

# Town of North Branford

## Board of Fire Commissioners

North Branford, CT 06471

### MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING, COMPANY #1 FIREHOUSE

DECEMBER 2, 2004

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Civitello called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

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

**OTHERS:** Officers: Interim Chief Anthony Esposito, Jr., District Chief Mark Amatrudo, Captains John Florio, Ken Neubig, and John Onofrio, Fire Inspector John O'Brien, Foremen Gary Samperi.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** During this portion of the meeting, Phyllis Dunphy, a dispatcher, wanted to follow up on the dispatchers' concerns from the previous meeting. Interim Chief Anthony Esposito met with Lieutenant D'Ancicco and also spoke to Dave Moffat regarding their concerns with the EMD/CAD systems. He stated that he contacted Nexgen to schedule a meeting regarding transfer of information from the EMD to CAD system. He would forward to the dispatchers for their review a copy of the troubleshooting guide he discussed with Dave Moffat. He ordered twenty pagers that are currently being programmed in Guilford. There was much discussion regarding the lengthy amount of time between a call being received at dispatch and the equipment being dispatched to the call. Commissioner Tulli spoke of several instances regarding the dispatching of calls and the delays. These constitute issues with the CAD that Interim Chief Esposito will try to resolve as soon as possible. John Reshotnik, a Company #1 member, inquired as to when a Chief would be appointed. Chairman Civitello stated that he expects to appoint a Chief at the January meeting. John Reshotnik felt the Board wasn't acting quickly enough and questioned whether or not the Board felt there was a qualified candidate in the department to become Chief. He wanted to know if the candidates met the current Bylaws/Rules and Regulations for Chief. Chairman Civitello stated that the Board is looking for the most qualified candidate. Several other comments made by Mr. Reshotnik were: he felt the Board was afraid of hiring someone from Company #1 to be Chief because he felt the trucks and equipment would then be fixed properly if they did, and that the Board was opening themselves up to a lawsuit. He felt no confidence in the Board, that they can't make a decision, and he stated that he would like to take a vote of no confidence in the Board and bring it to the Town Hall. He felt that the Board was changing the Rules and Regulations because they didn't want a candidate from Company 1. The Chairman responded to the allegations by explaining that they were trying to create two extra positions so that members from within the department could get advancement.

**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 November 4, 2004. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS:** A letter from Jennifer Ash, a Company #1 firefighter/EMT, was presented to the Board at the meeting. She would like the decision regarding Chief to be made promptly and felt that the department has a lack of continuity in day to day operations and lacks stable leadership. She would like to have Mark Amatrudo appointed as Chief.

**DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS' REPORTS:** The Fire Marshal's Report for November was distributed at the meeting and it was noted that there were 118 calls.

**COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Pension: The last meeting was held on November 24<sup>th</sup> but the statistics couldn't be approved because a quorum of members eligible to vote on the statistics wasn't present. A special meeting will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup> to approve the pension statistics. Vice-Chairman

Tosi also recommended the increase in the pension plan to \$22 per month/per year of credited service and there was some discussion regarding this. The actuary will compute some figures and it will be discussed again at the February meeting of the 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 his report was submitted as is.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** District Chief Amatrudo wanted an explanation/clarification of the procedures followed for changing the Rules and Regulations. He wondered why they were not distributed at the November meeting. The minutes of the meeting reflect that the changes were to be distributed after the meeting. He felt that there should be discussion at this meeting. He felt an organizational chart and job descriptions were necessary. He questioned who reports to who in the new changes, who had fire ground authority and why these were being changed on such short notice. Interim Chief Esposito agreed that an organizational chart was needed and the numbering order of the cars should be changed to a sequential order showing rank. Some members felt the Chief should be appointed first and be involved in the decision and have input into the changes. Captain Florio felt that the backbone of the department was the rank and file, not the Chief. He felt the rank and file should have input in decisions. He felt that the Captains were the most important people in the Fire Department as they basically run the department. He commended Anthony Esposito for doing a great job and felt that he accomplished more in two years than the department has in five years. He felt that the Town Council and Town Manager are bulldozing the department and the Board should have fought to make Anthony Esposito the Chief. A discussion ensued about appointing a career person to the position and the members felt that such a person would make drastic changes to the department. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Tosi and seconded by Commissioner Tulli to table the revision of the Rules and Regulations pertaining to Article I, Sections 3 and 4, and Article 3, Subsection L until the next Board meeting. On roll call vote, all in favor. Vice-Chairman Tosi thanked everyone for their comments and openness at the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** A question arose as to how the rent is structured and after some discussion, Captain Onofrio explained that the Companies requested increases. Captain Onofrio was glad to hear input from members but reiterated his comments from previous meetings that the rank and file needs to attend the Board meetings for the opportunity to have input. The Board had to request that someone from each Company attend the meetings. He felt that the Board should make the Rules and Regulations and lay a foundation and the Chief should have input. Questions were then asked about whose responsibility it is to keep the ambulances clean and Interim Chief Esposito stated that it is Vintech's responsibility. He explained that, per the policy adopted by the Board of Fire Commissioners, there was a 90 day period between the time of the call and for paying Company 4 members who pull shifts on the ambulance. The 90 days allow for the billing process to take place and all the necessary paperwork to be properly completed. A new policy for the ambulance workers was discussed and it was decided that they can not leave the building during a shift unless responding to a call.

**WELFARE OF THE COMMISSION:** The Budget will be discussed and the Interim Chief is to use a 4% increase at this time. The changes to the Rules and Regulations will be voted on.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Tosi and seconded by Commissioner Tulli to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane B. Whalen  
Board Clerk

