

# TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD

## Board of Fire Commissioners

### MINUTES

**SPECIAL MEETING, COMPANY #4**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Prunier called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**ROLL CALL:** Chairman Ed Prunier, Vice-Chairman Joseph Civitello (arrived several minutes late), and Commissioners Andrew Campion and Anthony DellaCamera.

**OTHERS:** Officers: Fire Chief William Seward, III, Deputy Chief Anthony Esposito, Deputy Fire Marshal John O'Brien, Captains Kevin Lyon, Ken Neubig and Steve Torino, Lieutenants Ken Ash and Corey Roberts and Foremen Kyle Conklin and Nick DaCunto. **OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:** Mayor Michael Doody, Town Council liaison.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** None.

**READING OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:** Commissioner Campion made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DellaCamera, to approve the Minutes of the June 29, 2017 Special Meeting. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS:** A letter from Co. #2 Captain Neubig was received requesting that BOFC meetings be moved to a Town building, effective immediately. A FOI request was received for letters that were read at the previous meeting and the Chief supplied the Town Manager with copies. The Chief informed the Board that he contacted FOI regarding security measures for the department and to determine discussions that should be held in executive session. He stated that any discussions regarding strategic deployment of apparatus and equipment and tactical operations will be held in executive session. The Zion Church picnic will be held on September 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m. for all fire personnel. He referred to a memo dated July 24<sup>th</sup> regarding surplus property. He is looking into the disposal of surplus hose and it will be kept in a secure area until properly disposed of. A letter was sent to the Police Department from the Chief requesting permission to have the Town's NICE INFORM audio recording system installed on his office desktop computer and a reply was received that his request was approved. The Chief requested that the Board approve the expenditure of \$1200 for the installation on his computer. The Chief received a request from the Holyoke, MA Fire Chief to use the same frequency as our primary dispatch channel. He didn't feel there should be any interference but he will wait to receive written confirmation from the consultant that there won't be any interference prior to agreeing to their request. An outside vendor, ESO Health Data Exchange, has been contracted by Yale New Haven Hospital to establish a link between all users and ESO to give immediate access to all health care information on patients. The Chief requested that the BOFC give him authorization to sign an agreement with ESO for access to health data. Commissioner DellaCamera made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Campion, authorizing the Chief to sign an agreement with ESO. On roll call vote, all in favor. Commissioner Campion made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Civitello, approving the Chief's request to spend \$1200 to install the NICE system on the Chief's computer. On roll call vote, all in favor. A thank you note from Park & Rec for the department's participation in Touch-a-truck was received by the Board.

**DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS' REPORTS:** Reports were received and distributed from Deputy Chiefs Esposito, Colangelo and Assistant Chief of Training Amatrudo. The Fire Marshal's monthly reports for July, listing 147 calls, and August, listing 160 calls, were also distributed.

**COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Pension: It was noted that Neil Salamack requested his pension and it was approved by the Town's Pension Committee in advance of the Board's approval. Commissioner Campion made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Civitello, that the Board approve the pension for Neil Salamack with 32 years of service. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**REPORT FROM CHIEF:** Chief Seward informed the Board that the fire chiefs met regarding MEDCOM and questioned its fiscal management. They would like to know whose purchasing requirements are being used and a better explanation as to how the money is being spent. The Chief received a request from the Town Manager as to what the cost would be to eliminate paramedic service in Town. The Chief compared costs to what Orange and Woodbridge pay since they use an interceptor service. He said that they have a fly car 24/7 with no ambulance transport. The Town of Orange pays \$248,417.00 annually and provides a garage and place to sleep for the service. The Town of Woodbridge pays \$282,142.00 annually and it is dispatched by the Police Department. The Town is looking for alternatives to save money but the Chief felt that eliminating paramedic service would be detrimental to public safety in town.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Discussion and Action re: Ambulance Pay-Per-Shift:** The criteria to be used for a no-call stipend was discussed. Deputy Chief Esposito made a suggestion that the stipend mirror the Merit Service Retirement Plan which provides a point for every twelve consecutive hours of duty. The stipend would be made retroactive to July 1<sup>st</sup>. Extra hours of no calls would be carried over to the following month. Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DellaCamera, that the volunteer members pulling shifts be allowed to accumulate hours which would be divided by twelve to receive a stipend and additional hours would be allowed to be carried over until the following month. On roll call vote, all in favor. **Review of the POCO Festival Operations:** An update from the Chief was received regarding the Festival and a total of 24 members were assigned to firewatch and EMS duties for a cost of \$5633.75. **Discussion and Action re: Ongoing Issues with Dispatch Operations:** The Chief provided a memorandum regarding previous dispatch issues and noted that delays in dispatching are unacceptable and provide a risk to the personnel and the community. Chairman Prunier stated that multiple attempts have been made by the BOFC to resolve these issues and they don't get resolved. The Chief stated that he will bring these issues to the Board at the monthly meetings and the Board felt that he should document all issues. Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DellaCamera, that the Chief forward monthly reports to the Town Manager for distribution to the entire Town Council regarding dispatch issues. On roll call vote, all in favor. The Chief also noted the issues with CAD and firehouse software and that Deputy Fire Marshal O'Brien has to input corrections manually. **Discussion and Action re: Radio Communications:** Previously, a transmitter was requested at Saltonstall Ridge to assist with deficient areas of communication. Chief Seward discussed an alternate solution to help correct the problems. He suggested that a 5 watt portable would transmit to a 50 watt mobile repeater unit which would then transmit to a tower and then to dispatch. Estimates to install this on one mobile unit would be approximately \$3800. Commissioner Campion made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Civitello, that the Chief continue searching for radio systems to correct the communications issue. On roll call vote, all in favor. **Discussion and Action re: Fire Hose:** Previously the Chief supplied information about the fire hose that is needed and he distributed a draft for preliminary discussion only. He would like direction from the Board regarding the replacement of the hose. **Discussion and Action re: Apparatus Replacement Program, Reserve and Town CIP:** The Chief noted that he will need to supply information to the Town for the budget preparation. **Discussion and Action re: Sale of Reserve R22:** There was a discussion

