Enfield Fire District No. 1

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

June 9th, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Patrick Droney.

Attendees for the Board:

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| Paul Benis | Gary Castle |
| Patrick Droney | Derek Chapin |
| Vinny Grady | Maureen Brennan |
| William Moran |  |
| Sean McGuire |  |

Also, in attendance was Deputy Chief William Higgins.

Vincent Grady makes a motion to add an item to the agenda for the election of officers under new business and this motion is seconded by Paul Benis. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

**1st Public Comment:**

Lisa Ellis – Ms. Ellis states that she highly suggests that the entire Board of Commissioners takes a class in ethics and their responsibilities and deportment as elected officials. President Droney and William Moran stated that they take ethics courses as a requirement of employment. William Moran also states that if by ethics Ms. Ellis means intimidation, giving incentives, disobeying town ethics, and calling people not transparent perhaps others need this training. President Droney asked if this is about a specific incident and Ms. Ellis states it is and it is because of a complaint about using town time to campaign for the recent election. She states that President Droney sent this in and he was acting for the board. Ms. Ellis states she believes other candidates would have made a better fit and she is looking for more transparency. William Moran states our meetings are public. Ms. Ellis says that there was a letter to the editor stating that the mill rate was lowered but it should have also stated that there was an increase due to the assessment and this lowered tax rate was for mitigating the cost. Mistakes with elections were mentioned and William Moran states some of that was run by our counsel and approved and therefore believed to be correct by the board. President Droney states that he did take responsibility in public for at least one of the errors and Ms. Ellis states that this was not the first time there was a mistake. President Droney states that the board was accused of nefarious actions and purposely trying to negatively affect certain candidates and this was not true and that it was an error with no intent and that all candidates were affected equally so it is clearly not the case. There is a conversation about the district Facebook page and William Moran states that at one time Ms. Ellis was to run it. Paul Januszewski mentioned that he was involved in training for the website and that Ms. Ellis was on the list for it. Ms. Ellis states she never received an email mentioned for the training but that former Commissioner Prentiss had told her she would have access. William Moran states that Ms. Ellis has since left and Ms. Ellis states that the reason she left has to do with the association. Maureen Brennan asked for clarification from President Droney about the action mentioned earlier, the ethics complaint to the town, and if it was done on behalf of the commission by him or as a concerned taxpayer and he states it was done by him as an individual.

John Alexander – Mr. Alexander states that the same former commissioner twice was supposed to call him about the Strategic Planning Committee and he never called.

Debbie Chapin – Ms. Chapin states that she had difficulty looking for the proposed budget and there was not enough time to ask questions. Maureen Brennan suggests that in the future key areas of the budget could be highlighted in a separate document. Vincent Grady states that the budget is reviewed and approved at the April meeting so it is not available prior to that. President Droney said that having public comment at the May meetings is an item he has suggested for the bylaws revision. Ms. Chapin suggests having public comment before the annual district meeting or a budget meeting prior and President Droney states he agrees. Ms. Chapin also states that at the March meeting there was a moment of silence for Joseph Bosco and that we have lost a member of the department who served for over 45 years and there was not a moment of silence for him and she feels sad about it. It is discussed that there has not been a meeting since the passing of Wayne Kinney and President Droney advises that they will pay this respect during new business. Gary Castle notes that most members of the board paid their respects in person at Firefighter Kinney’s services. Maureen Brennan asked President Droney if, in the future, a member of the public could ask for someone to be remembered at a meeting and he advises, yes. Ms. Chapin inquired about the district webpage. Deputy Chief William Higgins states that Maureen Brennan, having a photography background, has offered to update the webpage photos and this is being planned in conjunction with the arrival of the new apparatus. And he also states that they are working with Tab, a computer company, to make IT improvements. There is a discussion about updating several aspects of the webpage. It is confirmed that the “banner” alerting the public of the meeting (Maureen Brennan went to the site at this time). Deputy Chief Higgins states that the administrative assistant is no longer with us and Derek Chapin inquires about this as he had received an email from her. The Deputy Chief clarifies that she is helping out part-time while we move to fill the role. He also states that he has access to the email account and files and sends items as well. Derek Chapin states that at the DPW the admin runs their webpage. President Droney advises that the new admin will be doing this and it is in the job description.

