

TOWN OF SOUTHTON
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Chairperson Wilson called the special meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, held at Headquarters on July 23, 2020, to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Wilson, Shanley-Buck, and Kanute were present. Commissioner Moise arrived at 6:06 p.m. Commissioner Bunko was absent. Also, in attendance were Chief Butler and Assistant Chief Paul.

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Shanley-Buck, to approve the June 16, 2020, special meeting minutes as circulated. Motion carried with two ayes and one abstention.

MOTION: by Shanley-Buck, seconded by Kanute, to approve the June 18, 2020, regular meeting minutes as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Shanley-Buck, to approve payment of bills for June, in the amount of \$246,903.38. Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary's Report: None

Vice Chairperson Shanley-Buck asked for a moment of silence in member of former Commissioner John Mayo who passed away on June 28, 2020.

Commissioner Moise arrived at 6:06 p.m.

CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Butler discussed the following:

COVID-19

- The department will continue operating under the response directives that were established during the pandemic and will stay in place for the foreseeable future
- The department has been able to safely handle all of the incidents within the current response matrix
- There won't be any in person public meetings until September in the Town
- The Volunteer Companies can hold company meetings with the following guidelines
 - Only company members can attend
 - Must maintain social distancing and the use of face masks
 - No more than 25 members can be in attendance

Budget

- The new fiscal year started as of July 1, 2020, and July 23, 2020, is the last day to submit bills from the previous budget year

- Building maintenance projects are being planned
- Chief Butler is researching marketing firms to assist with recruitment and marketing the organization

Master Plan

- The Master Plan process is in full swing and we are hoping to set in person meeting dates in Southington in the near future
- COVID-19 is making it difficult to schedule in person meetings due to the consultant team being located in restricted states
- The process is going to be a major focus for the department for the next several months to ensure the best product when completed

Apparatus

- The new tanker is at the dealer's facility and hope to have it in Southington within the next two weeks
- The new rescue engine is in production and the mid-inspection is expected to be done in the fall
- The department will be ordering a new staff vehicle that is part of the CIP plan
- The apparatus fleet is being evaluated to determine what the maintenance costs are to help determine the replacement schedule
- The department is listing R-3 with a broker

Response Data

- The call volume is beginning to increase after a significant decline caused by the pandemic.
- Adding the district engine to still alarms is being considered
- The commission was provided the updated response data for January 1, 2020, through July 18, 2020

Training

- The probationary class's Firefighter I class has been moved to the Fall and impacts the availability for additional members to be added; there is one applicant in the process
- The department has completed the quarterly Train-the-Trainer program and quarterly training is under way
- Online training was assigned and with a completion date of June 30, 2020; the following is the breakdown of how the training is going:
 - The department has put seven members on admin leave for failing to do the online training and they have until August 7, 2020, to complete the training or additional action will be taken
 - Out of the seven members placed on admin leave one has completed the training and one has more than 50% complete
 - There are still five members that have not started the training
 - As of July 22, 2020, the breakdown is:

▪ 0%	5
▪ 1%-24%	1
▪ 50%-74%	1

- The Rope Rescue training program will restart in late August and this will include a second volunteer class
- The department will be holding a Train-the-Trainer program for the new tanker in the next couple of weeks

Personnel Matters

- A member has failed to provide documentation requested, for them to return to active duty or proof, for the need to extend the leave

Vice Chairperson Shanley-Buck asked about the process of notification to the members who failed to complete the training. Chief Butler reported that letters were sent to each member and emailed copies were sent to all the company officers. Chief Butler also reported that feedback was received by some of the company officers and the few members who have not completed the training are not very active members.

Commissioner Kanute asked if there are industry specific marketing companies that work with fire departments for recruitment. Chief Butler reported that the Volunteer Fire Council will be contacted to get recommendations.

Commissioner Moise told of his support of hiring a marketing company. Commissioner Moise also told of his approval of how Chief Butler is handling the members who have not completed their online training and how not complying shows they no longer want to participate in the company. Commissioner Kanute discussed that the steps Chief Butler has gone through by extending the deadline for these non-complying members and how it questions the value the member gives to the department.

