

Regular Meeting of the
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

DRAFT -- Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2020

Thompsonville Fire Station, 35 N. Main Street, Enfield, CT

1. Call to Order: by Comm. DuFour at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll Call: present were Comm. DuFour, Comm. Dodd, Comm. Pliszka, and Comm. Perry. Also present were Chief Deskis and Dept. Secretary Steneri.

3. Chief's Report:

Chief Deskis said the department will have 2 new firefighters, Joseph Duval Jr. and Travis Smith, starting on the 27th.

Chief Deskis said one of our Captain's will be out for a month due to some personal issues.

Chief Deskis said Captain Ellis has been filling in as Interim Fire Marshal until the position is filled. He has been doing a great job.

Chief Deskis said all the paperwork to change our 457 plan has been completed. We are just waiting to hold a conference call with Prudential to finalize everything.

Chief Deskis said the air compressor and the Hurst tool have sold on the State public auction site. Both payments have been deposited into our bank account.

Chief Deskis said the air leak has been repaired and Marine 21 is back in service.

Chief Deskis said the budget preparation is underway. I am just waiting for some figures for our insurances and yearly maintenance costs.

Chief Deskis said the Town is in the process of putting the fire protection fees for the water mains onto the fire districts. This process is going to take a long time because the Town cannot just switch the bill over to us. The Town Council just voted on it at their meeting last night.

Chief Deskis said he would like to start charging for fire inspections to include businesses and apartments. We will need to refer to our lawyer and possible changes to the charter. The fees would only be charged if we need to come back after the initial inspection. A checklist would be given to the customer to let them know what we look for during an inspection. Comm. Dodd said you would inform them of an inspection and give them a checklist of what you are looking for. Then you do the inspection. And if they fail, you will charge them for coming back. That is a great idea. Comm. Pliszka

said there is a section in the Charter about ordinances. Chief Deskis said I know we have to discuss the wording. Comm. Pliszka said if there is enough time, we could have it done by the annual meeting. There are a couple of meetings that the Board has to have. We could have them with the budget meetings.

Chief Deskis said I would like to see if it is possible to implement a fire protection charge on all Town of Enfield owned buildings. There are multiple buildings within our district. The Town of Enfield charges our department for multiple services which I believe they should provide the same for the services we offer. At last night's Town Council meeting it was said that the Town is very generous with us. The department purchases its own medical supplies. The Town refuses to buy new epi-pens. The dispatch fees are sporadic. The department does not get anything for free. Comm. Perry said the Council is talking about the Town of Enfield collects our taxes. We receive 100 percent of the money whether the Town collects it all or not. In my opinion, I would leave the buildings alone. I don't want to get hit with the water main fees. It's a lot of money. Comm. Pliszka said our tax collection fee is going to be negotiated in June. Comm. Dodd asked is the fee going to be increased. Chief Deskis said it could increase to 5 percent. Comm. Perry said it will be negotiated in June but our budget is set in May. Comm. Pliszka said it will be for the following year. Comm. DuFour said I would caution against it. We don't want to provoke them. I am 100 percent against this water protection fee because people are going to get taxed twice. Let's see how this plays out. Comm. Perry said it is something to keep in mind. Comm. DuFour asked how much would it cost to switch to TN for dispatch. Chief Deskis said it would probably be more expensive. Comm. Pliszka said Chief Richards looked into that 10 years ago. Chief Deskis said all 5 districts would have to agree to switch. The dispatch fees were reasonable a couple of years ago. But now they have increased and dispatch has been terrible. Comm. DuFour said it opens everyone up to a liability issue. If the department is dispatched incorrectly, we are the ones that are going to look bad. Chief Deskis said the dispatch employees are not trained properly. Comm. Perry said their job is to dispatch the right people for the right situation. It is not acceptable. Chief Deskis said it is discussed at every Chiefs' meeting.

Chief Deskis asked has the district received any PILOT money or Pequot Fund money. It has been brought to my attention that there have been some funds that were given to the Town. I don't know if any of the districts received a portion of that money. Comm. Perry said not that I am aware of. Chief Deskis said he just wants to make sure that if the District is supposed to receive any funds, that the District gets it. Especially since the District provides service to State buildings. Comm. DuFour asked does the Town get paid PILOT funds for State buildings. Comm. Pliszka said I am pretty sure the Town receives money. Comm. Perry suggested calling our State Representatives. Comm. Pliszka said this may be something that we are going to have to do on our own.

