

TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson Wilson called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, held at Headquarters on May 16, 2019, to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Wilson, Shanley-Buck, Bunko and Robertson were present. Commissioner Moise arrived at 6:03 p.m. Also in attendance were Chief Butler and Assistant Chief Paul.

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

A moment of silence was held in memory of all fallen firefighters.

Commissioner Moise arrived.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Shanley-Buck, to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2019, regular meeting as circulated. Motion carried with three ayes and one abstention.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Shanley-Buck, to approve payment of bills for April 2019 in the amount of \$\$63,182.26. Motion carried with four ayes and one abstention.

Secretary's Report:

A memo from Chief Butler recommending the promotions of Richard Molleur, Thomas Golec, Andrew Polzella and Robert Moquin to the positions of lieutenant.

CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Butler discussed the following:

- Emergency Medical Responder-
 - The department will hold an accelerated class even with the lower numbers of members participating
 - Currently there are seven personnel signed up for the program
 - Seats will be sold to outside agencies
- All members of the department must have a current CPR/AED card; currently there is 99% compliancy
- CIRMA will be evaluating the department's training and respiratory protection program on May 21 prior to OSHA coming
- A new training program will begin in July; a draft proposal was given to the Board for review – Deputy Chief DiBattista explained:
 - Eliminating Training Officers in the individual companies
 - Each company will have a cadre of instructors and the department will pay for teaching hours
 - There currently eighteen volunteer firefighters who have Fire Officer I
 - Applicants will be required to meet the 30% call volume for eligibility as an instructor

- There will be quarterly “Train the Trainer” sessions to provide consistency in training
- The schedule allows flexibility
- The training program meets the deficiencies identified in the ICMA Study and ISO report
- The program is a part of integrating all the members into one department

Chief Butler acknowledged Deputy Chief DiBattista’s outstanding job on the program.

- The department will be moving towards members having a minimum of EMR certification to help meet the demand of the rising EMS calls
- The department is developing its own Rescue Technician CORE program that will be offered to each member who wants to operate on a Ladder Truck or Rescue Unit
- Changing the Incentive Plan Response Formula:
 - Changing the current complicated formula that separates day and night calls and has calculations that can have a members percentage at 250% to a formula that includes all toned out calls
 - Changing the eligibility response percentages from 60% for a full share and 35% for a half share to 30% for a full share and 15% for a half; this calculation was tested on last year’s numbers the results stayed the same

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Robertson, to add Item 10.C. action on changing the incentive plan response formula to include all company toned out calls and eligibility rates of 30% for a full share and 15% for a half. Motion carried unanimously.

- Volunteer Compensation Program
 - Each quarter an incentive to the per call reimbursement of an additional 10% for each member who meets the 30% response rate from the previous quarter will be added
 - Each quarter the call percentage will be reviewed to determine who is eligible
 - The company officers will be sent the quarterly report to monitor their members response
 - The percentage is compounded
 - This initiative is an effort to encourage response to incidents from volunteer firefighters

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Bunko, to add Item 10.D. action on adding to the per call reimbursement rate an additional 10% for each member who meets the 30% response rate the previous quarter. Motion carried unanimously.

- Volunteer Officers Promotional Program – applications for the company officer positions that are open this year, will go out to the companies by the end of the month

- Volunteer Recruitment – Chief Butler discussed the need to explore targeted recruitment of women in the community and them being an untapped resource
- Merging the operational members of Company 5 with Company 1:
 - The three members left in the company, a captain, an exterior firefighter, and one fire police do not meet the minimum staffing to respond on E51
 - The recruitment efforts in the district have been unsuccessful

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Bunko, to add Item 10.E. action on merging the operational members of Company 5 with Company 1. Motion carried unanimously.

- Redistrict Volunteer Members:
 - The initiative is being looked at to improve response times
 - Travel time and traffic delays was factored in findings
 - The members who live closer to a different station but are a member of another would be redistricted to the closest station
 - Waivers will be considered on an individual basis

Commissioner Roberts asked if changing the meeting and training so not all companies are at the station at one time would help solve the problem three nights a week. Chief Butler stated that it is proposed in the new training program and will be discussed in the staff meeting on May 29.

Commissioner Moise suggested that the decision be tabled until the next meeting and the Board agreed.

- Information Sharing:
 - Looking for the best way to get information out to the entire department
 - Looking at a weekly or biweekly news type letter

Vice Chairperson Shanley-Buck asked if this information was communicated to the members. Chief Butler stated that as chief he has to follow the chain of command, so the first step is to report to the Board of Fire Commissioners. Chief Butler's plan is to communicate all changes at the next staff meeting on May 29.

