

Regular Meeting of the
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

DRAFT -- Meeting Minutes – August 19, 2020

Thompsonville Fire Station, 35 N. Main Street, Enfield, CT

1. Call to Order: by Comm. Perry at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll Call: present were Comm. Perry, Comm. Dodd, Comm. Pliszka, and Comm. Gillespie. Also present were Chief Deskis and Dept. Secretary Steneri. Absent was Comm. Bouthiette.

3. Pension Update from Beirne Wealth Consulting Services, LLC:

Lindsey Allard and Madison St. John gave an update via conference call:

Ms. Allard thanked the Board for allowing the Beirne Wealth team to provide an update during the meeting. Even though the Board agreed to receive updates quarterly, the team thought it was important to give an update because of the landscape of the market.

Ms. Allard reviewed the performance report as of July 31, 2020.

Ms. Allard said a lot of their clients have asked how the Presidential election will affect the market. The projection is that the market will go down between 5-8 % if Biden wins. We will raise cash if there is volatility in the market.

Comm. Pliszka asked if Beirne Wealth has the list of trustees for the pension plan. Ms. Allard said currently only Theresa is a trustee. Ms. St. John is waiting for the paperwork as to who the new designated trustees will be.

Comm. Pliszka asked has everything been transferred over from the 457 plan. Ms. Allard said that is correct. Comm. Pliszka asked have the participants been contacting you regarding the plan. Ms. Allard said the participants have full access to our advisory and administrative teams. A recorded webinar was emailed to the participants. A digital invite to answer questions was sent to the participants as well. Every 6 months a plan update will be given to the trustees.

The Board thanked Ms. Allard and Ms. St. John for calling into the meeting.

4. Chief's Report:

Chief Deskis said the department has received a large donation of masks, hand sanitizer, and thermometers from Ocean State Job Lot. SEWA International donated PPE as well.

Chief Deskis said there was one resignation this month. Firefighter Everest has been hired by the New Britain Fire Department. We appreciate his 6 years of service and wish him the best of luck.

Chief Deskis said Firefighter Vendetta will be retiring at the end of August. We thank him for his 30+ years of service.

Chief Deskis said 2 new firefighters have been hired to fill those vacant positions. They will start next week.

Chief Deskis said the department has been awarded a firefighter grant from the CT Water Company. FEMA's AFG grant is still in the running according to FEMA. All the grants should be awarded within the next 2 weeks. We will have to finance the air packs if we are not awarded that grant.

Chief Deskis said Squad 21 continues to have large repairs done on it. The apparatus is 14 years old and have over 80,000 miles. It goes out of service on a regular basis. To cut down on repair costs, Squad 21 and Engine 21 are rotated monthly. It might be a good time to start looking for a replacement so we can trade in or sell it before there is a major break in the apparatus. We could get \$40,000 to \$60,000 for it.

Chief Deskis said CT OSHA conducted an inspection at the fire station. There were some minor issues that have been corrected. We will invite them to do an inspection every year.

Chief Deskis said the parking lots have been sealed to ensure the pavement surface stays in good shape.

Chief Deskis said the bell project is in the planning stage. Hopefully, we can break ground in the next couple weeks.

Chief Deskis said former Chief Alaimo has contacted me regarding his pension calculations. He does not think they are correct. I contacted Prudential regarding the matter. They stated Mr. Alaimo was sent a letter regarding the change in payments and he did not respond back. Comm. Perry said so it is between him and Prudential. Chief Deskis agreed.

Chief Deskis said former Commissioner Mike Helechu built a Lego replica of Squad 21. He did a fantastic job. He brought it by the station and the press was there. There should be an article about it in the Journal Inquirer. Comm. Perry said it was amazing.

It had all the little details including the hoses, the decals, and SpongeBob in the window. He built it from scratch.

Chief Deskis said raises went into effect at the beginning of the fiscal year. I decided not to take one for myself.

