



TOWN OF NEWINGTON

1485 Main Street Newington, Connecticut 06111

Newington Volunteer Fire Department

MINUTES

Board of Fire Commissioners

Regular Meeting

March 13, 2008

Fire Headquarters

1485 Main Street

Newington, CT 06111

7:30pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ATTENDANCE

Commissioner's Ziegler, Stoddard & Jascowski

Chief Chris R. Schroeder

Asst. Chief Tom Lapierre

DC Tom Gill

DC Vic Depamphilis

DC Frank Papa

Fmr. Commissioner John Gubbins

Councilor Jay Bottalico

Councilor Tom Bowen

Captain Jeff Kobylarz

Captain Joe Valvo

Lt. Jim Wells

Lt. Cory Lachance

F/F Bill Pollock

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Fmr. Commissioner John Gubbins asked about a recent newspaper article about the "Pay-Per-Call" program. Chief Schroeder explained at great length what the program was about and the benefits, to both the firefighter and the Town of Newington, and when it would be implemented. The Department has been told that the Town Council is supportive of the program

IV. Communications

Communications were read and accepted.

V. LEDGER STATUS

Ledger Status was accepted as presented.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

The Pay-Per-Call program has been previously discussed and Councilor Bowen stated that he feels that it will get

The Laptop situation remains the same. Vendor issues are slowing the process. The pilot program recommended by the Capitol Region isn't up and running yet. Those of the members that are involved with the pilot programs agreed to step back and wait until all systems are go.

Deputy Chief Papa has gotten a ninety day extension on the Grant Program

The Rules and Regulations are being prepared and will be reviewed by the Chief and then presented to the Board for approval.

Engine#5 is still on market. All inquiries are of a private nature and it will probably go to auction.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

The Board and the Chief will be discussing vehicle issues and determine what's needed.

The Town budget has been released and there has been movement within some accounts. Heating Fuel and Utilities will remain the same. Facilities Maintenance will be looked at along with Building Equipment and Building Maintenance. Commissioner Ziegler and Commissioner Stoddard met with the Town Manager along with Ann Harter of Finance and Bob Korpak from Facilities Management. There will be further discussions.

Commissioner Stoddard further expressed his concerns that the items of concern are by Town Charter the responsibility of the Fire Department. He further explained that the Utilities and Heating Fuel have always been a pass through. Whereas, the others are strictly fire department related and not necessarily economy issues. It's more about control of the money/vendors.

Commissioner Jascowski stated that we maintain a trim budget and don't spend to an excess. He believes that the money and accounts should stay where they are.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councilor Bottalico explained that the council has been, department wide, going over their budgets. He further explained that it will be for items or services that used town wide. Heating contractors, electrical services and other items that everyone shares. Procure a vendor that will maintain a stable price throughout the year for all. Exclusive items will remain the same for the fire department to purchase.

Councilor Bowen explained further this is Mr. Korpak's responsibility for the town and he in turn will be the one to approach the council for funding. Councilor Bowen gave as an example the ceiling tiles in the gym at town hall. If he isn't notified or asked about repairs, there is a slim chance that the request will not be funded because the council considers him the expert.

Commissioner Stoddard stated he understood the concept but he stated the gym was a good example of how thing can go awry.

Councilor Bowen was under the assumption that the project was without issue, when in fact it had not received Fire Marshal approval or even the Fire Marshal being contacted to see if there were issues he was concerned with. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Ziegler stated that no one from the fire department was informed about the possible changes. He asked that the three line items remain in the budget and be evaluated over the next year. He explained that there is a Deputy Chief that is responsible for issues concerning fire department properties and if an emergency happens at two in the morning we have someone to call who will respond. These relationships have developed over the years and the service provided has been in town and cost effective.

Commissioner Ziegler also is aware that the Senior Center and the Library has many issues and will there be time and staff to do everything. Councilor Bowen again stated if these items are in the Town Charter then they should not be removed.

Councilor Bottalico stated that he aware that change is difficult to adjust to and that the fire department has not been singled out. Every department has gone through the same changes. He asked that we give these changes a chance. Councilor Bowen promised that if anyone takes a fire truck because of the changes proposed by the Town Manager he will go one record that they will buy us a new one.

Sue Reniewicz asked the question about the replacement of the Public Workers Coordinator by some who will be solely responsible for Heating and HVAC. The Public Works Coordinator had many different responsibilities and it was handled in an efficient and cost effective fashion. Why the sudden change?

Councilor Bottalico said that he wasn't involved in personnel issues and only knew that previously when there were HVAC or Heating issues were in question a vendor was contracted to bid on the work. Now, if there is an item that the new Heating and HVAC mechanic is not familiar with, a consultant will be hired to determine what needs to be done and submit his recommendations. Councilor Bottalico stated that this will be a cost savings.

Chief Schroeder brought up the Company #3 property. He has been told that it has been sold and someone is renting it. Commissioner Ziegler will contact the Town Manager, town Planner and the Finance Director to obtain more information.

Chief Schroeder also spoke about recruitment. Company #2 has prepared a brochure that will be distributed throughout the community. Chief Schroeder informed the group that the department will be participating in Career Day at the high school to encourage new members and cadets.

The cadets are meeting on a regular basis and are doing extremely well. They are learning firefighting skills and maintaining the firehouse and it's property.

Commissioner Gubbins asked about how we are doing about retaining our members that are in career departments. State Rep. Nafis has been working hard to gain passage of the bill.

IX. COMMISSIONER'S REMARKS

The Board at this time went into Executive Session.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm after the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Submitted By: _____

