

Town of North Branford

Board of Fire Commissioners

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING, COMPANY #2 FIREHOUSE

JANUARY 3, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Civitello called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

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

OTHERS: Officers: Chief William Seward III, Deputy Chief Anthony Esposito, Jr., Fire Inspector John O'Brien, Captains John Florio and John Onofrio.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING: A motion was made by Commissioner Blakeslee and seconded by Commissioner LaBanca that the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) appoint Joseph Civitello as Temporary Chairperson. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Commissioner Civitello. Temporary Chairperson Civitello called for nominations for Chairman. Commissioner Tulli made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner LaBanca that the BOFC appoint Joseph Civitello as Chairman. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Commissioner Civitello. Commissioner Tulli then made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner LaBanca that the BOFC close the nominations for Chairman. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Chairman Civitello. Clerk Diane B. Whalen cast one ballot for Chairman Civitello. Chairman Civitello made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Tulli that the BOFC appoint Don LaBanca as Vice-Chairman. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Commissioner LaBanca. Commissioner Blakeslee made a motion that was seconded by Chairman Civitello that the BOFC close the nominations for Vice-Chairman. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Vice-Chairman LaBanca. Clerk Diane B. Whalen cast one ballot for Vice-Chairman LaBanca. Commissioner Blakeslee then made a motion that was seconded by Vice-Chairman LaBanca that the BOFC appoint Diane B. Whalen as the Clerk. On roll call vote, all in favor. Commissioner Blakeslee made a motion that was seconded by Vice-Chairman LaBanca that the BOFC close all nominations. On roll call vote, all in favor.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS: None.

READING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Commissioner Tulli made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Blakeslee that the BOFC approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting of November 1, 2007. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Vice-Chairman LaBanca as he was absent from that meeting. Vice-Chairman LaBanca made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Tulli that the BOFC approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 6, 2007. On roll call vote, three in favor and one abstention by Commissioner Blakeslee as he was absent from that meeting.

NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS: Chairman Civitello informed the Board of the retirement party scheduled for Friday, January 4th at Doody's for Town Manager Karl Kilduff.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS' REPORTS: The Fire Marshal's Report for December and the Yearly Fire Marshal Report were distributed at the meeting. There were 152 calls for December. Reports were also received and distributed from Deputy Chiefs Colangelo and Esposito.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

REPORT FROM CHIEF: Chief Seward distributed a memorandum to the Board regarding the Chief's report for the month of December that is attached to the Minutes and made a part hereof. The Chief informed the Board that he met with Town officials to review the Emergency Operations Plan that he will modify and will write a summary for implementation by department heads. Delivery of fifty-five Scott units purchased with the 2006 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is expected by early February. Regionalization of emergency communications between Branford, East Haven and North Branford is being discussed. All the Fire and Police Chiefs in the three communities agreed that a single operations center for dispatch of 911 calls would enhance public safety with a minimum of four or five dispatchers on duty. The State would guarantee \$20,000 to conduct a study for regionalization. The Board felt the Chief should follow up with this project.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: A presentation by Tim Pelton from Holdsworth-Pelton Associates on billing for fire calls, i.e. motor vehicle accidents, house calls, etc. was given. He stated that the main reason for billing would be to recoup operating costs. A fee structure would be set up and it would only involve billing the homeowner/auto insurance companies. The Department could set any parameters they wish regarding billing and the Department would get \$.30 for every \$1.00 they invoice, based on past dealings with insurance companies, due to no state mandate requiring them to pay. His company would take 10.5% of every \$1.00 they collect. There was some discussion about the program and issues arose regarding public relations. The Board would like to see a spreadsheet with examples of how much the Department could actually receive. Further discussion will be held at the next meeting when more information will be available. The Board felt that billing for Fire Marshal duties would be worthwhile.

NEW BUSINESS: Chief Seward distributed a copy of a letter he sent to Town Manager Kilduff re dispatching procedures due to several incidents in Town. There was some discussion about sending only the police to investigate a matter that delays department response time. Tim Pelton made a suggestion that an agreement be reached with the Police Department that if they are first on scene, they size up the situation and either expedite or slow down the trucks if they are not needed. There are benefits to the regionalization of the emergency dispatch that could be overseen by the Board or a manager. The State will provide a laptop to the Department since they mandated patient care reports be electronically transmitted by 2009. Additional laptops for Ambulance 44 and Rescue will have to be funded from the 2008-09 budget. Chief Seward recognized Jeff Green, a Yale student who is leaving to pursue his education in Spain, for his hard work and involvement. He was encouraged to come back upon his return.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS: Vice-Chairman LaBanca asked if the Companies have discussed the pension changes. Chairman Civitello stated that they should meet with the Board's Pension Committee initially and then bring the results of that meeting to the Board.

WELFARE OF THE COMMISSION: Fire Marshal billing will be discussed at the February meeting. A spreadsheet for fire billing will also be discussed.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Vice-Chairman LaBanca and seconded Commissioner Tulli to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane B. Whalen

Board Clerk