5. Treasurer's Report:

Comm. Dodd said she is going to start with a FY 19-20 review. Chief Deskis did an amazing job with the budget. The total income was over budget by \$24,830. The total expenses were under budget by \$56,000. The net ordinary income was \$31,699. The other expenses were under budget by \$38,937. The overall net income was \$7,237. I cannot wait for the accountants to see this. Everyone did a great job.

Comm. Dodd read the current asset balances as of July 31, 2020: Operating account: \$72,099, Apparatus and Building Maintenance fund: \$160,175, Municipal Investment account: \$1,029,050, Debt Service: \$288,351, and Contingency fund: \$22,760.

Comm. Dodd said the total income was under budget by \$3,636. This is due to the loss of the firewatch fees from the cancelled Fourth of July Celebration. However, there was an increase in Fire Marshal fees and we received some income from the sale of old equipment. Expenses are overbudget primarily due to overtime, FLSA, and the parking lot repavement. Chief Deskis said the parking lot is paid for with grant money.

Comm. Dodd asked can the money in the Apparatus and Building Maintenance be put towards a new truck. Chief Deskis said it could be used as a down payment. We are just throwing money away repairing the squad. Comm. Dodd said that is the whole point of the account. We just haven't been able to fund it over the past couple of years. Can we wait until next year's budget or should we start discussing it now? Chief Deskis said it is hard to tell because we have been rotating the apparatus. Comm. Perry said it would have to be presented and go to a vote. Chief Deskis said the apparatus were all purchased at the same time. The ladder truck is going to be around for a while. We can replace the squad soon using a lease. Down the line, the engine will be replaced after that. Comm. Pliszka said some money is freed up if we get the grant. Comm. Dodd said we could use the maintenance fund money this year and then budget the lease payments for the following years. Chief Deskis said he will put a plan together to get a firm price. Comm. Pliszka said we won't have the new truck for at least a year. Comm. Dodd said then we should really start on this now.

Comm. Dodd asked about the bell monument. Chief Deskis said the Board approved to use money from the contingency fund for it. Firefighter DeMur has talked to several people about the brickwork. Captain Pliszka has been in contact with someone regarding the plaque. Comm. Dodd asked where the monument is going to be. Chief Deskis explained the location in the front of the station.

6. Public Communications:

None.

7. Commissioners' Communications:

Comm. Pliszka asked to add oath of office for Comms. Gillespie and Bouthiette to the next meeting agenda.

Comm. Pliszka asked if all the grant money from OPM has been spent. We could use some bushes out in front. Chief Deskis said there is a little bit of money left over.

Comm. Pliszka said we talked about the insurance. Chief Deskis said our property insurance decreased significantly by raising our deductibles a little bit.

Comm. Pliszka said we should start stripping one of our SUVs and put it up for sale. Chief Deskis said he is waiting for the state bid list to come in.

Comm. Pliszka asked the Grand List check from the Town of Enfield. Chief Deskis said we have not received the check yet. Comm. Perry asked is there any news on the collection rate. Chief Deskis said no.

Comm. Pliszka asked did all the bank signatories sign the paperwork. Dept. Secy. Steneri said yes but it will take a few weeks to go into effect.

Comm. Pliszka said we need to draft a letter to the Town of Enfield about receiving PILOT money for Asnuntuck. The money should be given to us instead of Hazardville. Chief Deskis said there is not a PILOT program right now. Comm. Pliszka said we should let them know in case it starts again. Comm. Perry said it is a follow through and to make it official.

8. Old Business:

None.

9. New Business:

None.

10. Approval of Minutes from June 17 regular meeting, June 30 special meeting, and July 9 special meeting:

MOTION to approve the minutes from June 17 regular meeting, June 30 special meeting, and July 9 special meeting made by Comm. Dodd, seconded by Comm. Gillespie. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 4-0.

11. Discussion and Approval of Invoices/Bills:

Commissioners reviewed, discussed, and approved checks for invoices/bills.

12. Adjourn:

MOTION to adjourn made by Comm. Dodd, seconded by Comm. Perry. All in favor by ayes at 7:57 pm.