

SOUTH FIRE DISTRICT
445 Randolph Road | Middletown, CT

Board of Fire Commissioners
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at the firehouse and via Zoom - Meeting I.D. 820 9793 9264

Present: Commissioners Kleckowski, Giuliano, Gregorio, Thazhampallath; Chief Trzaski, Deputy Chief Fischer, member of the public, and staff members.

Absent: Commissioner Pessina

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Kleckowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited.

3. ACCEPT/AMEND AGENDA

MOTION to amend the agenda to move item 12 Executive Session to the next item of business by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Gregorio. Unanimously approved.

4. NEW BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION to go into executive session pursuant to Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B) AND Section 1-225(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, to discuss a pending legal claim from a former South Fire District employee by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Giuliano. Unanimously approved.

The Commission entered executive session at 7:03 p.m. Present were Commissioners Kleckowski, Giuliano, Thazhampallath, Gregorio, Pessina; Chief Trzaski.

MOTION to end executive session at 7:28 p.m. by Comm. Kleckowski/Comm. Giuliano. Unanimously approved.

5. CALL BACK TO ORDER

Chairwoman Kleckowski called the meeting back to order at 7:30 p.m.

6. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 7:30 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney asked for a status update on the annual audit and the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Local 3918. Mr. Penney inquired about various charges shown on the Monthly Expense Detail report, including 7801 Independent Materials Testing Labs, Inc. \$4,910.00 and what it was for. 8999M Key Chevrolet \$65,239.50 and expressed his feeling that such a large expense should require an official approval.

7. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION

Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:34 p.m.

8. MINUTES TO BE ACCEPTED

a. Regular Monthly Meeting of October 15, 2024

The minutes were accepted as presented.

9. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS – OCTOBER 2024

a. Refunds: \$10,802.29

MOTION to accept refunds in the amount of \$10,802.29 by Comm. Thazhampallath/Comm. Gregorio. Unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Kleckowski invited Tax Collector Lee Matterazzo to speak about the large refund amount. Lee explained she received two corrections from the assessor's office for the property located at 100 Randolph Rd in the name of Middlesex Landlord, LLC. which caused the majority of the refunds this month.

b. Acceptance of the Tax Collector's Reports

The Tax Collector's Reports were accepted as presented.

10. FINANCIAL REPORTS

a. Monthly Expense Detail: September and October 2024

Chief Trzaski answered questions raised during the public session.

b. Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual: July 2024 through October 2024

c. Cash Balance Report: October 2024

The financial reports were accepted as presented.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS – OCTOBER 2024

Chief Trzaski and Deputy Chief Fischer provide an overview of the administrative reports and answered questions of the commissioners. They spoke of recent high fire danger and pointed out South Fire District was one of the initial responders to the Hawthorn fire. Deputy Fischer was doing operations with the South Fire District when the unfortunate incident occurred when a firefighter was lost. Chief Trzaski, Deputy Chief Fischer and Meriden Fire Chief took over operations for a brief time. Chief Trzaski stated South Fire District was well represented there and provided as much support as possible for the fire. Chief Trzaski informed the Commission our assets were going back and forth to that fire for two weeks and we have filed for FEMA reimbursement and will receive 100% reimbursement for our equipment and personnel. Chief Trzaski stated this incident inspired the creation of an informational group for EMS agencies including Westfield, Central, South Fire District and the police department and giving daily reports of the activities and may need to reallocate resources. Deputy Chief Fischer provided an update on Car 37 the new pickup truck. It is now in service. They will have First Line install some side steps as the vehicle is quite high. Some items ran slightly over budget due to outfitting, and the plow was incorporated into the purchase, however, the old Car 37 sold for more than expected. Deputy Chief Fischer explained the lights and radios from old Car 37 were stripped out and reused in new Car 37. He also explained this is not the same truck the District has been purchasing. Chairman Thazhampallath questioned if this vehicle was part of a state bid. Chief Trzaski explained when looking at replacing the vehicles they looked at different makes and models and found we received the best value from one of our own taxpayers, Key Chevrolet. As we continued to work with Key Chevrolet we were getting better values because we were basically fleet purchasing. Chief Trzaski explained even though the budget for the vehicle was \$80,000 and costs were over by approximately \$3,000, using Public Surplus to sell old Car 37 for more than expected and that money will go back into CNR. Deputy Chief Fischer informed the Commission he is getting everything ready for the winter. Apparatus have been getting tire chains inspection, On-Spots installed when going for seasonal maintenance and annual aerial and ladder inspections which is an NFPA/OSHA requirement. Chief Trzaski informed the Commission they have been having some contract negotiation meetings with Local 3918 and Local 3919. Local 3918 is still doing additional fact finding. Fire Marshal Mastroianni and Deputy Fire Marshal Parmelee were recognized by the Exchange Club during the month of October for their efforts in risk reduction and public and community involvement. In addition, they

