

TOWN OF SOUTHTON
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson Baker called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, held at Fire Headquarters, on November 17, 2015, to order at 4:00 p.m. Commissioners Baker, Bunko, Stanforth, Longo and Kanute were present. Also in attendance was Assistant Chief Wisner. Chief Clark was absent

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Baker and Assistant Chief Wisner presented Commissioner Longo with a helmet in appreciation for her years of public service. The November meeting ends Commissioner Longo's term to the Board of Fire Commissioners. Commissioner Longo thanked all members of the department and said that she enjoyed serving on the Board.

Commissioner Longo left the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

MOTION: by Bunko, seconded by Kanute, to accept the minutes of October 15, 2015, regular meeting as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Bunko, seconded by Kanute, to accept the minutes of October 19, 2015, special meeting as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Bunko, seconded by Stanforth, to approve payment of bills for October 2015 for \$52,178.33. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary's Report:

Memo from Chief Clark recommending approval of FF Jason Harnish's request for a one-year leave of absence.

Memo from Chief Clark proposing dates for the Board of Fire Commissioners' meetings in 2016.

Memo from Chief Clark recommending approval of FF Ryan Clark's request to extend his leave of absence to one-year leave.

Chairperson Baker summarized an email that was received from retired FP Al Urso, Sr. stating his concerns about the department's response to calls on the highway. FP Urso is concerned that there is excessive equipment being sent to the highway and the danger he feels the members are placed in.

CHIEF'S REPORT:

Assistant Chief Wisner reported for Chief Clark:

- Applications for an entry-level firefighter/EMT hiring list are being accepted.

- Chief Clark is working on getting the information Commissioner Stanforth had requested on descriptions of categories in the ISO report.
- All officers have been notified that the 2016 SOP revisions are available on the server to access and are to contact Deputy Chief DiBattista with any questions.
- Members of the Firehouse Software Committee met with Deputy Chief Steven Alsup at Wallingford Fire Department to see how Wallingford is utilizing the inventory module in Firehouse. Wallingford Fire Department was chosen because of the similarities in staff and equipment, with the exception of their fleet of ambulances. The committee gathered useful information and has identified areas that need to be defined before finalizing their recommendations. The group also plans to visit Waterbury Fire Department in the near future.
- Chief Clark attended Company 2's Ladies Night and wanted to thank them for an enjoyable evening.
- The administrative office is currently working on archiving old records and shredding duplicate paperwork.
- Estimates are being sought for repairs for Headquarters kitchen.
- The new C3 has been ordered.
- The generator bid has been awarded to Shea Electric.
- The bunker gear washer and dryer delivery is scheduled for next week.
- DC DiBattista has scheduled the annual EMT refresher training.
- DC DiBattista has been conducting the annual live burn training at the New Haven Fire Academy.
- Currently there are two applicants for the January probationary firefighter class; one is a social member and the other is being interviewed by their prospective company.

Commissioner Kanute asked about how the generator was going to be powered. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that it would be run by diesel fuel.

Chairperson Baker asked how long prospective applicants could submit an application to be included in January's class. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that applications would be accepted until December 20, 2015.

ASSISTANT CHIEF'S REPORT:

Activities of the Southington Fire Department for the month of October 2015:

1. Fire Marshal's Inspections – 39
2. CRRs - 4
3. Reports to the State Fire Marshal – 208
4. Damage to property involved in fire - \$5,000
5. Damage to motor vehicles involved in fire - \$7,750
6. Other losses - \$2,000
7. Total - \$14,750

8. Total units responded were - 635

Assistant Chief Wisner also reported that the Bureau continues to be busy working on plan reviews. The Bureau is actively involved with the Southington Arts Council building renovations.

Assistant Chief Wisner reported that a meeting was held with Lincoln College's administration to address the increase in nuisance calls. The college will be moving the problem smoke heads to a central position in the rooms so they will not be as sensitive to the hair products that have been a common cause of the alarms. The college will also institute a fine system for repeat offenders.

Assistant Chief Wisner discussed retired FP Al Urso, Sr.'s concerns about the amount of manpower used for highway incidents. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that all incidents on the highway are responded to according to Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Deputy Chief DiBattista reported that the department adopted the SOPs according to a 2008 State of Connecticut order signed by Governor Rell. The incident commander is in charge of determining the manpower required at a scene and are dispatched based on the original call. Dispatch keeps the incident commander updated of any changes while en route, so the incident commander can reduce or increase the response. Part of the department's duties is to protect the people on scene such as the state troopers and ambulance crew. An incident last winter proved the effectiveness of the procedure when R1 was hit on the highway, protecting all the personnel on scene from danger. Assistant Chief Wisner does not recommend changes and feels the incident commander has the authority to evaluate his needs and dismiss equipment. Commissioner Kanute stated that he felt the department's procedures were in line with the state guidelines. Deputy Chief DiBattista reported that Southington's highway response procedures are very similar to Plainville's and Cheshire's fire departments.

Commissioner Stanforth thanked Assistant Chief Wisner and Deputy Chief DiBattista for their explanations and encourages residents and members to bring issues and concerns to the Board's attention for discussion.

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

COMMISSIONS COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Chairperson Baker reiterated that the Board encourages issues and concerns to be brought to their attention. The Board can be contacted through the mail or email addresses listed on the town website.

Commissioner Stanforth asked for a report on the number of firefighters out on a leave and how it is affecting the department's manpower. Commissioner Stanforth would like to have this information to see if the Board should look at requesting additional personnel and how the manpower is distributed.

Commissioner Stanforth also asked that the Board be provided with month-to-month comparisons on call types and inspections.

Commissioner Kanute asked how the Fire Marshal's Bureau was handling the backlog of inspections. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that the inspections are staying current. He reported that the mandatory inspections are being done and that the change in the State of Connecticut requirements, reducing the frequency in inspections, has helped. Commissioner Stanforth asked if the department software helps notify the Bureau of upcoming inspections. Assistant Chief Wisner reported that the liquor permit inspections are up to the owners to contact the department.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

2016-2017 Budget Request – The first draft of the operating budget request was discussed line by line.

Chairperson Baker asked if there were grants available to help offset some of the costs. Deputy Chief DiBattista stated that they are being investigated.

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Bunko, to approve FF Jason Harnish's request for a one-year leave of absence. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Stanforth, to approve FF Ryan Clark's request to extend his leave of absence to one-year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Stanforth, to approve proposed meeting calendar for 2016. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Stanforth, seconded by Bunko, to table an Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Stanforth, seconded by Kanute, to adjourn the meeting at 4:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.


Wayne Stanforth, Secretary *WJS*
Board of Fire Commissioners