Enfield Fire District No. 1

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

November 3rd, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Vincent Grady.

Attendees for the Board:

Paul Benis Vincent Grady

Gary Castle Patrick Droney

Sean McGuire Derek Chapin

Maureen Brennan William Moran

Also, in attendance was Deputy Chief William Higgins.

**1st Public Comment:**

Debbie Chapin of Old King Street states she is pleased with the notices to the public for the commissioner opening and recent job posting but still would like to see a public notice for board committees, specifically the by-laws, the strategic planning, and station 2 renovation committees. She states that last month there was a concern mentioned about what the sign will be built in and the brightness of it and if members of the true public were on the committee it could be resolved.

John Alexander of Overhill Rd inquired as to if the new vehicle is in and the Deputy Chief advised that it is in and is currently in Rocky Hill.

Maureen Brennan read aloud the minutes from the October 8th, 2022 Commission meeting. Motion by Vice President Patrick Droney and second by Paul Benis to accept the minutes as amended and the motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Treasurer’s Report was reviewed and discussed. We have received two months of reimbursement for I-91 calls. Motion by Gary Castle and second by Derek Chapin to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Fire Marshall report was reviewed and discussed. President Grady asked if JFK has the CO completed and it is not completed yet. Meeting coming up on the 8th to review some minor outstanding items. There is apparently an unrelated zoning issue due to the brightness of the lights outside of the main office. Motion by Paul Benis and second by Vice President Patrick Droney to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Training Officer’s Report was reviewed and discussed. Deputy Chief William Higgins advised that old Engine 12 and Engine 15 are sold. The new quint is in Rocky Hill as of this morning. Training for the new quint is set up and will begin next week with day and night sessions. Training will move quickly because it is similar to the previous quint. The digital signage is discussed. Deputy will get a complete price for all fees for sign and gather the warranty info. Motion by Gary Castle and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote. Derek Chapin asked what sale price we received for Engine 12 and 15, Engine 12 was sold for $25K and engine 15 was sold for $12K. Derek Chapin also inquired about the Enfield decals being removed (to avoid our name being where we do not want it) and it is discussed that this is difficult to do but we will attempt this. Motion by Vice President Patrick Droney and second by Derek Chapin to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Chief’s Report was reviewed and discussed. I-91 calls have been added to the report. Ed Shirley has asked that since the roster number is on both the Chief’s Report and the Training Report it can be just on one, and it is decided it can be only on the Training report henceforth. There was an electrical fire on Hillside and the occupant did not, at first, see the fire in the attic. It is recommended by the State that the dept. does not try and estimate damage because it can cause issues between the insurance companies and us if there are differing opinions. Motion by Patrick Droney and second by Paul Benis to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

**Old Business** –

President Grady advised that four interested parties wish to fill the Board of Commissioners vacancy due to Donald Hayward’s resignation. He advised he sent an email to all four candidates inviting them to speak for a minute about their qualifications at tonight’s meeting prior to the vote to fill the opening. It is discussed that Paul Meunier did not receive this likely due to an email error and he will go last for speaking. Becky Ellis stated that although she does not have extensive fire service experience, she has recently been involved with the 125th-anniversary committee and it gave her an opportunity to see the current state of the department and it led her to seek out a mission statement for the commission and the department and could not find one. She states that she has an experience in the healthcare industry which would correlate with the commission work. She feels her modern mindset, progressive thinking and desire to give back to the community. Derek Chapin asked Becky what she thinks is the greatest asset to the department and she replied its members. Maureen Brennan asked for Becky’s top three areas she would like to improve and she states membership, morale, and budget analysis. Patrick Droney thanks Becky for putting her name in. Scott Prentiss could not be in attendance due to traveling but wishes to have the President read his statement of interest. This statement says that he approaches this humbleness and humor. He is usually the one reviewing the candidates. His qualifications do not need to be reviewed nor his desire to contribute to the EFD. Each person on the Board should know his heart is in the right place, agree or disagree with his recommendations. He may not be the smartest person in the room but has a way of fostering honest discussion. He would like to be part of the discussion and be along some history and basis for why some suggestions should be considered, agree or disagree and discuss until a plan is created. He says thank you for your consideration. John Alexander states that he has over forty years in the emergency and fire services with Hazardville Fd and CT Fire Academy as an instructor and a lifelong resident of Enfield. He is married for 34 years and he has a son who is a Master Srgt in CT Air National Guard. He has been trying for years to be on the Commission and feels he would be an asset; he has several contacts throughout the state. Vice President Patrick Droney asked about John’s affiliation with a slate of candidates this past spring who called the Board members unethical and John stated he would have no problem and that he had an issue with someone who is no longer here. William Moran asked what is the number one asset to the dept besides the membership and alludes to after-hours attendance at calls. William Moran states this could be said for most departments as well and John agrees. Paul Meunier advises that he would like to expand on who is not coming back for calls. He feels we really need to listen to each other and involve the community more. He thought about this in the past but had four young children and now would like to be involved and learn. He wants to understand more and help improve things. Derek Chapin asks what Paul’s opinion is on the consolidation of the fire districts in town and Paul states he does not think it will ever happen because some districts will have to absorb others’ debt and they will not want to but he states it should still be looked at and that it makes good fiscal responsibility to look at all avenues. Maureen Brennan asks what steps Paul would take to involve the community and he states an example of the meeting date changing on the website from next Thursday to tonight. He feels the meeting schedule should stay in place for the public. There is a discussion about the meeting dates falling on the first full week usually.

