

**Town of Ridgefield
Fire Commission Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2009; 6:30 pm
Town Hall Large Conference Room
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

Commissioners Attending: Rudy Marconi
Andrew Bodner
Barbara Manners
Di Masters

Commissioners Absent: Joan Plock

Representing RFD: Chief Heather Burford
Fire Marshal David Lathrop
Asst. Emergency Manager Dick Aarons

Meeting Called to order by Commission Chair Rudy Marconi at 6:30

Chief Burford presented for discussion the following reports:

- Capital Improvement Plan –RFD YTD Update
- Fire Department Incidents By Month and Type, Year 2008
- Proposed Fire Department Operating Budget FY '10
- Department Summary Budget 5-year Capital Budget

These reports are attached to the minutes.

Capital Improvement Update

- Women's Bath Project – Nearly complete, under budget.
- Pager Replacement – On schedule, on budget.
- Dry Hydrant/Cistern Repairs – On schedule; under budget.
- Firefighting Gear – Completed; on budget.

Fire Department Incidents

In response to questions from the commissioners, Chief Burford confirmed that about 60 percent of the Department's responses are Rescue/EMS incidents. The number of calls to the 640 Danbury Road complex in 2008 represented only a slight increase over 2007. Part of the increase is due to the increasing population at 638 Danbury Road.

Cistern Capacity/ Sprinkler Installation

A general discussion of the Turtle Ridge fire developed these conclusions:

- The town should re-visit current cistern requirements in the light of the increase of the size of new homes.
- Existing cistern capacity requirements were established when the average home was 2,500 square feet or less. New single-home construction includes houses from 6,000 square feet up.

- Chief Burford and Marshal Lathrop agreed that increasing required cistern capacity could help with room and contents type fires.

Chief Burford said sprinkler systems should be considered for all new residential construction and for refit in older homes where feasible. Only sprinkler systems and competent alarm systems can give the fire department time to minimize risk of loss of life and property.

Proposed Department FY '10 Budget

Line items were reduced or kept flat in all items except full-time salaries, holiday pay, part time dispatchers, vehicle maintenance, telephone service, professional service testing, OSHA compliance and medical supplies. Increases in these items represent contractual obligations, increased medical call volume and regulatory compliance. All Commission Members congratulated Chief Burford on the department's efforts to reduce expenditures in light of the current financial situation.

Five-Year Capital Budget

Tanker-10 replacement project has been deferred until FY '11. Remaining projects for FY '10 include SCBA replacement and the purchase of a fourth 12-lead cardiac monitor.

In response to questions from Commission Members, Chief Burford said that the department's 41 sets of SCBA gear range in age from 7-years to 21-years and none meets post 9/11 NFPA standards. The Chief has proposed a four-year program (FY '10 through FY 13) to replace the exiting units and thereafter to replace a few yearly to keep all up to standards.

Cardiac monitors are required on ALS response vehicles – Medic 1, 2, and 3 and Engine 2. The department owns three cardiac monitors that meet current ALS standards and best practices. The fourth department monitor does not. There are times when all four ALS vehicles are active, therefore the Chief believes each vehicle should be equipped to send all necessary biomedical data the ER doctors.

Adjournment: There being no other matters before the Commission, the meeting adjourned by motion, second and unanimous vote at 7:30.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard N. Aarons,
Assistant Emergency Manager
Acting Secretary