

Regular Meeting of the  
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

**DRAFT** -- Meeting Minutes – April 19, 2023

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. Gillespie, Comm. Bouthiette, Comm. Pliszka, and Comm. Crowley. Also, present were Chief Deskis and Administrative Assistant Steneri.

**3. Update from Beirne Wealth Consulting Services, LLC and Milliman:**

Chief Deskis called Lindsey Allard from Beirne Wealth and Jenn Castelhana from Milliman.

Ms. Allard said Jenn from Milliman is going to give an actuarial update instead of giving the pension update. The monthly report has been sent out. Please contact me if there are any questions about it.

Ms. Castelhana went over a summary of the July 1, 2022 valuation report. The report shows member count, pay status, plan assets, market values, actuarial values, accrued liability, funded ratio, the actuarially determined contribution, and a summary of the key results.

Comm. Pliszka said we are proposing to contribute \$541,000 into the pension. The actuarial determined contribution is \$385,000. That should help us out in the future, right? Ms. Castelhana said yes, that will be the funded status of the plan. The contribution that is calculated is an actuarially determined amount. There is nothing saying that you cannot contribute more.

The Board thanked Ms. Castelhana and Ms. Allard for their time.

**4. Executive Session: Union Contract:**

**MOTION to enter into Executive Session** made by Comm. Crowley, seconded by Comm. Bouthiette. Discussion: Comm. Perry said I would like to invite Atty. McQuade into Executive Session. Roll Call- Motion passed 4-0 with Comm. Pliszka abstaining. Comms. Perry, Bouthiette, Crowley, Gillespie, Chief Deskis and Atty. McQuade entered into Executive Session at 7:16 pm.

Out of Executive Session at 7:35 pm.

#### **5. Possible Action regarding Executive Session:**

No action taken.

#### **6. Treasurer's Report:**

Comm. Crowley read the bank account balances: operating account: \$17,186, apparatus/building fund: \$292,947, municipal investment: \$3,028,391, debt service: \$124,778, and contingency fund: \$42,897.

Comm. Crowley said we are nine months into the budget year. Everything looks to be on track. There are certain items that have already been mentioned that are overbudget: apparatus maintenance and overtime. Those seem to be the only two line items.

Comm. Crowley said the down payment for the new apparatus has been sent in.

Comm. Perry asked do we have to transfer funds into the apparatus maintenance and overtime budgets. Comm. Pliszka said we should be transferring funds. Where are we going to transfer the funds out of? Comm. Perry said it is for bookkeeping purposes. The transfers should be numbered. This one would be the first. Do we have another meeting coming up? Comm. Crowley said May 3. Admin. Asst. Steneri said there is the May regular meeting. The overall salary line is fine. Just that component is over. Comm. Perry said funds are transferred so that next year more funds can be added or deleted to that line item.

#### **7. Chief's Report:**

Chief Deskis said four members attended a pump operator class sponsored by the CT Fire Academy.

Chief Deskis said four members and myself attended the CT highway safety class.

Chief Deskis said the bell monument should be delivered this week. It will be installed on the pad.

Chief Deskis said the surge protectors have been installed at the station.

Chief Deskis said HVAC air filter maintenance was conducted this month.

Chief Deskis said Squad 21 is out of service with a pump transmission problem.

Chief Deskis said the new fire apparatus is being built. It should be ready by summer.

Chief Deskis said the South River Street bridge project will start in the next couple of months. Instead of putting the squad back in service, the squad can go there. I will ask the Town to put fencing, lighting, and security cameras around the apparatus. That will allow the department to have 2 apparatus in the area if there ever was a fire down there. There is a contingency plan in place with Enfield Fire District and Warehouse Point.

#### **8. Public Communications:**

None.

#### **9. Commissioners' Communications:**

Comm. Pliszka asked to put the calculation of a new firewatch rate on next month's meeting agenda.

Comm. Pliszka asked to put no parking signs in front of the station by the bays. Chief Deskis said it could be stenciled on when the lines are done or we could put up signs.

Comm. Perry said the piece that Comm. Gillespie had at the meeting about what is going to be built downtown was very well-written.

Comm. Gillespie said that is what I wanted to discuss. I hope the commission is in favor of what is going to be done. I think we should publicly endorse the project. Comm. Crowley said I thought there were some changes to the project. Comm. Gillespie said it is the same developer that did Mansfield Center by UConn. There were retail spaces on the first floor and apartments above those spaces. It looks beautiful. Comm. Crowley said I am in favor of the project. I'm not in favor of just all apartments.

Fire Marshal Ellis said he attended a meeting about the project at Town Hall this morning. There are going to be three buildings. Pleasant and Chapel Streets will still be one-way streets. An entrance/exit has been added off of North Main Street. One building is slated to have mixed-use tenants on the first floor. One building will have a health club and the other will have a community room. Each building will have two elevators and stairs. The monument is going to stay where it is.