Cindy Howell – States she appreciates the “meeting today” sign but that she would prefer that it had more detail. William Moran replied that we did look into digital signage for the stations but that for Station 2, it was realized that the flashing lights would pose a problem due to this being in a residential neighborhood and facing houses. Derek Chapin states that Warehouse Point has one that is successful. Deputy Chief states that is what we were modeling ours after until this problem arose. Paul Januszewski states that the town also wants to have control of the content thus making it very difficult. Derek Chapin states he believes one is better than none.

William Moran says that he appreciates the attendance at the meeting and it provides transparency. He states that the board is transparent and that at the end of the day, people know him and all you have is your “name”. He advises that the public can contribute in a positive way and help us and to continue attending meetings. He feels that what happened in the recent election should not have happened and we are better than that. It is decided at this time that future meetings will be held in the larger meeting space.

Captain Donald Ellis – states that there always seems to be nothing but negativity and what’s lost is the everyday commitment by a lot of people that go way above and beyond for the people we are supposed to take care of. This fact gets washed out too many times and there are a lot of good people that do a lot of good things here that really care.

President Droney closes the first round of public comment.

Maureen Brennan read aloud the minutes from the April 7th, 2022 Commission meeting. Motion by Paul Benis and second by William Moran to accept the minutes as amended. Motion passes with two abstentions by voice vote.

The Treasurer’s Report was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Vincent Grady and second by Paul Benis to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Chief’s Reports for April and May were reviewed and discussed. Vincent Grady inquired as to the completion date of JFK for September and Ed Shirley states this is reasonable. He also noted that the calls are increasing and medicals are part of it. Derek Chapin asks who is going for what calls after hours for medicals. Deputy Chief states often they go because there is no ambulance available. Motion by Vincent Grady and second by William Moran to approve as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Fire Marshal’s Reports for April and May were reviewed and discussed. Vincent Grady inquired about the Third-Grade program and Ed Shirley advised that teacher Amy Guzie has offered to help out over the summer. Motion by Vincent Grady and second by Gary Castle to approve as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Training Officer’s Report was reviewed and discussed. The basic training that began for seven new members has been very successful. SCBA trailer and maze trailer training were completed. The Saturday sessions have worked out well and the final one, with live fire training, is this Saturday. This will help the new members be SCBA qualified, etc. Derek Chapin asked what the total hours are a reference to, is it annual and it is. The ISO audit began in May and 75% complete. The Chief is absent from this meeting because he is attending the final inspection for the new truck along with Lt. Patrick Carifa, Cpt. Scott Cunningham, and Asst. Chief Paul Chapin. Deputy Chief Higgins states that the multi-department drone and rescue training held on the CT River was very successful. We have 17 marine operators. They have found a buyer for the ladder truck 12 in the amount of $8,500. Old engine 16 went to a dept in FL that had been in great need. Derek Chapin asks the price truck 16 was sold for and it is $6,000 and he asks if in the future could we donate the truck to a department that is impoverished. Deputy Chief advises this can be considered. Derek Chapin asks if the commission has to authorize the sale of used vehicles and we do but we do not set an amount required. Motion by Vincent Grady and second by Maureen Brennan to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

**Committee Reports**

Patrick Droney states that the HR Committee and Commission have authorized the Chief to make an offer for the administrative assistant opening.

President Droney advised that the By-Laws committee met and had a productive meeting. And wanted to wait until after this meeting to see who is handling what committees and then will move forward.

Derek Chapin inquired about the strategic planning committee and President Droney advises that the recommendations will be addressed in the fall.

**Old Business**

Derek Chapin read aloud a letter authored by himself regarding the recent election thanking the voters and candidates. The complete letter is attached (appendix A).