have been asked to speak at a national conference in Massachusetts for their program for adult and juvenile fire setters. Chief Trzaski explained to the Commission Marine 3 has been taken out of service as the last call it was used the motor quit and our team had to paddle to shore. He does not want to invest any additional money in the vessel. Deputy Chief Fischer reached out to MetalCraft, there are no new updates for the new boat. The radios and emergency lights have been removed from the boat, but the lettering still needs to be removed. Chief Trzaski stated Fire Prevention allowed South Fire District more opportunity in the month of October to get out into the public even more than normal. several events in which South Fire District is participating Trunk or Treat on Main Street and Middletown schools and What a Duck. South Fire District used this opportunity to get our fire prevention message out to the public. The Chief thanked Deputy Fischer, Kathy Kiley and Lee Matterazzo for helping during Alyse's absence. The Chief spoke about the awards he received The Michael Green Award for public safety, and an award from the Connecticut Fire Department Instructor Association. Deputy Chief Fischer announced the South Fire District Employee/Citizen Award Program. Since this is the These awards will be combined with the swearing-in ceremony in January 2025. Chief Trzaski spoke about Adopt-A-Family which will take place December 15, 2024 at the Elk's Club. Local 3918 is having a food drive at Big Y on Saturday, November 23rd. The South Fire District Children's Christmas party will also be held on Saturday, December 14, 2024.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

a. Building Committee: Commissioner Thazhampallath

Commissioner Thazhampallath provided a brief update about the renovation project. He informed the Commission of a couple of change orders out of control of the committee. He spoke about the possibility of naming a portion of the project after Quentin Phipps.

b. Pension Committee: Commissioner Gregorio

Commissioner Gregorio advised there are no updates.

c. Public Safety Telecommunications: Commissioner Giuliano

Commissioner Giuliano informed the Commission Mayor Florsheim is placing him on the building committee for the new Dispatch Center.

d. By-Laws Committee: Commissioner Giuliano

Commissioner Giuliano stated the Committee will begin to meet next month. He estimates there should be something ready at the same time as the Commissioner election in February.

e. Riverfront Redevelopment Update: Commissioner Pessina

Commissioner Pessina was not present at the meeting. Chairwoman Kleckowski had no update.

12. OLD BUSINESS – None.

13. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 8:04 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney mentioned the Red Cross training he received when he was younger allowed him to save a sheep. Mr Penney asked for clarification on the procedure for an ethics complaint against the South Fire District. He distributed a document titled *South Fire District of the City of Middletown Code of Ethics* to the Commission which he claimed he found in the "files". He stated the document was very well done, but it was never voted on by the Board of Fire Commissioners. He recommended the South Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners place the item on the agenda to either accept or reject it for final approval. He also distributed copies of an unsigned letter he received to the Commission. He is concerned it cites an operational issue with South Fire District. He asked to read the letter into the record; however, Chairwoman Kleckowski and Vice Chairman Giuliano denied the request based on the anonymity. He also questioned if South Fire District had an affirmative action plan, and if not they should be working on one. He also stated the Commissioner marker plates which were to have been removed from vehicles are still seen in the District. He believes a letter was to be sent to former Commissioners asking for the return of the plate.

14. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION

Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 8:09 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Giuliano. Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by,

APPROVED 12/9/24

Kathleen M. Kiley

Kathleen M. Kiley
Finance

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