Chairperson Wilson asked about the process of choosing a marketing company and how the Board will participate in the selection process. Vice Chairperson Shanley-Buck suggested that Chief Butler reach out to members of the different chief organizations for references.

ASSISTANT CHIEF'S REPORT:

Activities of the Southington Fire Department for the month of June 2020:

1. Fire Marshal's Inspections – 58
2. CRRS – 4
3. Reports to the State Fire Marshal – 165
4. Damage to property involved in fire - \$7,500
5. Damage to motor vehicles involved in fire - \$6,225
6. Other losses - \$2,000
7. Total - \$15,727

General Information

- There was a fire at Verona Pizza June 9, 2020; the members did a great job quickly stopping the fire
- There was a house fire on Dunham St. June 22, 2020
- There were two vehicle fires during the month

- The tanker has been accepted by the committee
- A meeting with a representative from the tanker manufacturer was here today and a list of parts and repairs was given
- Assistant Chief Paul wanted to recognize all members of the committee; BC Heath, Captain Glabau, Captain Doug Badgley, Lt. Brian Badgley and Consultant Jim Lyons
- Headquarters traffic light has been repaired and additional items are being addressed
- The landscaping around Company 3's sign has been completed
- All appliances have been received and installed
- Rescue 3 will be listed for sale with Fire Tech who is a broker

Fire Marshals Bureau

- Due to the retirement of the deputy fire marshal all members have taken on additional work
- They are busy with the following
 - Increase in tent inspections
 - School inspections starting August 17, 2020
 - Last week most schools had generator test inspections
 - Assistant Chief Paul and Inspector Chozick are working on sprinkler plans for Lake Compounce
 - Inspector Chozick is working on a plan for a forty-one-unit apartment complex
 - Inspector Hunt is working on multiple open projects
 - The project to create a list of inspectable properties is close to completion
 - Annual fire hose testing will be done September 9-10
 - The department will participate with the annual Dream Ride August 23, 2020

Commissioner Moise along with the other members of the Board thanked Assistant Chief Paul and the inspectors on the outstanding job they did accommodating restaurants by prioritizing their inspections so they could open.

Commissioner Kanute stated his thanks to the crew at the Verona Pizza fire and how they worked so quickly to stop the fire. Commissioner Kanute also asked about how the tanker repair was done. Assistant Chief Paul reported that it was done through welding and bonding.

COMMITTEE REPORT:

Recruitment and Retention Committee – Commissioner Moise discussed that plans to hold a meeting were canceled. Commissioner Moise did say that he plans to approach Southington Country Club and Hawks Landing to see if they would be willing to participate in promoting volunteer recruitment.

COMMISSIONS COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Chairperson Wilson asked Chief Butler if retirement percentage that BC Dube is quoted in a Record Journal number is accurate. Chief Butler stated that he would look into the matter.

Chairperson Wilson asked Chief Butler what was the status of the revision of fitness standard for the union members. Chief Butler reported that work on the revision was put on hold due to COVID-19. Chairperson Wilson stated that the current contract is to be followed and Article 29: Height and Weight Restrictions, is to be followed until the contract is changed or a committee is in place. Chairperson Wilson stated that the beginning of the next quarter, October 1, 2020, the contract is to be followed and the results given to the Board within the week. All the commissioners told of their support of this and the need for fitness.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Board of Finance member Edward Pocock Jr. told of him being in the area when the Verona Pizza happened and the quick action the department took to stop the fire.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Proposed Change to Rules and Regulations (See attached) – There was a discussion on the procedure and need for a vote.

MOTION: by Kanute, seconded by Moise, to submitting the proposed Rules and Regulations for a vote at the August regular meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Moise, seconded by Kanute, to terminate member who failed to comply with two notices requesting documentation of status. Motion carried unanimously.

Chief Butler reminded the Board of the special meeting on Tuesday, July 28, 2020, at 6 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Nathan Wilson, Chairperson
Board of Fire Commissioners



Southington Fire Department

Title: **ORGANIZATION**
Sub Title: **Rules and Regulations**

The Board of Fire Commissioners of the Town of Southington, acting under authority contained in the Town Charter, hereby establishes the following rules and regulations for the governing and discipline of the Fire Department of the Town of Southington.