**New Business:**

President Droney read aloud an announcement of a fundraiser for Firefighter Ben Carlton who has Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. This will take place August 20th, 2022 at Station 2 at 5pm and tickets are $20. (details are found attached in Appendix B).

There is a motion to donate $500 to Ben Carlton by Paul Benis and second by Sean McGuire. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

President Droney called for a moment of silence for Wayne Kinney who served the district for many years and passed away suddenly on April 20th, 2022.

President Droney thanked former commissioner Scott Prentiss for his service to the district.

There is a motion by Paul Benis to formally recognize Scott Prentiss’s service via a plaque or similar item and a second by Vincent Grady. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Clerk/Treasurer Maureen Brennan recognizes Scott Prentiss for his service. Maureen Brennan welcomed Derek Chapin to the board of commissioners. She also states that she appreciates that so many people came out to vote and that she believes an involved and informed voting public is a good thing and always has believed this. Maureen Brennan also advised that she will be asking the board for a bio/personal statement for the website. She also advised that she will keep a spreadsheet with topics covered so we can track from meeting to meeting what items need to be addressed and then notate when the items have reached closure. Maureen Brennan states that commissioner Hayward and herself met with Captain Ellis to review the assigning of available coverage of shifts. It had been discussed in the past that perhaps it would be beneficial to have a software program for this but upon reviewing the process, Captain Ellis is very conscientious and accomplishes the primary goal of having coverage of shifts to serve our district while keeping in mind the fair distribution of hours.

President Droney announces we will have the election of officers.

President Droney entertains a nomination for the position of Clerk/Treasurer. Vincent Grady nominates Maureen Brennan for Clerk/Treasurer and Paul Benis seconds this. Vincent Grady states Maureen has done a fantastic job and President Droney states that it has been a pleasure to have Maureen serve with him as President and Donald Hayward as Vice President and she does a tremendous job and she takes the role very seriously and takes it to heart. Maureen Brennan states she happily accepts and appreciates the opportunity to serve as Clerk/Treasurer.

President Droney calls three times for any additional nominations for Clerk/Treasurer and there are none. Vincent Grady makes a motion to close the nominations for Clerk/Secretary and second by Gary Castle. The motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

President Droney entertains a nomination for the position of Vice President. Vincent Grady nominates Donald Hayward for the position of Vice President and this is seconded by Paul Benis.

President Droney calls three times for any additional nominations for Vice President and there are none. Vincent Grady makes a motion to close the nominations for Vice President and second by Sean McGuire. The motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

President Droney entertains a nomination for the position of President. Paul Benis makes a motion to nominate Vincent Grady for President and second by William Moran.

President Droney calls three times for any additional nominations for President and there are none Gary Castle makes a motion to close the nominations President and second by William Moran. The motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Vincent Grady thanks Patrick Droney for his service as President and states that he did a good job and can be proud about it.

Clerk/Secretary Maureen Brennan casts one ballot for the three officer positions. Vincent Grady makes a motion to accept the nominees and there is a second by Sean McGuire. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

There is a motion to suspend the meetings for July and August 2022 by Paul Benis and a second by Derek Chapin

**2nd public comment**

Lisa Ellis – states that she read in the Journal Inquirer that the state is going to start reimbursing fire departments that go onto the highways. Deputy Chief Higgins states that he did see this, when asked, but that he believes it is only for two highways 395 and 95.

Debbie Chapin – inquires about the election of officers and what happens if someone wants to be President but has already been voted for Vice President or Clerk/Secretary. Maureen Brennan states a person can decline. They vote on the President last. And also that a person who is interested in a position would typically ask someone to nominate them at the organizational meeting.

John Alexander – states he hopes that there is a memorial brick for Wayne Kinney and Deputy Chief and Ed Shirley advised this is already in progress.

Motion to adjourn at 8:55pm by Paul Benis and second by William Moran. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen Brennan

Clerk/Treasurer