



WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
WESTFIELD FIRE COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 3, 2022



Fire Commissioner C. Lee Bennett called the meeting of the Westfield Fire Commission (hereinafter WFC) of January 3, 2022 to order.

Location: Little River Fire Station
Community Room
366 Little River Road
Westfield, Massachusetts

Date: January 3, 2022

Time: 18:00 hours

MINUTES TAKEN:

Ms. Patricia Breton, Westfield Fire Department (hereinafter 'WFD') Office Manager

Chairman's announcement:

Westfield Fire Commissioner C. Lee Bennett in accordance with the Open Meeting Law Changes (Reference Memorandum dated June 18, 2010 'Open Meeting Law Changes'), from the Office of the City Solicitor, made the following announcement to all participants and attendees that the Westfield Fire Commission Regular Schedule meeting of January 3, 2022 is being audio recorded and if the Westfield Fire Commission meeting at any time goes into executive session all audio equipment will be turned off to include all recording devices of audio and video and any transmission of video and or audio..

Westfield Fire Commissioner C. Lee Bennett also made the following inquiry that if there is anyone making a video or audio recording of the meeting, please indicate this to the Chair.

PRESENT IN ATTENDANCE:

Westfield Fire Commissioner C. Lee Bennett, Westfield Fire Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel, Fire Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli, Fire Chief Patrick Egloff, Deputy Eric Bishop, Firefighter Travis Lucia and Firefighter Kyle Roy, Mr. Peter Cowles doing the audio recording.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett asked for a roll call.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett – present
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel – arrived at 6:01
Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli – present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

READING OF THE RECORD OF:

- a. WFC Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes November 1, 2021. Vote to accept.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett ascertained a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes of November 1, 2021.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli made a motion to accept the Meeting Minutes for November 1, 2021.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	Not Present
Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli	YES

YES (2) NO (0)

Motion Passed

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel arrived at 18:02.

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

- a. Introduction - Commissioner C. Lee Bennett thanked everyone present and for their continued work of all the Firefighters. She stated we are rounding into year three of covid, and gave everyone praise for doing such a great job.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli also wished everyone on the department a safe and a healthy new year.

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel agreed with the other Commissioners.

- b. Letters and Communications – Chief Patrick Egloff stated the Fire Department received many Christmas cards thanking the Westfield Firefighters. The Department

also received donations during the Holiday, this is with a lot of baked goods for the staff, along with cards showing their gratitude for what we do, which is deeply appreciated.

REPORTS FROM THE WFD & WFC:

a) Chief Egloff to report on status of key areas of the department.

Departmental Promotional List:

We currently have an active list for Fire Chief, Deputy Eric Bishop is on this list. This list is good as of July 2021, and it is good for two years.

The Deputy Chiefs list was called for and postponed. We did not have four employees sign up for it. Civil Service has been called and it can be opened up to the next lowest rank, this would be the privates next year.

The Commission will have to decide whether to open it to the privates and have it this year. Chief Egloff recommended waiting a year, so that those interested have time to study. Deputy Eric Bishop said there are two Captains that are studying for the test now. The Captains have purchased the studying material and are studying.

Discussion was made on the fairness to all the Captains, if the exam is called for now. This would mean the exam would be in May 2022, and be open to both Captains and Privates.

The decision was made to open it to both Captains and Privates.

After discussion Commissioner C. Lee Bennett ascertained a motion to call for a Deputy Chief Test.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett made a motion to call for the Deputy Chief Test.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli	(YES)
Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	(YES)
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	(YES)

YES (3) NO (0)

Motion Passed

The Captains exam was held on November 13, 2021, the scores have yet to be released.

Organization Status:

We have two openings that we are not able to fill per Personnel and Law Departments.

We had four retirements in 2021.

Thomas Greene
David Ritchie
Tom Silva
Jenn Daley

We have one person long term IOD in the process of retiring.
There is another employee out long term IOD.
There is one employee out FMLA long term.

Right now I have four openings that I am unable to fill.

Covid is starting to take its toll, we currently have eight individuals out of work. They are in different stages of quarantine. Quarantine is now 5 days.

Chief announced to the public that Covid is at a spike right now. It seems that it is worse than last year's Holiday spike. It seems like the common denominator is they have not had their booster.

Acquisition of 2022 Apparatus/Equipment:

The Chief announced that the Department has created a new Apparatus Committee to put together a new Engine/Quint with a potential delivery date of late fiscal year 2023 or early 2024. Payment would be made the end of 2023 fiscal year. The lead time right now for a new apparatus is approximately a year to a year and half. This is due to supply chain issues. We have not yet decided between an Engine and or a Quint. The Engine right now is estimated at \$820,000.00 and the Quint (can do 5 things and has a ladder on it), this is estimated at \$1,100,000.00. If we get the Quint we would put it at the North Side due to all the new industry up there. There will be discussion with Mayor McCabe on the funding.

The last Engine we bought was in 2018 the Pierce which was \$780,000.00 this was paid for out of the Ambulance enterprise account. There were no tax paying dollars spent to purchase this, tax money was used to supply the equipment that goes on the Engine. The Engine is set up as a first response vehicle as well, it is also set up with Paramedic equipment.

Ems Superintendent Status:

Chief Egloff stated that Dave Avezzie has hit his stride and has taken the burden off the Training Office. He has been instrumental in helping me with our new affiliation agreement with Mercy Medical Center. We will be working together on

getting advanced up to date training that has been lacking with Baystate through Mercy Medical control. We will be having conversations with the Mayor on creating a Line Item in the budget specifically for EMS training. We accomplished approximately 7,400 EMS calls last year, so call volume continues to increase year after year. We are required by Mass OEMS to have uninterrupted training. With our call volume, we find it extremely difficult to get that required training done, while our members are on shift.

