

TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson Bunko called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, held at Headquarters on September 25, to order at 6:04 p.m. Commissioners Baker, Dandrow, Longo, Bunko and Stanforth were present. Also in attendance were Chief Harold L. Clark and Asst. Chief Wisner.

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

A moment of silence was held in honor of the passing of Fire Police Stephen Coull who served the Southington Fire Department for 17 years, and for retired Detective Michael Shanley who served the Southington Police Department for 29 years.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Stanforth, to approve the minutes of July 17, 2014, regular meeting as circulated. Motion carried four ayes and one abstention.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Stanforth, to approve payment of bills for July 2014 in the amount of \$60,191.95. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Stanforth, to approve payment of bills for August 2014 in the amount of \$49,727.09. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary's Report:

A memo from Chief Clark recommending the approval of FF Richard Diaz's request to extend his leave of absence by six months.

A memo from Chief Clark recommending the approval of FF John Thompson's request for a one-year leave of absence.

A memo from Chief Clark recommending the request for a bond ordinance to purchase a 2014 Sutphen custom engine.

CHIEF'S REPORT:

- The members of the latest probationary firefighter class have started Firefighter 1 and are responding to calls in a limited capacity.
- The January 2015 probationary class has four applicants at this time. Two of the applicants have completed all the prerequisites and the other two are in the process.
- The Truck Committee has been very busy working on specifications for the next engine. There were two vendors that were being considered, and

the final decision was made to stay with a Sutphen engine. Chief Clark met with the vendor and negotiated the price down \$44,000.

- A 9/11 ceremony was held at the Rails to Trails monument, near the West Main St. intersection, that was attended by the Department. Captain Training Officer DiBattista represented the Department. Chief Clark and Assistant Chief Wisner were attending Detective Shanley's funeral.
- The Chamber of Commerce has decided not to hold their monthly meetings at Fire Headquarters for logistical reasons.
- The Energy Conservation Project has completed installing new lighting in all the stations. The Project will also be replacing parts in the current air-conditioning system at Headquarters.
- The Awards Ceremony Committee is finalizing the arrangements for the October 7, 2014 ceremony. The ceremony is being held at Derynoski Elementary School at 7 p.m. Chief Clark is working on securing a master of ceremonies.
- L1 is out of service to have corrosion repaired. The repairs costs are covered under the warranty. L2 is back in service.
- A mason has replaced the exit door on the north side of Headquarters.
- Three live burn training drills have been scheduled at the New Haven Fire Academy. The first drill will be held this Sunday.
- Superintendent of Schools Timothy Connellan is implementing a School Wide All Hazard Plan. Chief Clark has reviewed the plan and met with Deputy Town Manager Sciota and Health Director Shane Lockwood to discuss suggestions and concerns within the purview of the Deputy Director of Emergency Management and the Fire Chief.
- A staff meeting with the volunteer officers was held on September 17, 2014. The following areas were discussed:
 - The Ride Along Program hours to be reduced
 - Consequences for not fulfilling that commitment will be addressed
 - The Recruitment and Retention Committee meeting was combined with the staff meeting. The following areas were discussed:
 - Discussion on purchasing signs to be put up a few weeks prior to the closing date for class enrollment
 - Discussion on targeting recruitment for fire police
 - Discussion on developing a driver/exterior firefighter position
 - Discussion on communications and where the breakdowns were
 - To improve communications monthly meetings for the volunteer officers and chief officers will be held on the first Monday of every month, starting in November.
 - Theresa Buchanan, the new HR Generalist, submitted a list of volunteer members who needed their I-9 forms completed. A date

was set for members to meet with her and complete the necessary paperwork.

- There was discussion on the need for a pump operator class. The officers estimate 25 members are interested in taking the class. Because there are so many department members who would attend the Department would contract the Connecticut Fire Academy to run the class in town.
- Company 2 asked about the status of an additional computer dedicated to training. The IT Department installed it this week.

Commissioner Baker asked who would be attending the monthly meetings. Chief Clark reported that all the volunteer officers would attend including the company training officers.

Commissioner Baker also asked what year the new engine would be. Chief Clark reported that it would be a 2014.

