

# Town of North Branford

## Board of Fire Commissioners

North Branford, CT 06471

### MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING, COMPANY #2 FIREHOUSE

JANUARY 6, 2005

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Civitello called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**ROLL CALL:** Chairman Joseph Civitello, Vice-Chairman Angelo Tosi, Commissioners Donald LaBanca, Patricia Nagot and Joseph Tulli.

**OTHERS:** Officers: Interim Chief Anthony Esposito, Jr., District Chief Mark Amatrudo, Fire Marshal Bert Bunnell, Fire Inspector John O'Brien, Captains Laura Burich, Ken Neubig, and John Onofrio, Lieutenants Robert Colangelo, Jason Conway, Dennis Juhasz, and Dave Roden.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** Captain Onofrio commented regarding the changes to be made to the Rules and Regulations. He urged the Board to wait until more input is received from the rank and file and until job descriptions are added for the additional positions. He stated that he has received comments from many who felt that the new chief might have his own visions for the department and the Captains should have some input. He hadn't received one positive comment regarding adding extra chiefs. The Board stated that they are not appointing a Deputy Chief(s) immediately and job descriptions will be posted prior to the appointment. Todd Ingarra felt there should be input from the department and was opposed to Article III L regarding the Board suspending all rules. There were many remarks made about the department having too many chiefs with too few Indians. Prior to voting on the changes, Dave Burich would like to see job descriptions for the new positions and felt it should be left up to the chief.

**READING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Tosi and seconded by Commissioner Tulli to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 2, 2004. On roll call vote, three in favor and two abstentions by Commissioners LaBanca and Nagot as they were absent from that meeting.

**NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS' REPORTS:** The Fire Marshal's Report for December was distributed at the meeting and it was noted that there were 136 calls. Interim Chief Esposito asked if the Board required the call by call details or just a volume summary of calls as the Fire Marshal's office is considering changing the report. The Board felt that a summary of calls would be sufficient.

**COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Pension: The pension statistics were approved at a December meeting of the Town's Pension Committee.

**REPORT FROM CHIEF:** Interim Chief Esposito distributed a memorandum to the Board regarding the Chief's Report. It is attached to the Minutes and made a part hereof. Interim Chief Esposito stated that the Ambulance bid opening is scheduled for January 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 a.m. Other items discussed were: the lawsuit being filed by the family of Edward Mucha, planning and zoning reviews, dispatch issues, radio/communication issues, new foam technology and dry hydrants. Regarding the budget: it was mentioned that there was no money budgeted for strategic planning or for any other department officers to be compensated. It was noted that the fire police can be sworn in at this time. Other issues discussed were changes being made regarding the manner in which pre-hospital EMS is delivered as some classifications are being eliminated. The number of hours for the EMT-B course are being increased. The Mark I Kit (anti-nerve agent) was discussed. The State is looking to distribute Mark I Kits for all responder personnel. It was noted

that it would need to be kept in a locked area. A letter was sent to the Town Manager inquiring whether or not the Town would be interested in participating in that program. Interim Chief Esposito provided copies of the specifications for the generator at Station #4 and asked if the Board wished to proceed with a bid for a generator based on those specs which were previously used for the Station #2 generator. The Board approved the proposal for the bid. Copies of the draft of the Code of Ethics as it was presented to the Town Council were distributed and there was some discussion about whether or not it could affect any firefighters that perform work for the Town.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** The Rules and Regulations changes were discussed (a copy is attached to the Minutes) and Vice-Chairman Tosi read each change prior to it being voted on. Vice-Chairman Tosi made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner LaBanca to approve Article I, Section 3, Subsection A regarding departmental officers which would add two new positions consisting of one Deputy Chief and one Deputy Chief/Training Officer, eliminate the Deputy Fire Marshal position and add two Fire Inspectors. On roll call vote, all in favor. A discussion on car designations followed. Vice-Chairman Tosi made a motion, seconded by Commissioner LaBanca, to approve Article I, Section 3, Subsection B listing the radio car designations as follows: Car 1 - Chief, Car 2 - Retired, Car 3 - Deputy Chief, Car 4 – Deputy Chief/Training Officer and Car 7 – Fire Marshal along with the following changes: Car 5 shall be District Chief 2 and Car 6 shall be District Chief 1. On roll call vote, all in favor. The car designations for the Fire Inspectors were discussed. Vice-Chairman Tosi made a motion, seconded by Commissioner LaBanca, to amend the previous motion to include the Fire Inspectors as Car 71 and Car 72. On roll call vote, all in favor. The next change to be discussed was the appointment of departmental officers. Commissioner LaBanca made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Nagot to approve Article I, Section 3, Subsection C regarding the designation of the appointing body for the various departmental officers. On roll call vote, all in favor. The terms of office was the next item to be discussed. Vice-Chairman Tosi made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Nagot, to add the Fire Inspectors to the lifetime term along with the Fire Marshal under Article I, Section 3, Subsection C #1. On roll call vote, all in favor. Regarding appointment procedures, a change was made to eliminate the wording “best qualified” in front of the word candidate. Vice-Chairman Tosi made the motion, seconded by Commissioner LaBanca, to approve Article I, Section 3, Subsection C #2a (5) deleting the words “best-qualified” in front of the word candidate. On roll call vote, all in favor. It was decided that the words “best qualified” in front of the word candidate regarding the Fire Chief should also be eliminated. Vice-Chairman Tosi made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Nagot, to approve Article I, Section 3, Subsection C #2b (5) deleting the words “best qualified” to describe the Fire Chief candidate. On roll call vote, all in favor. The next issue related to the Fire C

hief. Commissioner LaBanca made a motion seconded by Commissioner Nagot to approve Article I, Section 3D as is which focused on the criteria for the eligibility of the Fire Chief. On roll call vote, all in favor. The next issue involved adding an “s” to the word Deputy Chief regarding duties of departmental officers. Vice-Chairman Tosi made a motion seconded by Commissioner Nagot to approve Article I, Section 4, adding an “s” to the word Deputy Chief in Subsections B and C and approving Subsections D, E, and F as is. On roll call vote, all in favor. Commissioner LaBanca felt strongly that Article III L should be eliminated as it gave too much power to the Board. Commissioner LaBanca made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Nagot to withdraw Article III, Section L from the Rules and Regulations. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS:** The Budget will be discussed at a special meeting next week.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** John Conway questioned whether anything was decided regarding his letter seeking a benefit for members who die prior to achieving vesting in the Town’s Retirement Plan. Chairman Civitello said the Board received cost estimates for life insurance and will discuss it at a future meeting. Fire Marshal Bunnell requested that any person wishing to comment during the meeting should stand and state their name for identification purposes and the Board agreed. Captain Onofrio informed the Board that Company #3 will be a drop off site for the collection of items to send to servicemen. Captain Neubig asked that the Board consider increasing the rent due to oil/gas prices when discussing the Budget.

**WELFARE OF THE COMMISSION:** A Special Meeting was scheduled for January 13, 2005 at Company #2 at 7:30 p.m. for discussion and action on the budget and the appointment of a new Fire Chief.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Commissioner Nagot and seconded by Commissioner Tulli to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane B. Whalen  
Board Clerk