



Keith Chapman
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

1485 Main Street Newington, Connecticut 06111

Board of Fire Commissioners

February 10, 2022



Brian Whalen
Frank L. DeMaio
Kent E. Stoddard, Jr.
Fire Commissioners

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Minutes

This meeting was presented as a Zoom Webinar Meeting

- I. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Commissioner Stoddard. Meeting began with Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. **Attendance** – Chairman Brian Whalen, Commissioner’s Frank DeMaio, Kent Stoddard, Chief Jeff Trommer, Assistant Chief Tom Lapierre, Fire Marshal DJ Zordan, Town Clerk James Krupienski, Town Council Liaisons Tim Manke and Mitch Page.
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – Commissioner DeMaio made a motion to approve the November 11, 2022 and January 13, 2022 minutes. Motion was seconded by Chairman Whalen. Motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Communications**- Commissioner DeMaio went over the monthly reports. A motion was made by Chairman Whalen to approve communications, seconded by Commissioner Stoddard. Motion passed unanimously.
- V. **Ledger Status** - The ledger status it is in good shape. Chief Trommer stated that he met with the Chiefs and allotted monies will begin to be spent from the budget so next months ledger status should look a lot different. Commissioner Stoddard made a motion to accept the ledger status, seconded by Commissioner DeMaio. Motion passed unanimously.
- VI. **Old Business** –
 - Radio System Update- Meeting was held with Town Manager and Paul Boutot last week. It was a very productive meeting, going in the right direction. Will be moving forward on the Fire Department side with no cuts which we are very pleased to hear. Public Safety will be going with the State system, all other Town agencies will be going with Marcus Communications. Still hoping to get a grant to offset the cost to the Town. A letter will be going to FEMA on this. Our grant writer hired by the Town, Sonia Robinson, will be working on this. She has been very helpful in the process.
 - Truck 2 Update – Deputy Chief Nesklada received preliminary drawings from Firematic. A list of items have been made to be discussed. An e-mail will be sent to Firematic to discuss concerns. It is a good sign that we have received the drawings. Supplies and materials are all back ordered because of COVID.

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Patricia O. Nigro
Town Clerk

- Assistant Chief and Deputy Chief Evaluations- All evaluations except Deputy Chief Nesklada have been done. Evaluations went well, good feedback. Evaluations should continue on a yearly basis in the future. Thank you to all Chiefs, great job done by all.
- Grant Update – Three grants have been applied for. The Firehouse subs grant has been rewarded to us for \$47,000. We should be able to purchase the equipment from this grant in March. It will take approximately three months for the equipment to come in. The other two grants are the AFG grant for \$1,000,000 for radio equipment and the Safer Grant through FEMA for a bill board in front of Company 1.

We are trying our best to bring in as much money as possible to save the town money. We will continue to apply for any new grants that we see out there for the Fire Department.

VII. New Business –

- Chapman Street Firehouse – A discussion took place regarding tearing down the old Company 3 firehouse on Chapman Street. Once torn down we would like the green space to be given to the elderly housing complex and we would like to take over the green space behind Company 3. This would allow us to put up a butler building for storage for not only us but for Emergency Management. The fire house is well past its prime. Deputy Chief Nesklada said that Joe Salomone has looked into keeping the old building since it is historical but it would be much cheaper to take the building down and rebuild. We will need to have a place to put the equipment it is housing now when it gets knocked down. It currently stores a utility trailer and a generator which needs to be stored on that end of town. These are to specifically service the bus way. A formal request needs to be written to the Town Manager to swap out the green space. Everything must happen simultaneously. This is plan B. Plan A is really to expand Company 3. To the right of where Company 3 sits the property is for sale but the person does not want to work with us on the financial side. Ultimate goal is to be able to get that property and expand Company 3.
- Form Building Committee for Company 3 and Company 4 – Building committee needs to be formed for the expansion of Company 3 and Company 4. A formal request needs to be written to the Town Manager so that we can get it on the Town Council agenda. The Chapman Street/butler building should wait until a decision is made on Company 3 expansion. If expansion takes place no need for butler building.

Commissioner Stoddard made a motion to send a letter to the Town Manager to form a building committee for the expansion of Company 3

and Company 4. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeMaio. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Liaison Manke stated this committee would fall into the new Standing Building Committee that will be on the next Council agenda. Very good timing to bring this forward. Deputy Chief Nesklada stated this is not about what we want but what we need.

VIII. Public Participation – Les Woods, long time Company 1 member, commended the Commission and Chief Officers on the communication that has been going out to the retirees. He also asked who the primary contact person was for purchasing equipment for the Department as he might be able to help the department out on some purchases.

IX. Commissioners Remarks – Chairman Whalen – Great meeting. We have a lot of work to be done. A concern of his is he wants it to be known that nobody should think that we are closing Company 4.

Commissioner DeMaio spoke again about the outstanding job that was done at the fire on January 1st on Cedar Ridge Road. Spoke again about how great our cadet program is. Looking forward to a great year. Thank you to Fire Marshal Zordan and his staff.

Commission Stoddard – Fantastic Department. Evaluations gave a lot of insight of how well the department is doing. Everything is moving in the right direction. Thank you to all.

X. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn by Chairman Whalen, seconded by Commissioner DeMaio. Meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by: Sherri Leghorn, Fire Department Secretary