



**WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
WESTFIELD FIRE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 14, 2023**



Fire Commissioner C. Lee Bennett called the meeting of the Westfield Fire Commission (hereinafter WFC) of August 14, 2023 to order.

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

Date: August 14, 2023

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 meeting of August 14, 2023 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 Jeffery Siegel, Fire Chief Patrick Egloff, Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Kane Jr. and Deputy Chief Eric Bishop. Firefighter Travis Lucia and Candidate Aiden King

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett asked for a roll call.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett – present
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel – present
Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli – absent

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

READING OF THE RECORD OF:

- a. WFC Regular Scheduled Meeting Minutes June 05, 2023 Vote to accept.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett ascertained a motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 05, 2023.

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel made a motion to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes for June 05, 2023.

Commissioner Lee Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	YES
Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES

Yes (2) No (0)

Motion Passed

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Firefighter Travis Lucia addressed the Commission in regards to Aiden King, the candidate being interview this evening. He wanted to give a recommendation for Aiden, he has known Aiden for a few years and Aiden has been steadfast after this position. It has been on his mind for a long time. He has been constantly working toward this goal. Aiden has reached out to Travis multiple times for more information about the job. He is a sponge and has soaked up everything. He said Aiden is a hard worker and very interested in the Fire side also. He highly recommended Aiden.

ROUTINE BUSINESS:

- a. Introduction –

- b. Letter and Communications - Chief Egloff read a thank you note from Olive Wilder thanking Firefighter Bethany Thomas and Dominic Ceccarini for both being kind and considerate as they took her to the hospital. She really appreciated it.

REPORTS FROM THE WFD & WFC:

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

Department Promotional Lists

The Deputies List will expire a year from September, so Chief Egloff will have that on the agenda for Septembers Fire Commission Meeting. The Captains exam has been called for and will happen Spring of 2024. The Fire Chiefs exam is in the sign-up phase that closes tomorrow August 15th.

Organization Status

We have one member going to the Fire Academy at the end of August, Jackie O'Brien. Nicholas Hope was supposed to attend, but had an issue related to the physical fitness portion and will be attending the next Academy at the end of November. Nick just upped to a paramedic and will be working as a double paramedic.

The budget was finalized at the end of June, the Mayor cut the Fire budget by two members and when it was presented to the City Council Finance Committee, they cut the overtime money by half or \$200,000.00. Chief will have to go back and ask for more money to get through the second half of the fiscal year.

Chief Egloff was notified by Pat Breton that she will be retiring on October 6, 2023. Per the ASME35 Union's contract, Christie Fillion is the only person who can apply for the Office Manager position, so we will be looking to hire to fill her position. From what the Chief understands, HR and the Union are still working out how we will train the new staff member. I would like to bring Pat Breton back after she retires, part time, to do some of her old duties so that Christie can train her replacement and Pat Breton is agreeable to this.

Replacement Equipment

Chief Egloff has put funds into the ambulance budget to replace two of the ambulances. He is anticipating having them by this coming spring. We are also anticipating receiving our new Pierce Velocity Pumper next year as well, these are all being funded through the ambulance enterprise account and not taxpayer moneys.

The new Airboat will have both river search and rescue capabilities as well as ice rescue operations. It has an anticipated delivery date of November of 2023. This Airboat was

purchased with ARPA funds. It has been decided that only the Captains will be trained to operate/drive the airboat do to safety concerns and accountability.

Hiring Process

Chief Egloff says he is anticipating another retirement within the next three months. As for the hiring process, the second person who was given a conditional offer of employment, Joseph Lords, decided the day before the PAT that he didn't want to complete the process, after the department paid for both his physical and his psychological evals. The Chief then called Jake Antosz to offer him the position and he stated that he had already begun the process of being hired by Easthampton and that is why we are interviewing again. Nick Black will be taking his PAT for a second time this week, so neither of our June 5th hires have been able to have an impact on the overtime situation that we find ourselves in.

Call Volume

June's call volume was 246 Fire Apparatus responses and 683 Ambulance responses. July's call volume was 299 Fire Apparatus responses and 653 Ambulance responses.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Discussion and Potential Vote on a process to recognize the accomplishments of members of the Westfield Fire Department through citations and awards.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett acknowledged that Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli has done a lot of work on a project listing on how things should go. She has down loaded the rules and regulations from the Springfield Fire Department in regards to this, and has shared them with President of the Union Travis Lucia. Commissioner C. Lee Bennett feels it is a good idea to recognize people that do a good job. She said people go above and beyond on a regular basis here, and they should be recognized. There should be a committee that reviews acknowledgements and sends it up the chain of command. She also said whether it is approved or not by the committee it should go to the Commission, so they are aware of this acknowledgement.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett indicated that this should be separate from the rules and regulation or policies and procedures. Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel said so that this is not tied to anything, no financial remunerations. There maybe some cost such as a badge, that may come out of the budget.

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel suggested tabling this and not voting on it tonight, for further discussion. Commissioner C. Lee Bennett said she would send Commissioner Siegel the information.

The item was tabled until the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Interview one candidate for one open position, discuss and potentially vote to conditionally hire to the position of : Full-Time Firefighter/EMT effective start date: Per Fire Chief, pending successful completion of all the aspects of the Conditional offer of employment.
1. EMT Basic Aidan C. King

Chief Egloff called for a new requisition because the second person backed out and the third person did not want the position. Chief talked to the Chairwoman and she said go ahead and asked for another requisition.

There was a list with seventeen names on it and Aiden is number one on the list, as a Westfield Resident. He would have been number one on the last list, but he was not an EMT yet. Aiden is number one over all on Westfield's list. There was no one else who signed the list.

Aiden was then asked a series of question by the Commissioners.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett ascertained a motion to give a conditional offer of employment to Aidan C. King. Conditions of this offer includes a successful full department physical, a positive psychological evaluation, passing of the Massachusetts physical abilities test (PAT), the completion of the Career Recruit Massachusetts Fire Academy Program and if not currently a Paramedic, obtaining your Paramedic credentials within 28 months of hire and passing of the background check.

Commissioner Jeffery Siegel seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES
Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	YES

Yes (2) No (0)

Motion Passed

- b. Acknowledgement of Commissioner Albert J. Masciadrelli's over two decades of service to the City of Westfield as a Fire Commissioner.

Commissioner Albert Masciadrelli was not present for the Commission, Fire Chief and Firefighters to honor him. Chief Egloff will get his gift and cards to him.

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner C. Lee Bennett seconded the motion.

Roll Call

Commissioner Jeffrey Siegel	YES
Commissioner C. Lee Bennett	YES

Yes (2) No (0)

Motion Passed

Time: 18:29 hours

Respectfully submitted,



C. Lee Bennett, Chair
Westfield Fire Commission
pab