No code of rules can be devised which will provide a specific formula for every circumstance and condition liable to confront the firefighter in the course of duty. Nevertheless, it is expected that these rules and regulations will be comprehensive enough to cover, either specifically or in a general way, the obligations of the members of the Fire Department. When confronted with a situation for which specific provisions have not been made, it must be dealt with in a manner credible to the Department with approval by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

These rules shall govern career and volunteer forces except as abridged by a negotiated contract.

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The Board of Fire Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as "Board") consisting of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council, shall be responsible for Department personnel and shall have control and maintenance of all fire companies' properties, buildings, apparatus and appliances belonging to the Town used for fire purposes.
2. The annual meeting of the Board and the election of commission officers shall be held on the 3rd Thursday of December in each year. The Chairperson shall appoint any committees deemed necessary to carry out the Board's functions.
3. Meetings of the Board shall be held regularly on the 3rd Thursday of each month. The order of business shall be as follows:
 - a) Roll Call.
 - b) Pledge of Allegiance.
 - c) Action on Minutes.
 - d) Approval of bills.
 - e) Reports of Chief and Committees.
 - f) Communications.
 - g) Communications from the Public.
 - h) Unfinished Business.

- i) New Business. (at the direction of the chairperson)
- 4. The majority of the Board (three [3]) shall constitute a quorum.
- 5. No appointments or dismissals of personnel or officers shall be made without a majority vote of all members of the Board.
- 6. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board. If absent, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside. Special meetings shall be held only after proper notification to the Town Clerk and members of the Board and in accordance with Chapter 3 of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- 7. The Board shall appoint a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary. Duties shall be to keep a complete record of transactions of all meetings and carry on all correspondence. For the faithful performance of these duties, the recording secretary shall be remunerated by the Town at a rate recommended annually by the Board.
- 8. These rules and regulations, for the government of the Board of Fire Commissioners and the Department, may be altered, amended, repealed or additional rules may be adopted at any regular meeting of the Board by affirmative vote of a majority of all the Board members (three [3]), providing that notice of such alterations, amendments, shall be given at a previous regular meeting, or they may be altered, amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of all the Board members (five [5]) without such previous notice.

B. COMPOSITION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT

- 1. The Fire Department of the Town of Southington shall consist of:
 - a) A firefighting force consisting of the Chief, Assistant Chief/s, and such other officers and members, as may from time to time, be required as the Board deems necessary.
 - b) As may be required, a Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal/s and Inspectors as designated and outlined by Connecticut General Statutes.

C. APPLICATIONS

- 1. All applications to the career and volunteer force shall be made on applications provided by the Fire Department.

D. METHOD OF APPOINTMENT

- 1. Regular force - as established and agreed to by contract between the Town of Southington and the Southington Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 2033.

2. Volunteer force:

- a) Persons eligible for membership in the Southington Fire Department must meet the following requirements:
 - (1) Over eighteen (18) years of age
 - (2) High school diploma or equivalent
 - (3) Valid CT driver's license
 - (4) Town of Southington resident
 - (5) Non-resident with employment within the town and an agreement from employer to allow him/her to respond during working hours
 - (6) Primary residence within one (1) travel mile of town boundaries
 - (7) American citizen or properly documented alien
 - (8) Physically qualified
 - (9) Be of good moral character
- b) Applications shall be received by the Chief's office. The candidate will be interviewed by the Chief or his/her designee. If the candidate is acceptable, applications will be sent to a potential assigned company after the background check is completed by the Southington Police Department. Approval will be subject to passing a physical examination and compliance with height/weight guidelines. All applicants must successfully complete the department sponsored Probationary Firefighter recruit training program and Firefighter I certification during their one (1) year probationary period.
- c) Probationary firefighter recruit training will be held twice annually, beginning on the following dates: January 1, and July 1 (See Probationary Program Appendix A). If an application is received after these dates, the prospective member will be given a social membership to the assigned company and will start in the next available recruit class.
- d) When a vacancy occurs in the volunteer officer's ranks, interested members will be required to submit a letter of intent and resume. An interview will be conducted by the Chief, Assistant Chief and Department Training Officer. After consideration of past experience and performance record, the Chief will select a qualified candidate and recommend him/her to the Board of Fire Commissioners for a final appointment. (See Officer Promotional Program).
- e) Upon reaching the age of 65, a member shall automatically be retired from firefighting service. When retired, the member shall be placed on social or honorary list. Retired members may not hold office.

E. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

CHIEF: The Chief shall:

1. Have sole and absolute command over all personnel connected with the Department, and all apparatus and appurtenances belonging to the same, make all assignments, transfers, and details as may seem to be for the best interest of the service, and report it to the Board.
2. Devote whole time to the performance of the duties of the office, visit the stations of the Department at least once per quarter per calendar year, and report to the Board of Fire Commissioners such suggestions or recommendations as may be deemed necessary.
3. Cause all repairs and other work on account of the Fire Department to be done.
4. Report promptly to the Board, any officer or member of the Department who, by reason of physical condition, disease, accident, or other incompetence, does not or cannot fully, promptly and properly, perform their full duty.
5. During firefighting or emergency situations, summarily suspend from duty any officer or member of the Department for insubordination, disorderly conduct, neglect of duty, or violation of Department rules and regulations and report each suspension immediately to the Chairman of the Board.
6. Issue such orders for the governing of the Department as may be deemed necessary and transmit all reports and communications of the Department with endorsements to the Board.
7. On all occasions see that the Charter and Ordinances of the Town, applicable to the Department, are faithfully observed, and promulgate and enforce all regulations and orders of the Board.
8. See that all apparatus is in proper condition.
9. In case of emergency, have authority to employ such additional firefighters as may be deemed necessary with approved by the Board
10. See that complete records are kept of the Fire Department, of the firefighters in the Fire Department, or alarms answered by the Fire Department, as well as all other records called for in these rules and regulations.
11. Receive a performance evaluation covering the period of July 1 through June 30 with a final evaluation due to the Fire Chief by August 1 of each year. The performance evaluation shall be determined and finalized collaboratively between the Board of Fire Commissioners and the Chairperson.

12. Implement Standard Operating Procedures for the operations of the Fire Department and will require final approval by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

ASSISTANT CHIEF/S:

1. The Assistant Chief/s shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chief.
2. The Assistant Chief/s shall act as Chief and shall exercise the same power and authority as the Chief whenever the Chief is absent.

OFFICERS:

1. Officers of all companies shall meet qualifications as described in Department policy or committed by contract.
2. Each officer shall preserve the discipline of assigned personnel and instruct the members in their duties on scenes, in training and in station. Each officer shall direct the operation of assigned personnel at fires and carry out the orders of the IC, while following Department SOPs. Officers shall report to the IC the conditions in the position to which assigned and make recommendations where needed to more effectively control the fire. Officers shall supervise the relief of firefighters during severe fires to keep them in the most effective condition possible.
3. Each officer shall keep or cause to be kept a chronological record of all activities of assigned personnel, and also a record of the fire and drill service of each member of the assigned personnel.
4. Officers shall require that all drivers be cognizant of all applicable federal, state, local and departmental regulations or directives in operation of a vehicle.
5. Officers shall promptly report in writing to the Chief any error, incapacity, inefficiency, neglect of duty, disobedience of orders, or the violation of any rules, regulations or orders of the Board or Chief, in which report the officer shall state the name of the offender, time, place, and nature of the offence, together with the names of persons by whom the facts may be proven.
6. Officers shall be responsible for the cleanliness and order of company quarters.
7. Officers shall be responsible for the above duties and any others that the Chief has duly assigned to them.

E. CHARGES

1. Any member of the Fire Department may be disciplined with an oral or written reprimand, or after the opportunity for a hearing, be suspended, reduced in rank or grade or dismissed from the Fire Department, for any of the following offenses committed while on duty:

- a) Any violation of the rules, regulations, orders and bylaws governing the Department.
 - b) Conviction of a felony.
2. The hearing opportunity provided in paragraph F.1 above, shall be before the Chief or Assistant Chief and shall provide the member with:
- a) The right to representation by a representative of his/her choice.
 - b) The charges alleged against the member expressed either orally or in writing at the member's request.
 - c) An explanation of the evidence compiled by the Department's administration supporting such charges and receive copies of all documentation of this type.
 - d) An opportunity for the member to respond, either verbally or in writing, to the charges alleged and the supporting evidence within three (3) working days from the hearing date. If member does not respond within the specified time, he/she forfeits the opportunity to respond.
 - e) Within three (3) working days from the member's response, the Chief or Assistant Chief will deliver their final decision in writing.
3. Any member aggrieved by a decision of the Department Administration under paragraphs F.1 or 2 may, within fourteen (14) calendar days of the notification of that decision, appeal such decision to the Board of Fire Commissioners in writing. Within thirty-five (35) calendar days of receiving this appeal, the Board of Fire Commissioners will arrange a date for a hearing with the aggrieved party.