Comm. Crowley asked what are they going to do for parking. Chief Deskis said that is the big issue. There is only one parking spot for each apartment. People can park their other cars at Bigelow. People were complaining that they don't feel safe walking there at night.

Comm. Gillespie said we can do a press release. Comm. Perry said we can attend a council meeting and make a statement. These meetings are televised. A lot of people do not read the newspaper. Comm. Crowley said a letter can be sent to the Town Council and have it read at a meeting.

Comm. Gillespie said I am endorsing this because I have seen it. It works. I have a feeling that this is a steppingstone for what is needed down there.

Comm. Perry said Thompsonville is not a huge blight. But the less you do, the worse it's going to get. I was impressed with what is proposed.

Comm. Gillespie said I don't like that people who do not live here are complaining about what needs to be built here.

Comm. Perry said we will write a letter and send it to the Town Council.

#### **10. Old Business: Department Credit Card:**

Admin. Asst. Steneri said I have a credit card application from M&T Bank. I have filled out what I can so far. There are some things that the Board needs to decide such as credit limit and who the authorized signors are going to be. Comm. Perry asked who are the authorized signors for the other credit card. Chief Deskis said myself. Admin. Asst. Steneri said the authorized signors' social security numbers are required. Comm. Perry asked is he liable for something if he signs it. Comm. Crowley said only as chief though. Chief Deskis said no, I'm personally responsible for it. Comm. Perry asked how do we alleviate that. Chief Deskis said let's just keep it the way it is and just make sure the bill gets paid on time. Comm. Perry asked are we going to get a new card. Admin. Asst. Steneri said the application says that you agree to be personally responsible for all purchases. Comm. Gillespie said we should have a corporate card. Chief Deskis said we'll investigate it more.

#### **11. New Business: a) Review of Fire Marshal Ordinance Fees, b) Dental Insurance:**

##### Review of Fire Marshal Ordinance Fees:

Comm. Perry asked are we the only district that has these. Fire Marshal Ellis said yes.

Comm. Perry asked are we in line with other towns that have these. Fire Marshal Ellis said yes. This was a derivative of samplings from other municipalities. Some places are confused because there are separate municipality fees. We have our fees and the Building Department has theirs. Also, our fee is just a one time thing. Every time you apply for a different permit you have to pay a fee to the Building Department. Ours is a plan review fee. If a project doesn't have plans to review then there is no fee. A lot of companies ask to pay their fees online.

Comm. Crowley asked do we have the ability to process online payments. Fire Marshal Ellis said we don't have it now. I looked into it while we were in the process of creating our own website. Chief Deskis said we can definitely do that. I'm not sure what time of fees there are for that. Fire Marshal Ellis said there are no fees for us with Stripe. The person paying has to pay the processing fee. Having online payments makes it easier

for bigger companies to pay for the permit fees while the local companies can still stop by in person and pay. It would also eliminate some clerical work for myself.

Comm. Crowley asked do we oversee the replacement of gas or oil tanks. Is there a permit for that? Fire Marshal Ellis said any of those have been done under a building permit. We got a fee from that. I don't have the logistics to do the relicensing of propane refilling facilities. The Building Department lets me know about those so I can send out our permit application for that.

Comm. Crowley asked is there a fee for electric car charging stations. Is there a process for that? Fire Marshal Ellis said they have to apply for an electrical permit for that. There is going to a Tesla charging station near Big Y. They were charged a fee because they had about seventeen sheets of plans to look at. One of the car dealerships is going to put in one charging station. That was just an electrical permit because there were no plans to review. Comm. Crowley said that is the future and it is a source of a fee. Fire Marshal Ellis said the Board can change the language of the ordinance in the future.

#### Dental Insurance:

Chief Deskis said some of the members said that their cleanings are covered under insurance anymore. I just wanted to bring it to the Board in case the Union decides to change insurances. Delta Dental is a few dollars more. We will have to redo the figures for the contract. Comm. Pliszka said I have to see a specialist to get some work done. Nobody is accepting BeneCare anymore. Chief Deskis said if no one else complains about it then we will keep it the way it is.

#### **12. Approval of Minutes from March 15 regular meeting, March 22 special meeting, March 28 special meeting, and March 29 budget presentation meeting:**

Admin. Asst. Steneri asked at which meeting did the Board vote on the budget. Those meeting minutes need to be amended to include that motion. Comm. Perry said it was the March 28 special meeting.

**MOTION to add to the March 28<sup>th</sup>'s meeting minutes, the motion to approve the budget and approve all other meeting minutes** made by Comm. Crowley, seconded by Comm. Perry. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 5-0.

#### **13. Adjourn:**

**MOTION to adjourn** made by Comm. Bouthiette, seconded by Comm. Crowley. All in favor by ayes at 8:23 pm.