- Town Council Meeting – two additional firefighter positions were approved
- Meeting with our partner agencies to discuss how we can better help each other
 - Mutual aid
 - Developing a working relationships
- Working on the different options to develop a Master Plan; through a private agency or in house
- Quarterly Response reports will be going out to each company
- Radio Project- working with the police on future radio contract
- Working on a communications plan with our partner Fire Departments
- A draft disciplinary policy will be emailed to the Board
- Establishing a fitness committee to evaluation height and weight standards and what level of fitness should members maintain; the committee will consist of two volunteer firefighters and two career

- Fire police response changes:
 - Response when requested by the on duty battalion chief
 - Dispatch will page out the request and any Fire Police available can respond
 - Change will be effective July 1
- Communications-
 - Requires both sides of a conversation to participate
 - Chief Butler has an open door policy that is not taken advantage of
 - Newsletter will include email address and phone numbers of administration and board members
- The amount of mutual aid given and received is increasing
 - Plainville and Cheshire responded into town yesterday
 - Southington responded to Plainville today and rescued a trapped occupant
- There will be a promotional ceremony on June 12, 2019, at 7 p.m. for the newly promoted lieutenants at Fire Headquarters

ASSISTANT CHIEF'S REPORT:

Activities of the Southington Fire Department for the month of April 2019:

1. Fire Marshal's Inspections – 70
2. CRRS - 5
3. Reports to the State Fire Marshal – 154
4. Damage to property involved in fire - \$155,000.00
5. Damage to motor vehicles involved in fire - \$47,050.00
6. Other losses - \$101,000.00
7. Total - \$303,050.00

General Information

- Car 2, Car 3, and Squad 1 responded to a mutual aid request in Plainville this morning for a house fire requiring the crew to rescue a person on the second floor
- Code enforcement classes through July 1, 2019
- The department is purchasing E-Draulic rescue tools, a spreader and a cutter
- A new grip hoist as well as a rescue mannequin was purchased
- Continuing to work with management at Chuck and Eddie's and their insurance for damaged/contaminated equipment
- The Fire Marshal's Office has been assisting the Board of Education with several school fire drills
- Annual pump testing will be done on May 20-21, 2019

Apparatus

- The new Chevrolet Tahoe is in service as Car 2
- The pre-construction trip for Tanker 2 is May 20-22, 2019, with BC Heath, Capt. Glabau and Lt. Doug Badgley representing the department
- The new Sutphen engine is in production and may be completed by September

Building Maintenance

- Tremco Roofing was called for a roof leak over the apparatus at Station 5

- The Board of Education plumber assisted the department with another sink issue at Headquarters
- Station 5 was treated for insects and rodent control
- Station 5's boiler will have several sections replaced by both Sav More and H.B. Smith through warranty
- Board of Education plumber will be looking at an exhaust fan issue at Station 2
- Station 3 had another issue with E-31's overhead door that was repaired
- Station 5's boiler will have several sections replaced. Working with both Sav-More and H.B. Smith

COMMITTEE REPORT: None

COMMISSIONS COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Chairperson Wilson thanked the Board members and Chief Butler for all the work they did in helping get information to the Town Council for approval of the two new firefighters. Commissioner Moise thanked everyone who showed up at the Town Council meeting. Vice Chairperson Shanley-Buck thanked Chief Butler on all the information that was provided that showed how the department works. Discussion on how a resident approached Chief Butler after the meeting thanking him for the service the department does for the town.

Commissioner Robertson encouraged members to research political candidates before an election and supports the ones who for the department instead of name recognition or political party.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Al Urso, Sr. discussed his disappointment in the disrespect shown to Town Councilor Miceli at the Town Council meeting. He wanted members to remember that the town council is an unpaid position and he feels they work very hard for the town.

BC Dube thanked the Board for their support on the two new positions and the promotions of the lieutenants. BC Dube all discussed the mutual aid response to Plainville and how quickly they were on scene due to their location on River St.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairperson Wilson stated that the Recruitment Committee is being reestablished with the following appointments:

- Board of Fire Commissioner Member – John Moise
- Town Council Member – Christopher Poulos
- Volunteer Firefighter – Andrew Rennie
- Volunteer Firefighter – Conner Sperry
- Volunteer Firefighter – Vincenzo Infante

Career Firefighter – Eric Heath
Private Citizen – Al Urso, Sr.

Chairperson Wilson charges the committee to provide recommendations to the Board of Fire Commissioners and the department to identify and categorize problems and challenges to recruiting and retaining volunteer personnel in Southington, to determine what programs to implement and what results shall come from said programs, to create and manage effective tactics with recruitment efforts through modern and efficient ways. The first meeting will be held in June and a quarterly schedule will be set at the first meeting.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Robertson, to promote Richard Molleur, Thomas Golec, Andrew Polzella and Robert Moquin to the positions of lieutenant. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board members congratulated the new lieutenants.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Shanley-Buck, to approve changing the incentive plan response formula to include all company toned out calls and eligibility rates of 30% for a full share and 15% for a half. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Robertson, to approve the per call reimbursement rate of an additional 10% for each member who meets the 30% response rate the previous quarter. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Bunko, to approve merging the operational members of Company 5 with Company 1. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board discussed moving the three remaining members to Company 1 allow them to be active and if recruitment efforts improve in their district the Board will consider reversing the merger. Chief Butler told that he wants to meet with Company 1's officer and the three members of Company 5 to discuss the merge.

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Buck, to adjourn to Executive Session, excluding the public and the press with the exception of Chief Butler and Assistant Chief Paul, to discuss personnel and contractual matters at 7:36 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Personnel matters were discussed. No action was taken.

Returned to regular session at 8:09 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Christopher Robertson, Secretary
Board of Fire Commissioners