MOTION: by Dandrow, seconded by Longo, to accept the Chief's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

ASSISTANT CHIEF'S REPORT:

Activities of the Southington Fire Department for the month of July 2014:

1. Fire Marshal's inspections – 41
2. Reports to the State Fire Marshal – 185
3. Damage to property involved in fire - \$22,100
4. Damage to motor vehicles involved in fire - \$9,275
5. Other losses - \$10,300
6. Total - \$41,675
7. Total units responded were - 572

Activities of the Southington Fire Department for the month of August 2014:

1. Fire Marshal's inspections – 74
8. Reports to the State Fire Marshal – 185
9. Damage to property involved in fire - \$58,750
10. Damage to motor vehicles involved in fire - \$5,000
11. Other losses - \$15,550
12. Total - \$79,300
13. Total units responded were - 566

Assistant Chief Wisner reported:

- There were multiple fire incidents since the Board last met:
 - Kitchen fire on Wild Oak - \$25,000 loss
 - Bedroom fire on Mount Vernon Rd. - \$65,000 loss
 - Exterior fire in Wheeler Village - \$5,000 loss

- The Bureau has also continues to visit the middle school renovation projects regularly. The Board of Education recognized the Bureau for their help throughout renovations.
- The Bureau was also busy with the following plan reviews:
 - Sign Pro on Atwater St.
 - DePaolo Drive energy plant
 - Adult arcade, bowling alley and restaurant on Spring St.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Dandrow, to accept the Assistant Chief's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

CAPTAIN DONNELLY'S ALARM MONITORING REPORT:

- Captain Donnelly reported that the Town monitors twenty-nine building fire alarm systems. Twenty-three are Town owned properties and six are private businesses. The monitoring equipment is ten years old and will take thousands of dollars to replace as it fails.
- Captain Donnelly feels that the six privately owned businesses are a large liability to the Town if the monitoring equipment should fail and a loss is incurred.
- Captain Donnelly recommends phasing out the service and having the individual properties switch to a private monitoring company. His suggestion is to start in phases. He suggests the first phase would be with the private businesses.
- Captain Donnelly is presenting this to the Board for their approval to do further research.

Vice Chairperson Dandrow was concerned that the six private businesses were part of a large elderly population. Captain Donnelly reported that those businesses represent the highest liability should the current equipment fail.

Commissioner Stanforth asked Captain Donnelly on the details on how the Department started monitoring alarms. Captain Donnelly reported that Fire Departments have monitored alarms for over a hundred years, but now the national trend is to end the service because of the high liability issues.

Commissioner Stanforth asked about the advantages of monitoring the fire alarm systems. Captain Donnelly reported that there is a chance of delayed notification from an outside source.

Commissioner Baker discussed the large expense the Town will have in replacing and maintaining the monitoring equipment.

Chairperson Bunko discussed the \$200,000 that is in the Capital Improvement Plan for 2015, to replace the system. Chairperson Bunko asked that Captain

Donnelly submit a Cost Benefit Analysis to compare the savings versus expenditures.

COMMISSIONS COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Chairperson Bunko discussed the following events he attended:

- 911 ceremony
- Staff meeting
- Contract negotiations

Chairperson Bunko thanked Company 5 for participating in a Fill the Truck event and Company 2 for their Old Timers Night event.

Chairperson Bunko invited the other Board members to march in the Apple Harvest Parade on October 5, 2014.

Chairperson Bunko reminded the Board that the Awards Ceremony will be held on October 7, 2014 at 7 p.m.

Commissioner Stanforth asked Assistant Chief Wisner for the percentage of inspections the Bureau is behind on. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that the number is unknown. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that the Bureau's backlog is similar to most towns and that he feels that it will be more manageable once a new inspector is hired. Commissioner Stanforth also asked about the accuracy in the inspection hours listed in the report submitted. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that they were not accurate. Commissioner Stanforth stated that the Board will discuss what information they would like tracked.

Commissioner Baker asked about a copy of the memos sent to the volunteer companies listing members who have not complied with their training requirements. Chief Clark reported that the issue was discussed in the staff meeting and adjustments are being made to the amount of hours with stricter consequences for non-compliance. Chairperson Bunko stated that he feels that the ride along requirement is valuable training.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Dandrow, to approve FF Richard Diaz's request to extend his leave of absence by six months. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Dandrow, to approve FF John Thompson's request for a one-year leave of absence. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Longo, seconded by Dandrow, to approve requesting a bond ordinance for the purchase of a 2014 Sutphen custom engine. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Dandrow apologized for her absence from meetings and events recently.


MOTION: by Baker, seconded by Stanforth, to adjourn to Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, except the Chief and Asst. Chief, to discuss negotiations and personnel matters at 7:12 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel matters were discussed.

Return to regular session at 7:50 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.



Mary Baker, Secretary
Board of Fire Commissioners