Budget Disbursement:

Chief explained that the overtime comes out of the Ambulance Budget and the recent rise in positive covid diagnoses is having an impact. We were also required by Baystate Medical Center to send all of our IFT Paramedics to a 16 hour class in both July and August, which are already our highest overtime months. We did not receive any prior heads up on this required class, and the refresher is normally 6 hours, so we were not prepared. IFT is an inter facility transport, these are high equity transports which means something is running such as an IV with some sort of drug, a ventilator or something similar. OEMS does not require this

Our affiliation agreement was up with Baystate, so we decided to go from Baystate to Mercy. This will not affect the citizens of Westfield, it's just a better agreement. Things have changed for the better.

A grant was written that was awarded for the sum of \$61,024.99 from AFG-S Covid supplemental. We were able to use these funds to purchase needed PPE to protect our members from Covid. This money was used instead of our regular budgeted supply money, so there will potentially be money going back into the Ambulance Enterprise account at the end of the fiscal year.

FY 2023 budget process update, Chief has met with the Mayor elect to discuss the path going forward. The Mayor would like the budget sooner than usual, he would like it by February 1, 2022.

Grant Processes:

Covid AFG-S has \$12,057.24 to spend on medical supplies we have until September 1, 2022 to do this. This has been extended, because of supply chain issues. It is still hard to get certain PPE supplies.

We have submitted an AFG Grant for Fiscal year 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the purchase of new SCBA in the amount of \$235,095.00, we should hear sometime in the summer of 2022.

We also have submitted for a grant from Mass DFS22 FY 22 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program to get an extra pair of gloves and nomex hood for each fire department member, this would cut down on the amount of carcinogens that the members would be subject to. We also requested the purchase of an SCBA fit tester, this would allow us to make sure that everyone was using the correct mask every year which is required under NFPA guidelines. Currently we borrow

the fit tester from the HCFMAA or Western Mass Chiefs, but we have to track them down and have to wait because other departments are also borrowing them. This request is for approximately \$20,000. The SCBA fit tester is a little over \$10,000.

All Facility Status:

The Sacket Street building has been voted on by the City Council to surplus. It is still the Fire Departments until someone purchases it. It looks like there is someone interested.

Chief Egloff had a conversation with Mayor Mike McCabe when he was mayor elect, about the security in the buildings, we would like to Key Fob all the facilities exterior doors and a few of our interior ones. This would be a much better system then the key code that is used on the doors now. Mike said to submit the request after the first of the year. This would be our number one priority to get security for all our buildings. Every entry will be recorded.

Chief Egloff has had a conversations with the Facilities Director on replacing the carpeting in the dorm rooms with some type of laminate flooring to cut down on the potential of spreading blood borne and other pathogens from footwear that is worn during medical emergencies. This type of flooring can be mopped using a bleach type cleaner. I have also spoken to him about changing out the front offices flooring for the same reason. This is on my supplemental budget that needs to be in for January 10, 2022

Chief Egloff is also requesting funds for equipment that would go onto the new Fire Vehicle. This will most likely go on next year's budget.

OLD BUSINESS:

a) Transfer opportunity Christopher D'Angelo.

Christopher will have to wait until the next available opening, we are hoping for April or May with a retirement. Christopher has brought the request to his Chief, but has not gone to his Fire Commission yet. Once it goes to the Commission they vote and if they sign off on it, it will then go to Civil Service for approval and to sign off on it. Chief recommendation is to do nothing with it at this point. The Commission has done their part, they can just wait, and they do not have to rescind anything.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Firefighter Paramedic Kyle Roy to address the Fire Commission to request acceptance of his Associates Degree.

Firefighter Kyle Roy is receiving an Associate's Degree in Health Science and is requesting the Commission to accept this toward his education incentive.

Kyle explains how this degree helps toward his job as a paramedic.

The Commission has already accepted the same degree for two other firefighters.

Chief Egloff asks the Commission to vote to accept this, seeing they have for two others. Chief also suggested that during contract negotiations that the Local 1111 bring this forward to be included in negotiations.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli made a motion to give Kyle Roy the incentive pay.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli	YES
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	YES
Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES

YES (3) NO (0)

Motion Passed

2. Discussion on Burning Permits.

Burning season starts January 15, and goes to April 30. We are discussing this for next year 2023, it will not happen this year. We would like to change how we do the burning permits. Chief explains the process now, how the Deputy determines if it is safe burn. Once this is decided the citizens then call in and leave their name, address and phone number. This is if they have a burning permit. The burning permit was good as long as the address and phone have not changed. The Department of Fire Service says we cannot do permits this way.

We are the only community in the area that allows open burning. We are going to have to change our permit process. Currently those areas that do allow burning charge for burning permits, which is revenue building. We currently do not charge for burning. Chief Egloff is discussing charging a \$10.00 fee for the permit. He explains the process that we will be looking into. This will cover the price of a truck that may have to go to a home.

This would bring us into compliance, the State Fire Marshal says we are not in compliance. It is too late this year, to try to get this done. He has been working on this with Christie Fillion Head Clerk on setting up payment through the City of Westfield's

website. Christie has been working hard at getting the Fire Departments permits and payments on line to do credit and debit cards.

Chief Egloff told the Commission it will be up to them as to how they want to change this and by how much to charge. Commissioner Bennett said she would like to see what is comparable before we make a decision on the fee and what account they would go in.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett ascertained a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel made a motion to adjourn

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES
Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli	YES
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	YES

YES (3) NO (0)

Motion Passed

Time 19:02 hours

Respectfully submitted,



C. Lee Bennett, Chair
Westfield Fire Commission
pab