

**SOUTH FIRE DISTRICT**  
**445 Randolph Road | Middletown, CT**

**Board of Fire Commissioners**  
**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, February 19, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Held at the firehouse and via Zoom - Meeting I.D. 886 0915 8203**

**Present:** Commissioners Kleckowski, Giuliano, Thazhampallath, and Gregorio; Chief Trzaski; Deputy Chief; staff members

**Absent:** Commissioner Pessina

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Kleckowski called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was recited.

**3. ACCEPT/AMEND AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**4. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 7:05 p.m.

*Dan Penney, 1101 Chamberlain Hill Road*

Mr. Penney asked for clarification on specific expenditures listed on the Monthly Expense Detail report, suggested authorization for expenses which exceed a certain amount, and instituting the practice of publicly advertised bids at the beginning of each fiscal year, which would benefit the taxpayers and assist in budget preparation. Mr. Penney commended the actions taken by the Health & Safety Committee, spoke about CONN-OSHA's services, and recommended adding a member of the public to the committee, to which he asked to be considered. Mr. Penney asked for an explanation on the protocols on how invoices have been/will be paid related to the building renovation project.

**5. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION** Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:14 p.m.

**6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**MOTION** to nominate Deborah Kleckowski for chairwoman by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Giuliano. Unanimously approved.

**MOTION** to nominate Seb Giuliano for vice-chairman by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Thazhampallath. Unanimously approved.

**MOTION** to nominate Geen Thazhampallath for secretary Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Giuliano. Unanimously approved.

**7. MINUTES TO BE ACCEPTED**

- a. January 8, 2024 Regular Monthly Meeting
- b. January 29, 2024 Special Meeting
- c. February 5, 2024 Annual Meeting

The minutes were accepted as presented.

#### **8. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS – JANUARY 2024**

**a. Refunds: \$531.28**

**MOTION** to approve refunds in the amount of \$531.28 for January 2024 by Comm. Thazhampallath/Comm. Gregorio. Unanimously approved.

**b. Acceptance of the Tax Collector's Reports**

The Tax Collector's Reports were accepted as received.

#### **9. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

- a. Monthly Expense Detail: December 2023 and January 2024
- b. Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual: July 2023 through January 2024
- c. Cash Balance Reports: January 2024

The financial reports were accepted as submitted.

#### **10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS – JANUARY 2024**

Chief Trzaski and Deputy Chief Fischer provided an overview of the administrative reports and elaborated on the staff's preparation for the budgetary process, the fire marshal's services to the community, new OSHA regulations, cancer screening for esophageal cancer, and an update on Marine 3.

Budget workshops/meetings will be scheduled during the March 2024 monthly meeting. By-Law revision(s) will also be an agenda item for the March 2024 meeting.

Deputy Chief Fischer advised that R35 is not back from First Line; therefore, a tour of the truck will not take place tonight. He acknowledged the efforts of the members who have gone above and beyond in getting the truck outfitted for service, which saved the district approximately \$750,000. The truck was acquired by the State of Connecticut at no cost. The old Rescue 35 will be offered for sale on public auction.

#### **11. COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

**a. Building Committee: Commissioner Thazhampallath**

Commissioner Thazhampallath advised that the invoice issue brought up during Public Session will be looked into and an answer will be provided. The project is going out to bid again, as the level of participants for the original bid package had not been met. The deadline for bids is 3/6/24 and will be opened at SFD on 3/7/24 at 10:00 a.m. The committee is hopeful the bidders will be selected by 3/15/24 with a potential construction start date of on or about 4/1/24 and completed by 9/1/24. Hiring local entities is highly desirable.

**b. Pension Committee: Chairwoman Kleckowski** An update was not provided.

**c. Public Safety Telecommunications: Commissioner Giuliano**

Commissioner Giuliano provided an overview of the Public Safety Telecommunications meeting, as is presented in the report.

**d. Riverfront Redevelopment Update: Commissioner Pessina**

Commissioner Pessina was not in attendance; an update was not provided.

**12. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Entry Level Firefighter Hiring Process Update**

Chief Trzaski and Deputy Chief Fischer provided an update on the hiring process through FirefighterApp which is moving in a positive direction, especially in light of accepting applications from non-certified individuals who, if hired, will attend the Recruit Firefighter Program at the CT Fire Academy.

**13. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Discussion of New OSHA Regulations Affecting the Fire Service**

Chief Trzaski remarked on this subject during the discussion of *Administrative Reports*.

**b. Select Commissioner Representatives for CBA Negotiations, IAFF Local 3918 & UPSEU Unit 3919**

A selection will be made in advance of the chief's response to the letters he received regarding negotiations. Commissioner Thazhampallath indicated he would be happy to serve in the Local 3918 negotiations and believes Commissioner Pessina would also be interested. The contracts expire June 30, 2024.

**c. Completion of Rescue 35 Project and Apparatus Tour**

Rescue 35 is currently at First Line; an apparatus tour did not take place.

**14. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 7:51 p.m.

*Dan Penney*

Mr. Penney recommended three budget workshops to allow taxpayers sufficient time to participate and be well-informed in advance of the referendum.

*Geen Thazhampallath*

Geen thanked the commission, the chief, and the SFD staff for their support at the time of his mother's passing. He expressed his gratitude to the on-duty crew who responded to his home, and commented on the level of compassion, care, and dignity shown. It is very much appreciated by his entire family.

**15. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION**

Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:55 p.m.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** to adjourn by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Thazhampallath. Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Submitted by,

*Alyse McEwen*

Alyse McEwen

Recording Secretary

**APPROVED 3/11/2024**

The recording of this meeting is available upon request, according to Connecticut Freedom of Information Act requirements.