

Town of Suffield



Board of Fire Commissioners Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting for the Fire Commission

October 10, 2023

Chairman Christian called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

Attendance: P. Christian; E. O'Hurley; P. Yeskey; J. Caron. V. Mathieu and J. Bucior.

Others in attendance: New Chief, Scott Cunningham; M. Van Cott. 5-6 firefighters and Suffield Police Chief Cannon.

Two representatives from Tolland Dispatch-Tyler Milliy and Douglas Racicot

Pledge of Allegiance

J. Caron motioned to have the agenda changed to have the two representatives from Tolland moved up on the agenda. V. Mathieu seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

Secretary's Report

No report

Minutes & Correspondences:

June 20, 2023-J. Caron motioned to have the minutes reflect that the Fire Commission Board supports Mrs. Gayle Demko. J. Bucior seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0. V. Mathieu made a motion to accept the minutes with the changes. P. Christian seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

July 11, 2023-V. Mathieu motioned to accept the minutes. J. Bucior seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0. J. Caron abstained.

July 19, 2023-V. Mathieu motioned to accept the minutes. P. Yeskey seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0. J. Bucior abstained.

September 12, 2023-J. Caron motioned to accept the minutes. J. Bucior seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

September 26, 2023-V. Mathieu motioned to accept the minutes. J. Caron seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0. P. Yeskey abstained.

October 2, 2023-V. Mathieu motioned to accept the minutes. J. Caron seconded the motion. All in favor. 5-0. E. O’Hurley abstained.

Chief stated that he is very unhappy with our dispatch service. We have missed calls; dropped calls. Eventually it is going to catch up and something bad will happen.

Tyler Milliy and Douglas Racioc gave a presentation regarding Tolland’s dispatch services. Highlights include:

- 16 towns
- 2 towns for animal control
- 43,000 calls a year
- Dispatch roughly 30,000—only fire and EMS-no police
- 10 full time and 8 part-time employees
- Technology and services-outreach program for educational reasons
- 30 towers
- Use of “common name” in specific area
- Bad weather or snow is coming-all employees report to work so all hands are on deck
- Phones are covered 9am-9pm by 2 people at all times.
- Fee: \$32.24 per call. Roughly \$25,792 yearly. Start up fees-10k to 15k.
- J. Caron stated that he works dispatch for Vernon and they use Tolland and really like them.
- Entire service will be up and running in less than 1 year once all approved.

The presentation ended at 7:53pm.

Meeting resumed at 7:57pm

V. Mathieu asked Chief Cannon his thoughts-“would benefit from a new system” having only 1 person in dispatch is an issue.

No funds to start this program. Can we take from the budget?

Is there a grant that we can apply for?

Board of finance might be able to help out.

Financials:

On target will all expenses. The only one that is high is the repairs and maintenance and that is all preventative care. Stations are all where they should be at this time.

J. Caron motioned to accept the financials. E. O’Hurley seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

Correspondences:

No correspondence.

Calls and Activities:

July-56 calls

August-36

September-51

Discussed the two structure fires. Hill Street and Edgewood Lane.

Chief stated that the department did not have enough men for the fires. Had to call in mutual help to help fight the fires.

P. Christian stated that it is unacceptable that we have to call in mutual aid at all times to help fight our fires because we don't have enough manpower to fight the fires. We do not have it in our budget to pay the town for mutual aid assistance if they decide to bill us. It is disappointing as a commissioner.

J. Caron wanted to thank the guys that did attend the fire and be there for the town. They responded the way they should and acted the way they should.

Chief Cunningham also wanted to thank the firefighters for their action this past Saturday for the fire on Hill Street.

Public Comment:

No

Old Business:

Supplemental First Responder Application-Application is done. Hopefully looking at December 1, 2023 to get this up and running. Submit to First Selectman and then to the state. SOG is completed and just needs to be submitted. Will need 1 day of training. We will move the 1 day of training into the drill schedule for Nov. or Dec.

Update on Captain's Position-Offer was made to Eric Vincent who accepted. He will start at the end of the month and will work 7am to 3pm Mon-Fri. His office will be located in station 1.

New Business:

Open burning discussion-had a discussion regarding state statute section 23-49 the Burning of dangerous materials. Next time the resident burns materials he is not supposed to, he can be arrested.

Will look into Ellington's ordinance and copy what they have and will put into place in Suffield.

Chief's Report:

Discussion of the Chief's report:

Vehicles:

Tanker 4-still not sold. Would like to lower the price again.

E. O'Hurley made a motion to drop the price to \$17k. V. Mathieu seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0. Chief will let company know to drop the price.

New "squad" vehicle-still in Greenwood waiting on final inspection. All equipment was brought up to Greenwood to have it mounted to the engine. Hopefully we will have the new engine in 3 to 4 weeks. Should be on the road in 5 to 6 weeks.

Chief's new vehicle is great.

Membership meeting:

October 4th-all members of the department. Raising the bar for standards starting on November 1st. Expecting everyone to attend at least 25% of all drills and 25% of of all incidents.

All firefighters need to sign in and out -who is attending the fires and who is at the station. They all need to be held accountable.

Regular inspection so fall stations.

Chief will be doing 1:1 meetings to find out where everyone stands and how they feel. Want to all work together.

Discussion of the derogatory comment that was left on the white board at Rately Road station. Chief was very upset; disappointed. Once he finds out more he will report to the commission.

P. Christian thanked the chief for handling the situation. The commission board was upset and disappointed by what was written on the board.

Chief will work with new Captain going over daily activities; reports; etc.

Chief met with Agawam Fire chief and will develop a relationship with Agawam to have mutual aid with them.

Recruitment:

40 members; 24 active members; 10 non-active members; 6 cadets.

1 member resigned.

22 applicants since January of 2023.

Chairperson's Report:

Nothing to report

J. Caron made a motion to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. V. Mathieu seconded the motion. All in favor. 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Vic Mathieu
Fire Commission Secretary

Margaret G. Van Cott
Recording Secretary