

Regular Meeting of the
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

DRAFT -- Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2022

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, and Comm. Pliszka. Absent were Comm. Bouthiette and Comm. Dodd. Also, present were Chief Deskis and Dept. Secretary Steneri.

3. Chief's Report:

Chief Deskis thanked all those who participated in the budgeting process. I think the taxpayers will agree that this is a fair budget. The mill rate stays consistent without any major increases. Budget workshops should start earlier next year.

Chief Deskis said the department will have an ISO evaluation this month. There will be a review of our daily documentation. We should have a decent rating because of recent updates since I started here. ESO is much better than Fire House. We have Flow MSP for pre-planning.

Chief Deskis said Firefighter Duval has decided to resign from his position. He thought it would be best for his to resign due to his health needs. It was a great pleasure to have him as an employee and he will be missed. His last day is May 11th.

Chief Deskis said Captain Forsyth has requested to retire after twenty years of fire service at TFD. It was a pleasure working with him. His service is appreciated. His last day will be May 5th.

Chief Deskis said I want to make a statement about the consolidation. No matter where the plan goes, all fire districts need each other. Even if we are not consolidated. We cannot speak for the other districts; however, I am sure they would agree that we all need to work together to continue a professional fire service in the Town of Enfield. I'm saying this because there were some members of the other departments that attended a union meeting here that took some words out of context. They thought we weren't willing to work with them. That is not a true statement. People are upset because of how the consolidation plan was put together.

Chief Deskis said for the record, there is not one person that I know of that did not want to consolidate with Hazardville and Shaker Pines. We were always for it; we just wanted the plan.

Chief Deskis said we need to start working on a plan for the tax recovery issue for the District. I have spoken with someone who is familiar with tax collection. So, if the Town does not collect our taxes we will have a plan in place.

Chief Deskis said the Town is going to fix the bump in the road at the intersection of Enfield Street and N. Main Street. This will happen after the Fourth of July celebration. I want to thank the Town Manager for getting this issue resolved.

Chief Deskis said Ladder 21 is out of service for some maintenance items.

Chief Deskis said the captain's exam has been posted for members who are qualified. The posting will be for thirty days. I will post a firefighter employment announcement shortly after that for any qualified applicants. Our current list has expired.

Comm. Pliszka asked will a PTSD test be done on the applicants. We have done it in the past. Chief Deskis said absolutely. Comm. Perry said I would prefer that. Comm. Gillespie asked do we need a psychological test. Comm. Perry said I think so after the troubles I've seen police and fire departments run into. It's not something that we should overlook. Fire Marshal Ellis said it certainly reduces the liability of negligent hiring and retention. It adds a layer of protection for the District. Comm. Gillespie said it needs to be put in writing that an applicant will have to do this.

Comm. Gillespie said I would like to clarify my words from that other meeting. I did not say we would not operationally work together. I stated that I was not happy with the way that Hazardville and Shaker Pines went behind our backs and did what they did. I never said everybody. I said that I would not want to work with them getting their thing off of the ground. I'm sorry but I don't like the way it went down. If a member of another department has a problem with me, come see me. Comm. Perry said the Board has said we want to consolidate. Our biggest concern is our firefighters. If people don't believe me then I don't care. Chief Deskis said the problem with our society today is that nobody talks to each other. If you have a conversation, the truth will come out. Comm. Perry said we are all going to move forward.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Chief Deskis said I have Lisa Foy on the telephone. Comm. Perry asked is there anything that we should be concerned about with this month's reports. Ms. Foy said everything looks right in line. A medical payment might have been missed but other than that things look good.

5. Public Communications:

None.

6. Commissioners' Communications:

Comm. Gillespie said after we have the budget vote, we should start having labor management meetings. So, we can get things out before there are any grievances.

Comm. Perry said we should host a meeting here to discuss consolidation with the other districts' commissioners.

Comm. Gillespie said those meetings worked very well when I was a firefighter here. Our members are excellent firefighters. We all need to be unified.

Chief Deskis said what happens in these meetings should stay in these meetings. People shouldn't be texting stuff to other people. We should be worried about our own problems. Comm. Perry said we do post our meeting minutes. Feel free to read them.

7. Old Business:

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8. New Business:

Comm. Perry said we need to put together about possibly billing for the taxes. I would like the Chief, Comm. Pliszka, Della, and our accountant to get together to discuss things. Chief Deskis said maybe we should invite the other fire districts to come. There is a huge list of things that we would need to do. Comm. Perry said we are already a taxing district.

9. Approval of Minutes from February 16 regular meeting:

MOTION for the approval of the minutes of the March 16 regular meeting, March 30 budget presentation meeting, April 13 special meeting, and April 13 public hearing made by Comm. Perry, seconded by Comm. Gillespie. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 3-0.

10. Adjourn:

MOTION to adjourn made by Comm. Pliszka, seconded by Comm. Perry. All in favor by ayes at 7:20 pm.