F. VACANCIES

- 1. Vacancies in both career and volunteer ranks shall be filled at a meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners with a majority of (3).

G. DUTIES OF VOLUNTEER FORCE

- 1. The volunteer force shall respond to alarms of fire or other calls as may be assigned.

H. DUTIES OF FIREFIGHTERS

- 1. As outlined in Department Job Description.

I. WORKWEEK

- 1. As established by contract between the Town of Southington and the Southington

Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 2033.

2. The Chief of the Department shall make all assignments, transfers, and details as may seem to be for the best interest of the service.

J. GENERAL RULES

1. No member on duty shall be allowed to leave the premises, quarters, fire station, or any of their duties for any purpose without permission of the commanding officer. All requests for prolonged leave of absence must be made through the Officer to the Chief or Assistant Chief.
2. It shall be the duty of volunteer officers and volunteer members to attend all fires and alarms to which they are assigned or may be called. All members shall attend a minimum of 12.5% of available fires and all mandatory drills and meetings unless a due case is registered with the Captain of the company or a designee. Failure to attend the minimum 12.5% annually, without a due case, will result in an automatic dismissal of any volunteer officer or member. Officers and members will be granted an opportunity to appeal the dismissal to the Board of Fire Commissioners within thirty-five (35) days of the issued dismissal.
3. Any member or personnel of Fire Department shall avoid expressing their opinion publicly regarding any incident or Fire Department matters.
4. Firefighters shall read and become familiar with the laws, ordinances, rules and regulations and orders relating to the fire service.
5. Firefighters shall not be guilty of deception or evasion of any laws, ordinances, rules, regulations or orders of the Fire Department.
6. Firefighters shall not use obscene, immoral or disrespectful language.
7. Firefighters shall not be guilty of conduct unbecoming a firefighter nor of conduct in any manner prejudicial to the good name and reputation of the Department.
8. Firefighters shall not use intoxicating beverages or controlling substances while on duty.
9. Officers shall be just, dignified and firm in their relations with subordinates.
10. No member shall spread gossip or reports injurious to the character of another member or tending to be injurious to the welfare of the Department.
11. All officers shall be addressed by their proper title.
12. Errors in responding to an alarm or emergency with apparatus shall be deemed a

serious offense.

13. The administrative officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) of each company shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Company, which shall be held on the respective company's scheduled monthly business meeting in November. Elected officers shall take office on January 1.
14. Each company shall make by-laws governing the affairs of their respective company, subject to the approval of the Board of Fire Commissioners.
15. Each company shall be subject to audit of contributions and disbursements annually in the month of September by the Board of Fire Commissioners. Company officers shall make available copies of bank statements, deposited checks and cash, and receipts of disbursements.
16. The Chief will assign company line officers such as Captains, Lieutenants, , while taking into consideration recommendations of the company and qualifications of the candidate. The chief will also dismiss company line officers such as Captains, Lieutenants when necessary. The Chief will make final recommendations for approval by the Board of Fire Commissioners.
17. All Department emergency vehicles shall be so marked as Town of Southington fire emergency vehicles per established standards unless marking changes are approved by the Board. Approved magnetic decals can be used, with Board permission. They must be displayed on the vehicle during all official activities.

SUMMARY

All organization Rules, Regulations and By-laws formerly adopted which are contrary to these By-laws, Rules and Regulations, are hereby repealed and declared to be no longer effective.

Adopted this [REDACTED], by the Southington Board of Fire Commissioners.

Board of Fire Commissioners

Nathan Wilson, Chairperson
Christine Shanley-Buck, Vice Chairperson
Michael Bunko, Secretary
John Moise
David Kanute