

TOWN of RIDGEFIELD
FIRE COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 28, 2016 – 6:30 PM

RIDGEFIELD FIRE HEADQUARTERS CONFERENCE ROOM
SIX CATOONAH STREET, RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT

UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED MINUTES

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

Present: Commissioner Rudy Marconi
Commissioner Barbara Manners
Commissioner Maureen Kozlark
Commissioner Robert Hebert (left at 6:50 p.m.)
Commissioner Steve Zemo

Also: Fire Chief Kevin Tappe
Assistant Chief Jerry Myers
Deputy Chief Tim Pambianchi

The meeting was called to order by R. Marconi at 6:30 p.m.

R. Marconi asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Personnel Update - Chief Tappe gave an update on new personnel. One is now assigned to a shift and four are currently in the recruit fire academy. Chief Tappe mentioned that the sudden loss of so many personnel required about \$40,000 in extra expenses for recruit training and PPE and uniforms. Chief Tappe also reported on the progress of the test for the position of Fire Lieutenant and the search for a new Fire Marshal. The new Lieutenants should be on board before the end of December. There was some discussion of how many applicants to be tested.

Apparatus Update – The new Engine #2 should be delivered toward the end of October and should be in service by the end of November. Selling the old Engine #2 has not been successful yet and it will be listed with another broker. There was some discussion of painting the old Engine #2 to obtain a higher price. Chief Tappe will research the costs. Engine #3 is currently being inspected to develop a list of items needed for the refurbishment. It will then go out to bid for the refurbishment process. There was also some question about possibly purchasing a used engine rather than refurbishing.

EMS Update – Asst. Chief Myers presented the results of the last months public EMS surveys and we continue to be rated highly by our patients. He then reviewed the figures and data obtained tracking multiple EMS calls, response times, etc. It was suggested that to try to separate out the mutual aid ambulances response times if possible and also how many times a mutual aid call occurred when headquarters was left empty.

B. Hebert left the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Building Update – Chief Tappe explained about some long standing building maintenance issues such as the floors at both stations, the sinking driveway and exterior building trim replacement and painting. He had brought these items to the attention of the Engineering Department on numerous occasions and they are still not fixed. The trip hazards are becoming worse. R. Marconi asked the Chief to send another notice to Mr. Fisher and copy him on the memo.

General Alarm Fires – Chief Tappe reported on two fires that occurred--one at 39 Midrocks Road and another at West Branchville Road--and distributed photos of the fire scene. There was some discussion about a portable pond and water supply at the Midrocks Road fire. It was explained by Deputy Chief Pambianchi that water supply was not an issue at this fire and that three additional tankers were called for. The portable pond on Tanker 10 was not available but also was unnecessary at this fire. There was a question about safety at the Branchville fire in which firefighters did not have full PPE on. Chief Tappe explained that the fire was 30 feet away from the firefighters and it was a very hot day and he felt that there was no need to be wearing complete PPE. The heat exhaustion factor was more important and there was no exposure to the products of combustion.

Activities – Chief Tappe briefed the Commission on some events in which the Fire Department was involved including Public Safety Day, a trail run, a fundraising 5K for Brook, the Pamby ½ marathon and LYL. He also stated that the Exchange Club had chosen Firefighter/Paramedic Tim Nobes and Volunteer Fire Lieutenant Patrick Sexton as the Firefighters of the Year for 2016. They will be honored at a dinner at the Leir Retreat Center on October 19th and a state function on October 20th. The Commission was also made aware of a retirement party for Lts. Drake and Jones and FM Lathrop on October 5th.

Strategic Plan – Chief Tappe distributed Phase II of the Strategic Plan. He explained that many of the items had already been completed or are in progress. The largest item that drew some discussion was the location and possible replacement of fire stations. The commission agreed that a consultant may be the next step to determine costs, placement of structures, impact on response times, etc. S. Zemo asked how the \$40,000 figure was obtained. Chief Tappe explained that he had spoken with two different public safety consulting firms and both of them stated that a ball park figure was between \$35K and \$40K. The Commission suggested that the Chief reach out to the other Chiefs around the state to find others that have used similar consulting firms and obtain background information. There was discussion about possibly

including the consultant fee in next year's budget. R. Marconi asked if there were enough funds in the "Drenzek" account to fund a consultant. Chief Tappe will research. S. Zemo also discussed the possibility of having a potential public safety building as part of the scope of the consultant report. It was felt that the Fire Commission should meet with the Police Commission before ordering such a study.

Fire Marshal candidate interview – the Commission went into executive session at 7:45 pm in order to interview a candidate for the position of Fire Marshal. The Commission returned to public session at 8:05 p.m.

B. Manners motioned and M. Kozlark seconded to appoint Firefighter Michael Grasso as the new Ridgefield Fire Marshal. Vote carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the Special Fire Commission meetings of May 11, 2016 and July 20, 2016 were reviewed. **M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded to accept the minutes of the special meetings of 5/11/16 and 7/20/16. Approved by a vote of 3 in favor, 0 against and 1 abstention. B. Manners abstained.**

A motion was made by M. Kozlark and seconded by S. Zemo to adjourn the Fire Commission meeting at 8:15 pm. Vote carried 4-0.