

Town of North Branford

Board of Fire Commissioners

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING, COMPANY #3 FIREHOUSE

JUNE 5, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Civitello called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag and then called for a moment of silence for former Company #3 member and past Captain Arthur Reynolds.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Joseph Civitello, Vice-Chairman Donald LaBanca and Commissioners James Blakeslee and John Florio. Commissioner Angelo Tosi was absent.

OTHERS: Officers: Chief William Seward III, Deputy Chief Anthony Esposito, Jr., Captains John Florio and John Onofrio, and Lieutenants Richard Lennon and Joseph Manzi.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS: Company #1 Lt. Lennon distributed a letter to the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) from Jennifer Ash, Chairman of Company #1. She asked that the BOFC clarify the guidelines regarding the solicitation of donations within each district's boundaries. There was some discussion on the guidelines. Commissioner Florio felt that the BOFC should meet with the Companies to discuss the guidelines for solicitation. Originally, each Company was given three months in which to solicit donations. Captain Onofrio stated that if all Companies were represented at the BOFC meetings when each should be requesting permission for their individual fundraisers, everyone would be aware of the fundraisers. It was suggested that the Clerk send a letter to the individual Companies requesting that they meet and decide what guidelines they could agree upon. Captain Onofrio thanked all the Captains and Companies and the Chief for their support with the recent death of former member Art Reynolds. Captain Onofrio requested Board approval for a fried dough pizza event June 6th, sometime in August and September 19th. The Board gave their approval. He also requested permission for a motorcycle poker run on August 17th with a rain date set for the following week. The Board approved the fundraiser.

READING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Commissioner Florio made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Blakeslee that the BOFC approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of May 1, 2008. On roll call vote, all in favor.

NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS: A letter was received from Jennifer Ash, Chairman of Company #1, asking for clarification of fundraising guidelines.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS' REPORTS: The Fire Marshal's Report for May listing 135 calls was distributed at the meeting. A report was also received and distributed from Deputy Chief Esposito. The Ambulance Activity report was also received.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS: Transportation: Commissioner Florio requested that the BOFC review all the apparatus at each Company since it hasn't been completed in several years. The Board agreed and a date will be set to visit each station and it would be helpful if the records from public works could also be available for review. Pension: The Town Pension Meeting will be held on the second Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. in February, May, August and November.

REPORT FROM CHIEF: Chief Seward distributed a memorandum to the Board regarding the Chief's report for the month of May that is attached to the Minutes and made a part hereof. The remaining funds of \$2,542.00 from the 2006 AFG were used to purchase approximately 80 CO/Smoke Detectors for

distribution to select Town residents. Fire Inspector O'Brien has been taking calls from the public and approximately 20 requests were received during Touch-A-Truck. A notice will be inserted in the newsletter for the Totoket Valley Trailer Park on Foxon Road and those residents without detectors will be added to the list. Dispatch procedures are now in place and the Chief has trained each dispatcher and will also schedule a group training session. The NexGen system requires an update so that many time-consuming manual steps won't need to be performed prior to dispatching a medical emergency. The Chief has requested information on a satellite receiver to be placed at Company #1 since there are many dead zones for transmitting. The Baked Potato Festival has expanded to three days this year and he inquired as to whether any Company would like to volunteer during the festival on August 1st through 3rd.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Chief Seward inquired as to the status of the pension credits to be given for standby at a Company that was proposed at an earlier meeting. The Captains were supposed to meet to give their input and a meeting will be scheduled for that purpose.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Florio asked for a complete set of the General Orders issued by the Chief to update their manuals. The Chief will forward a CD of the orders to all Companies. Commissioner Florio discussed mutual aid relating to shortage of manpower and asked about the status of multi-jurisdictional dispatch. He felt descriptions of the qualifications of the department's members and apparatus should be compiled for multi-district incidents. The issue of a single uniform for all department members was discussed at length. It was noted that former member Art Reynolds was in favor of one patch for all members. The Chief felt that officers should wear white shirts and the department members wear blue shirts with the same patch on the left sleeve. Captain Onofrio mentioned that uniforms were chosen years ago but the Town patch didn't seem to fit the uniform. He agreed that one uniform would be ideal and Vice-Chairman LaBanca felt that one uniform should be chosen in Art's memory. Commissioner Florio noted that Tilcon donated approximately \$30,000 worth of equipment to Branford since they conducted a drill in the Stony Creek Quarry. He suggested that this Department contact Tilcon and conduct a drill in North Branford. It was agreed that the participation by the Fire Department in the Memorial Day Parade was poor. Commissioner Florio felt that the members should be proud to represent the Fire Department.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS: The BOFC congratulated Vin Rapuano for his prompt and professional response to the Bode household during an emergency. The Sound newspaper also noted that he escorted her to the prom. He stated that they have been friends for a long time and he would be escorting her on graduation for her diploma. Captain Onofrio agreed that it was a short parade but also felt that some might not participate because they would like more uniformity with regards to marching properly. He attended the Touch-A-Truck event and enjoyed it but was concerned about the trucks being left with air in them in order for the horns to work. Not all the trucks had chocks to secure them and someone that stayed with the vehicle. He also noted that the backhoe actually moved during the event. He noted that some children were scared when the horns blew and wondered if the solution could be to have only one or two trucks that would be advertised as the trucks to blow the horns and they could be faced in a different direction. Safety issues were discussed and it was noted that events in Town will have a safety inspection and a safety officer present. The Chief stated that a written plan with contingencies will be submitted for Town events. There were some injuries at the event - Fire Inspector Zulawski received an eye injury and Deputy Mayor Wentworth tripped at the event. Chief Seward will discuss some issues with Pam Gery regarding future events. A car accident that occurred at Rt. 80 and Twin Lakes was discussed and Company #1 felt that dispatch didn't need to comment that they didn't sign on. There was a possible dispatch error because it was announced that a truck was coming but that was incorrect. Chief Seward would like a listing from each Company of the certified drivers. It was stated that the primary job is to get the vehicle to the scene and not to stop at the scene first.

WELFARE OF THE COMMISSION: Vice-Chairman LaBanca made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Blakeslee that the BOFC suspend the Regular Meetings in July and August unless they are needed. On roll call vote, all in favor. Chief Seward informed the Board that Manchester Fire Department is selling their rescue truck as they no longer require the use of it and he would like to put a bid on it for our use. After some discussion, Vice-Chairman LaBanca made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Florio that the BOFC give the Chief permission to pursue the purchase of the vehicle from Manchester. On roll call vote, all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Vice-Chairman LaBanca and seconded by Commissioner Blakeslee to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane B. Whalen
Board Clerk