Enfield Fire District No. 1

Regular Commission Meeting Minutes

September 7th, 2023

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

**Attendees for the Board / Roll Call:**

Paul Meunier Paul Benis

Gary Castle Patrick Droney

William Moran Sean McGuire

Vincent Grady

Deputy Chief William Higgins was also present.

**1st Public Comment:**

No Comments.

**Approval Of June’s Meeting Minutes**:

The minutes from the June 8th regular commission meeting had been previously emailed to the Board for review.

Motion by Paul Benis and second by Paul Meunier to accept the minutes and the motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

**Communications and Reports:**

The Treasurer’s report for June was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Gary Castle and second by Paul Benis to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Treasurer’s report for July was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Vice President Droney and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Treasurer’s report for August was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Paul Benis and second by Gary Castle to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Fire Marshal report for June was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Paul Meunier and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Fire Marshal report for July was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Patrick Droney and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Fire Marshal report for August was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Gary Castle and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Training Officer’s Report for June was reviewed and discussed. Department had a very busy July and August. Multiple structure fires kept the Fire Marshal’s office busy. This month, September, Station 2 is hosting a Fire Academy/Fire Officer 4 Class. This Sunday, September 10th at 3pm is the 9/11 Memorial Tribute at Station 2. Tom Burnham will have his ice cream truck there.

Hired one new career firefighter, LJ Sousa, started on July 3rd. He’s been training, orientation, at Station 2 since he started and will be transitioning to Station 1 soon to train on the equipment. Three members are in Firefighter 2 at the Regional Fire School in Windsor Locks. Motion by Paul Benis and second by Gary Castle to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Training Officer’s Report for July was reviewed and discussed. Motion by William Moran and second by Paul Meunier to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Training Officer’s Report for August was reviewed and discussed. Motion by VP Patrick Droney and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Chief’s Report for June was reviewed and discussed. Building fire on 11 Putnam Drive, total loss? Structurally the exterior is sound but the interior may need to be gutted. Motion by Paul Meunier and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Chief’s Report for July was reviewed and discussed. Motion by VP Patrick Droney and second by Gary Castle to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The Chief’s Report for August was reviewed and discussed. Motion by Paul Benis and second by William Moran to approve the report as presented. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

**Board Member Comments:**

Gary Castle was present at the investigation at 144/146 South Road fire and he has to say he is impressed with the Fire Marshal and his team; the way they worked together and the way there was training involved in the investigation process.

Bill Moran comments regarding the Lovely Street fire (he was a neighbor), it was nice to see everything the guys did click like they had done it a thousand times, no one got hurt and the fire got put out. The guys did a great job.

Patrick Droney congratulates the guys that just got promoted: Don Ellis to Assistant Chief, Chris Ellis, and Matt Mucci to Captain, and Josh Donor and Mike Carifa to Lieutenant.

Vincent Grady says great job to Deputy Chief Higgins for putting it all together; the testing, the interviews. Everything was done in a very fair, transparent, and timely manner.

Deputy Chief Higgins says they are working on getting badges and uniforms ready for a ceremony that will be held in the near future. Pat Droney comments that one of the taxpayers had said that a ceremony should be held to recognize the individuals who were promoted.

**Old Business:**

Patrick Droney says they need to set meeting dates for the rest of the year and change the meeting times. Motion to change the meeting times for all regular meetings from 730pm to 630pm by Paul Meunier and second by William Moran.

There is discussion about changing the first Thursday of each month to the second Thursday of each month so there’s no confusion when it has to be changed due to first Thursday occurring in first week of the month. Motion made by Paul Meunier and seconded by Paul Benis to schedule future commissioner meetings to the second Thursday of every month at 630pm. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

The schedule needs to be changed on the website.

Has any progress been made with the Fire Marshal looking into the fees. Vincent Grady has a copy of the Warehouse Point’s fee schedule which was left in his truck. Table it for now. He’ll send a copy of it to everyone and they can vote on it at the next meeting. Discussion with Fire Marshal Ed Shirley regarding the rates. Fire Marshal Ed Shirley says Warehouse Point charges everyone regardless. Fire Marshal and Vincent Grady are in agreement that homeowners should not be charged plan review or inspection fees.

Gary Castle and Deputy Chief Higgins followed up on the Ethics Policy. It is on the Chief’s desk and it is a work in progress. Once they get a finalized version, they’ll send it off to the attorney and have him take a look at it.

Patrick Droney comments that the five fire districts met last week with a company that they are considering for collection of our taxes and move away from the town. It was a good meeting. Three of the districts are very interested; two are on the fence.

Hopefully when push comes to shove everyone will be on board. It looks like a decent savings for the taxpayers. This is one more thing to unwrap ourselves from the tenacles of the Town Manager and save the taxpayers money in the process.

They are going to send us a proposed contract in the next few weeks. If it happens, it will happen for next fiscal year. Talked about the car tax abatement; N. Thompsonville is not collecting fire taxes through the car tax. Enfield needs to look at that but he knows the Chief is not in favor of that. He states the taxpayer is getting hit left, right, and center with taxes.

**New Business:**

Vacancy on the Board of Fire Commissioners. They had three responses. They are here at the meeting to introduce themselves. John Alexander’s wife was present and said that he was withdrawing from consideration.

1. Tom Burnham: Member of the fire department for 32 years. He is retiring at the end of September. He feels like he could help out the department. Pat Droney asks about the possibility someone might raise the issue of a conflict of interest if he is a commissioner and also does work for the district. Tom does plowing for the department. Is that a conflict? He’s kept all of his prices at rock bottom and never raised his prices. He also does work for Thompsonville.
2. Chris Foley: Enfield resident for 30 years. Recently retired from running restaurants so he hasn’t had time to volunteer until now. Comes from a firefighting family in Boston. Dad was a Civil Defense Coordinator in Dorchester in WWII; Uncle was a firefighter in South Boston for 40 years; Godfather was a Deputy Chief in Boston. Stepson Dan was a volunteer here and now he’s a Captain in Hamden. He’s always had an interest in the fire service and really wants to help out.

No decision made on selecting commissioner for open seat tonight. Probably next meeting.

**Second Public Comment:**

None

Motion to enter into executive session for purposes of personnel issues at 7:55pm by Patrick Droney and second by William Moran. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Commission is out of executive session at 8:58pm with no votes taken.

Motion to adjourn at 8:59pm by Vice President Droney and second by William Moran. Motion passes by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Simonian-Luke

Administrative Assistant to Chief Richards