Vice President Patrick Droney makes a motion to fill the Commission opening by paper ballot and a second by Paul Benis. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

President Grady directs the Commissioners to write the name of the candidate they choose to fill the Board vacancy and directs the Treasurer/Clerk, Maureen Brennan, and a member of the audience, (Debbie Chapin volunteers) to count the ballots.

The count is returned and the results are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Paul Meunier | 5 votes |
| John Alexander | 1 vote |
| Scott Prentiss | 1 vote |
| Becky Ellis | 1 vote |

President Vincent Grady announces that the Board has appointed Paul Meunier to the Board of Commissioners and welcomes him.

HR Company update: Maureen Brennan advised that the district has hired Bambie for a year-long contract at the rate of $4,300. This service provides an HR Specialist dedicated to the department, policy writing services, and much more. We can extend the contract if we see value in it and the price does increase to approximately $12k/yr in the future.

Website upgrade: Maureen Brennan states we are moving forward with the upgrade and need a list of roles and responsibilities for web content moving forward and a point person for the upgrade. Maureen Brennan recommends using the web company for photos.

Vice President Patrick Droney asks the commissioners for feedback on the By-Laws revision and president Grady asks that the meeting times be earlier and this will be looked at.

**Committees:**

Strategic Planning: Maureen Brennan advised that the meeting for 11/2 was rescheduled for 11/9 to allow more time for the list of priorities to be explored. And also, a link to another plan was shared and it was made with the assistance of a consultant who will be discussed at the next planning meeting.

**New Business**

William Moran expresses gratitude for the care received from the district during a recent emergency call for himself due to multiple bee stings. It was a very critical condition he was in and the department personnel was effective and professional. He states we have a top-notch team.

President Grady advised of a CPR call this evening which had a positive outcome and he wants to say a good job tonight. The exact names of the involved personnel are not available at this time.

Deputy Chief Higgins advised that he attended the Firefighters Assoc meeting recently and a topic that arose was the different ways they get t-shirts.

Paul Benis made a motion that every member of the department will get two t-shirts, ordered by the Deputy Chief, and they will be paid by the department and Vice President Patrick Droney seconds it. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Maureen Brennan mentions that the consultant that handles the strategic planning also has advised that she partners with a group that can assist us in applying for the ERTC/Cares Act funds and if they obtain funds, they take 15%. Maureen asks if there is consensus from the board to have them attempt to get the funds for the district and there is. Patrick Droney makes a motion to pursue the ERTC/Cares Act funds and Paul Benis seconds it. The motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Derek Chapin compliments the committee for Engine 12 because he knows the order needed to be rushed and we do not usually purchase a stock vehicle but that this apparatus has what is needed to do the job.

**2nd Public Comment**

Debbie Chapin of Old King St inquired about the date of the next meeting and it is December 8th. She suggests the date of the next meeting be mentioned at the end of each meeting.

Donald Ellis of Post Rd. states that for the medical issue for Commissioner Moran he would like for people to look at the specifics of the call, the timing, and the location of apparatus/FF at the time of the call as an example of the benefit of having someone ready to go and the same goes for tonight’s CPR call. He also asked if the commissioners would like a copy of the monthly call attendance and it decided that it is and can be sent via email. He also inquired about how we want to see the positive things that happen throughout the month and it is decided that it will be sent to Vice President Droney and President Grady for meetings to be read into minutes. Derek Chapin states that he feels receiving the attendance is not necessary as it is operational. Maureen Brennan advised that with the current inquiries, we should look at this info even for a short time.

John Alexander of Overhill Dr inquired about the possibility of doing a reward program for various instances such as CPR saves etc. President Grady states he likes the idea but that it would be up to the Deputy and the Chief. Deputy Chief Higgins advised there is a draft rewards program written up at this point and they agree with having a service reward program.

Ed Shirley of Missle St. mentioned the suggestion of having the meetings on the second Tuesday of the month to allow time for the reports to be completed. Vice President Droney and Maureen Brennan explained that the By-Laws revision will state that the meetings will be set at the organizational meeting for the year ahead.

Becky Ellis of David St stated that in the past, about the shirts, she and Chris used to order them from Sue’s Creations and pre-pay but then people who ordered did not pay and it became financially not feasible. Deputy Chief Higgins states that there was no negative comment resulting in the decision to order the shirts.

President Grady closes the meeting by thanking those who showed interest in joining the commission and asks them to please stay involved.

Motion to adjourn at 8:53pm by Vice President Droney and second by Gary Castle. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen Brennan

Clerk/Treasurer