Chief Deskis said it is not mentioned in the Chief's report but if the Board wants to move forward with consolidation, it is going to have to be put into our budget. Comm. DuFour said we will discuss it during Commissioners' Communications.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Comm. Dodd said our operating account has \$93,625 and the municipal investment account has \$2,779,800 for a total of \$2,873,425 as of the end of January. There is \$110 thousand in the apparatus/building fund, \$165 thousand in the debt service account, and \$43,800 in the contingency fund. Our revenue and expenses for January are as follows: revenue: \$3,394 and expenses: \$338,257. This is comparable to what it should be. For the budget vs. actual, our revenue is under budget by \$38,000 and our expenses are under budget by 1,041,000. We will discuss contingency funding when we discuss the budget.

5. Public Communications:

None.

6. Commissioners' Communications:

Comm. DuFour said there was an interlocal meeting a few weeks ago about consolidation. Everyone kind of felt the same way about things. They want to get rid of the consolidation plan we have. The Chiefs were looking for some direction on whether or not to do that. It is more a bunch of information than it is a solid plan. The Chiefs' Association has paid money for it. The Commissioners from the other districts were in favor of letting go of the person performing the study now. Comm. Dodd said I thought this person was supposed to do an analysis. Chief Deskis said it was but he already made the recommendation to consolidate. It seems like his mind is already made up. Comm. Perry asked where did the Chiefs' Association get this guy from. Chief Deskis said he was recommended by Chief Macsata. Comm. Perry asked why didn't the Association contact a town that did consolidate. Chief Deskis said because it was very expensive to do it that way. This person had done some consolidation work for other towns. Comm. Pliszka said you pay for what you get. Comm. DuFour said it was information you could get off the internet. Comm. Dodd said we want to get rid of this guy but not throw out the whole idea. Chief Deskis said the Town needs to really think about this because a real consolidation plan will cost a lot of money. Comm. DuFour said I think we should pull out of this. But the Board cannot make a motion because we are not paying for this. The Board can make a recommendation. I don't think we should continue because it is just wasting money. There was a recommendation made right in the beginning and the information was tailored to fit that recommendation. That's not the way it should be done. Chief Deskis said it is going to cost more money in my opinion. You are going to have to pay to provide a service for the whole town. Comm. Perry said consolidation means there are going to be stations that aren't manned any more. Comm. DuFour said the plan we have now is not worth the money we are paying for it. The Chiefs Association needs to get another company to do this.

7. Old Business: a) Sale of Old Air Compressor:

Sale of Old Air Compressor: Discussed during the Chief's Report.

8. New Business: a) Bank Signatories:

Bank Signatories: Dept. Secy. Steneri said former Comm. Reidy is a signatory for all of the District's bank accounts. She needs to be removed. The Board can replace her with someone else or not. Comm. Dodd asked who are the other signatories. Dept. Secy. Steneri said Comm. DuFour, Comm. Perry, and Comm. Dodd. There can be up to 4 signatories but you don't have to have 4. Comm. Dodd said the Board should wait until the next election to replace her. Dept. Secy. Steneri said the Board has to make a motion to remove her.

MOTION to remove Colleen Reidy as signatory from all the Thompsonville Fire District's bank accounts made by Comm. DuFour, seconded by Comm. Perry.

Discussion: Comm. DuFour asked is there any paperwork that needs to be filled out for that. Dept. Secy. Steneri said she will contact the bank. Roll Call- Motion passed 4-0.

9. Approval of Minutes from January 15 regular meeting, February 4 special district meeting, and February 4 special meeting:

MOTION to approve the meeting minutes from the January 15 regular meeting, February 4 special district meeting, and February 4 special meeting made by Comm. DuFour, seconded by Comm. Dodd. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 4-0.

10. Discussion and Approval of Invoices/Bills:

Commissioners reviewed, discussed and approved checks for invoices/bills.

11. 2020-2021 FY Budget Workshop:

The Commission, Chief Deskis, and Dept. Secy. Steneri discussed the Grand List, health, dental, and workers' compensation insurances, air packs, grants, pension contribution, government trust, the budget presentation and public hearing dates, budget format, building and apparatus fund, and salaries.

12. Adjourn:

MOTION to adjourn made by Comm. Perry, seconded by Comm. DuFour. All in favor by ayes at 8:19 pm.