, and Fire Chief Richard Hart.

Absent: Mayor Jeffrey Caggiano

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Moore at 6:00 pm.

2. Employee Recognition

- a. None.

3. Public Participation

- a. None

4. Communications

- a. Commissioner Jandreau was reappointed until January 2028.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- a. On motion of Commissioner Ptak and seconded by Commissioner Jandreau it was voted: To accept the January 23, 2025 meeting minutes. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

6. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY REPORTS

- a. On motion of Commissioner Jandreau and seconded by Council Member Thibeault it was voted: To accept the January Monthly Reports. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Chief Hart provided an update to the board on Fire Station 3. He shared that they are preparing to start with under slab plumbing and wiring. He stated the contractor is estimating they are about a month behind due to winter weather but is confident they will be able to make up time lost.

- b. Commissioner Jandreau on behalf of the Personnel Committee shared that Probationary Firefighter Ryan Blaney was sworn in and has started at the Connecticut Fire Academy.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Chief Hart gave an update on the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. He attended the Capital Improvement meeting where they discussed the renovation request of Fire Headquarters. The board will try and secure funds for a design and price estimation on the renovations project this coming fiscal year and readdress the following fiscal year.
- b. Chief Hart shared that he met for the mayor's budget review. He stated the budget was reduced after a request by the mayor to show purposed budget reductions of 2% and 5%. The Fire Department adjusted their budget to reflect only 8 new firefighters, leaving the new personnel request for 8 instead of 16 and to fill remaining vacancies with overtime. The removal of the 8 new hires and several other reductions resulted in a \$761,675.00 decrease from the originally submitted budget. The main budget increase is in wages where there is an additional staffing request, and a contractual 3.5% increase in wages. The board discussed the arrival of the new ladder, which is expected late fall, how to staff it given the current circumstances, and again addressed the potential to obtain a SAFER Grant to offset costs for staffing. Chief advised the budget hearing is on March 5th.
- c. Chief Hart advised the board that the Fire Marshal's office has been working to provide them an update on the private hydrants in the city. He shared that all owners of private hydrants received notice to test and provide documentation for proof of compliance. The city has an ordinance in place for the maintenance and upkeep on these private hydrants. Council Member Thibeault advised they will look at ordinances from other municipalities to compare against Bristol's for compliance.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Chief Hart shared that Engine 5 was in an accident involving icy conditions while responding to an overturned propane truck. The firefighters suffered relatively minor injuries considering. He stated the engine incurred an estimated \$100,000.00 in damages but noted that it could have been far worse given the circumstances, and commended the driver on making the best of a bad scenario.

10. ADJOURN

- a. On motion of Council Member Thibeault and seconded by Commissioner Ptak, it was voted: To adjourn the meeting at 6:38 pm. Following a voice vote in which there was no opposition, the Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Recording Secretary: Sara Bianchi