regarding the listing of R22 on a website to sell it and the amount of reserve to be met. Commissioner DellaCamera made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Campion, that authorizes the listing of R22 for sale on the Public Surplus website with a reserve of \$10,000.00. On roll call vote, all in favor. **Discussion and Action re: Fire Marshal Fee Ordinance:** Deputy Chief Esposito distributed copies of the proposed ordinance amended 3/29/17 and possible changes amended as of 8/28/17 consisting of consolidated building plan reviews, a fireworks and special effects permit and the maximum inspection fees. The Board reiterated that this ordinance was only developed in response to a request by the Town to increase revenue for the Town. Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DellaCamera, that the BOFC accept the proposed ordinance as presented for fire marshal billing. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS: Discussion and Action re: FIREOPS 101:** Chief Seward requested that this discussion be tabled as Deputy Chief Colangelo was unavailable and would explain this program in greater detail. This is a program that relates to how a fire department operates by allowing participates to suit up in gear and attend a training session. **Discussion and Action re: Bids for Fire Hose and Apparatus Maintenance and Repairs:** The Chief noted that three bids were received for fire hose and two bids were incomplete. He recommended Shipman's Fire Equipment as it contained prices for attack and supply hose. There was a discussion on the amount of hose that is required on each apparatus. Commissioner DellaCamera made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Civitello, that the BOFC award the bid for fire hose to Shipman's Fire Equipment and put the maximum amount of hose on each apparatus. On roll call vote, all in favor. The maintenance contract was then discussed and the successful bidder should be within twenty miles of North Branford and there were two bidders in compliance, New England Fire and EJ Boughton Company. It was noted that EJ Boughton Co. had lower prices for emergency/after-hours maintenance. Commissioner DellaCamera made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Campion, to award the bid for the maintenance contract to EJ Boughton. On roll call vote, all in favor. **Discussion and Action re: Position Description for EMR and EMT-B:** The Chief supplied a draft of the description as it has been requested by Yale. The physician won't give a physical without a job description. Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Campion, that the BOFC accept the draft for the position description of EMR and EMT-B. On roll call vote, all in favor. **Discussion and Action re: Review of 5 year FD Operating Budgets associated with spending freezes:** The Chief provided the Board with copies of the budgets for the previous five years and noted that \$123,535.00 was returned to the Town over that period due to spending freezes. The Board felt that the fire department should spend as much of the budget by early 2018 to avoid a spending freeze. **Discussion and Action re: Realignment of Department Structure:** The Chief asked that this item be tabled until the next meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMENTS:** District Chief Esposito noted that the fire department members participate in many community events, volunteering their time, like Touch-a-truck, the NBIS Wellness Fair, Local Heroes Night, etc. Company #1 will hold their fill the bucket fundraiser this weekend at Rt. 80 and Rt. 22. They have a car show scheduled for October 15<sup>th</sup>.

**WELFARE OF THE COMMISSION:** Chairman Prunier stated that next month's Board meeting will also be a Special Meeting held at Co. 4 since all Companies have requested that Board meetings no longer be held at their stations.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DellaCamera, that the BOFC adjourn to Executive Session at 10:00 p.m. for discussion on matters pertaining to deployment of security devices per C.G. S. Sec. 1-200 (6)(c). Those present include the Board, Chief Seward, and Deputy Chief Esposito. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Vice-Chairman Civitello made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Campion, to reconvene to public session at 10:40 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner DellaCamera, seconded by Vice-Chairman Civitello, to authorize the Chief to request \$39,870 from the Town Council for fire hose. On roll call vote, all in favor.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Civitello, seconded by Commissioner Campion, to adjourn the meeting at 10:42 p.m. On roll call vote, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane B. Whalen, Board Clerk