

Regular Meeting of the
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

DRAFT -- Meeting Minutes – June 21, 2023

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. Bouthiette, and Comm. Pliszka. Absent was Comm. Gillespie and Comm. Crowley. Also, present were Chief Deskis and Administrative Assistant Steneri.

3. Chief's Report:

Chief Deskis said the firefighter and fire marshal positions are posted.

Chief Deskis said four members have been sworn in as deputy fire marshals. They will help with the fire marshal duties until a new fire marshal and fire inspector are hired. A MOU has been written up for the deputy fire marshals. It will last for four months. Comm. Perry said she would like all members of the board to have a copy to review.

Chief Deskis said he has received several power washing quotes to clean the bricks and remove the calcium stains. Comm. Perry asked if the bricks need to be repointed. Chief Deskis said that is for chimneys and masonry bricks. We could seat coat the station.

Chief Deskis said he is waiting for some more bids for the fire alarm panel.

Chief Deskis said he would like to use some of the contingency money to purchase some equipment.

Chief Deskis said our workers' comp insurance for next fiscal year has increased since we put together the budget. It increased by twenty percent instead of the estimated twelve percent. But money can be moved around and the department will be fine.

Chief Deskis said the stations' drains clogged again. During the unclogging process, some of the drains were blown out and made a mess in a few areas. The insurance company has been contacted about the incident. Comm. Perry said the station obviously has a drainage problem. How much would it cost to correct this issue? Chief Deskis said the department would have to hire an engineer to look at the pipes. One of

the pipes has a ninety-degree bend. It would be a nightmare to locate where that pipe is. But it is an issue that eventually needs to be fixed. SERVPRO came and cleaned up the mess.

Chief Deskis said there were two minor fires this week. One was due to a burnt out motor at Big Y. The other was at twenty-two Pleasant Street.

Chief Deskis said the South River Street bridge project has started.

Chief Deskis said the department is preparing for the Enfield Fourth of July celebration.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Comm. Perry said the treasurer is not here. Comm. Perry asked Comm. Pliszka if he had anything to say or any questions.

Comm. Perry said she had asked if this had been reviewed with the accountant. Admin. Asst. Steneri said yes. The reports are sent to her every month. There was nothing that was out of the ordinary. There are just some general ledger accounts that should be merged.

Comm. Pliszka said the Santander Bank lease for the SCBAs has been paid off. Can it be removed as a liability? Admin. Asst. Steneri said it will probably be removed once this year's audit is completed.

Comm. Pliszka said the apparatus maintenance and repairs line item is over budget by \$34,000. Admin. Asst. Steneri said the overall station vehicle expenditures category is overbudget by \$29,648. Overtime is over budget by \$47,803 but there is only one more pay period left. The overall salaries line item is underbudget by \$154,807. Comm. Perry asked do we need to move funds into the accounts that are over. Comm. Pliszka said the only category that is overbudget is the station vehicle expenditures. Chief Deskis said that is what contingency money is for. Comm. Pliszka said two percent can be pulled from each category. Comm. Pliszka asked Chief Deskis how much contingency money he needs. Chief Deskis said about twenty-five thousand dollars. If we need to use more, then we can wait until next year to get the equipment. Comm. Pliszka asked will twenty thousand suffice in contingency. Chief Deskis said it will have to. Comm. Pliszka said we can pull two percent from station operational expenditures, fees, and other expenditures. We are going to have to take some out of contingency.

MOTION *to move \$20,000 out of contingency fund and two percent out of the following line items: station operational expenditures, fees, and other expenditures* made by Comm. Perry, seconded by Comm. Bouthiette. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 3-0.

Comm. Perry asked if the transfers need to be numbered. Comm. Pliszka said no.

Comm. Pliszka said there is \$452,000 in Fire Marshal Fees. Admin. Asst. Steneri said that is the total amount that has been collected over the years.

5. Public Communications:

None.

6. Commissioners' Communications:

Comm. Perry said she received a thank-you letter from The Network Against Domestic Abuse for the gift basket donation.

7. Old Business: a) Tax Collection by QDS:

Comm. Perry said she, Comm. Pliszka, and the Chief attended a meeting regarding tax collection. The company did not realize that the District does not receive money twice a year. We have to have another outlet or we will be at the mercy of the Town. I would like to have another meeting to discuss the proposal. Comm. Pliszka agreed. He said all the commissioners should attend and make up their own mind.

Comm. Perry said she is unsure about the Town collecting our taxes. They could pull out from the agreement if they feel we are not moving fast enough with consolidation. Then the District would not have a tax collector. Everybody has to agree to this. The District cannot consolidate if the other departments do not want to.

Comm. Perry asked about the yard waste barrel. Chief Deskis said he wrote an email to the mayor asking to meet with him. Comm. Perry said the Town will not pick up our yard waste barrel. Chief Deskis said the department will pay for the barrel.

Comm. Perry said the Board is not going to make a decision until another meeting is held.

Firefighter Barone asked is there another consolidation meeting with the Town scheduled. Comm. Perry said no. It will be scheduled for the fall.

Admin. Asst. Steneri said she put a copy of the email that was sent out this weekend in the commissioners' packets.

8. New Business: a) Enfield Square Issue, b) Adding Retiree Spouse to Health Insurance:

Enfield Square Issue: Fire Marshal Ellis said building permits have been filed for roof repairs. The department is going to have to provide firewatch while some of the work is being done. The leaks are being repaired in the old G. Fox building.

Fire Marshal Ellis said some transients had gotten into the old G. Fox building and assaulted two mall security guards. Both of them are still in the hospital. The police department may have identified some of the assailants.

Fire Marshal Ellis said he spoke with the mall manager about people getting into the building. If nothing is done, then most of the entryways will be boarded up.

Fire Marshal Ellis said only one alarm company has submitted a bid to install horn strobes in the common areas. In the past, the mall had multiple security guards. The mall had one security guard who monitored the fire alarm. That is why strobes were not needed back then.

Fire Marshal Ellis said there are some minor violations that are being worked on. The deputy marshals will have to check the progress once a week.

Comm. Perry asked is there a timeline. Fire Marshal Ellis said yes. The timeline has been met so far.

Comm. Crowley asked do we have the ability to process online payments. Fire Marshal Ellis said we don't have it now. I looked into it while we were in the process of creating our own website. Chief Deskis said we can definitely do that. I'm not sure what time of fees there are for that. Fire Marshal Ellis said there are no fees for us with Stripe. The person paying has to pay the processing fee. Having online payments makes it easier for bigger companies to pay for the permit fees while the local companies can still stop by in person and pay. It would also eliminate some clerical work for myself.

Comm. Crowley asked do we oversee the replacement of gas or oil tanks. Is there a permit for that? Fire Marshal Ellis said any of those have been done under a building permit. We got a fee from that. I don't have the logistics to do the relicensing of propane refilling facilities. The Building Department lets me know about those so I can send out our permit application for that.

Comm. Crowley asked is there a fee for electric car charging stations. Is there a process for that? Fire Marshal Ellis said they have to apply for an electrical permit for that. There is going to a Tesla charging station near Big Y. They were charged a fee because they had about seventeen sheets of plans to look at. One of the car dealerships is going to put in one charging station. That was just an electrical permit because there were no plans to review. Comm. Crowley said that is the future and it is a source of a fee. Fire Marshal Ellis said the Board can change the language of the ordinance in the future.

Adding Retiree Spouse to Health Insurance:

Chief Deskis said some of the members said that their cleanings are covered under insurance anymore. I just wanted to bring it to the Board in case the Union decides to change insurances. Delta Dental is a few dollars more. We will have to redo the figures for the contract. Comm. Pliszka said I have to see a specialist to get some work done. Nobody is accepting BeneCare anymore. Chief Deskis said if no one else complains about it then we will keep it the way it is.

9. Adjourn:

MOTION to *adjourn* made by Comm. Pliszka, seconded by Comm. Perry. All in favor by ayes at 7:45 pm.