

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

**Board of Fire Commissioners
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Monday, April 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.**

Held at the firehouse and via Zoom - Meeting I.D. 871 3169 8143

Present: Commissioners Kleckowski, Giuliano, Pessina, and Gregorio; Chief Trzaski, Deputy Chief Fischer (via Zoom); fire department members, and members of the public.

Absent: Commissioner Thazhampallath

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

MOTION to accept the agenda as presented by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

4. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 7:04 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney remains very concerned about changes to the bylaws related to voting rights and commissioner qualifications. Regarding voting rights, he indicated that fire districts are not totally exempt and there are different interpretations about what the district can and cannot do. He asked the commission to research the subject. Mr. Penney asked the commission to be cautious in the budget promotion/mailed by keeping the information on the mailed limited so public funds are not being used to promote the budget.

John Killian

Mr. Killian, a member of the By-Laws Revision Committee, commented on the proposed changes made related to voting and believes the wording gives everyone an opportunity to cast a ballot, especially with the use of absentee ballots. He is in favor of the change that allows a firefighter from a different town the opportunity to serve on the commission. He thanked the committee for their teamwork on the revisions.

5. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:08 p.m.

6. MINUTES TO BE ACCEPTED

a. Regular Monthly Meeting of March 10, 2025

The minutes were accepted as presented.

7. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS – MARCH 2025

a. Refunds: \$1,458.84

MOTION to accept refunds in the amount of \$1,458.84 for March 2025 by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

b. Acceptance of the Tax Collector's Reports

The Tax Collector's Reports were accepted as presented.

c. Approval of the Negative Balance Purge

MOTION to approve the Negative Balance Purge by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a. Monthly Expense Detail: February 2025 and March 2025
- b. Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual: July 2024 through March 2025
- c. Cash Balance Report: March 2025

The financial reports were accepted as presented.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS – MARCH 2025

Chief Trzaski and Deputy Chief Fischer gave an overview of the administrative reports. The deputy reminded the commission of the citywide mass casualty exercise taking place on 4/15 and 4/16 which will involve South Fire District, Middletown Fire Department, Middletown Police Department, and several other public agencies. The deputy and members of the Boat Committee will be traveling to Canada new week to review the specs. The new boat will take 6-7 months to build and will not be put in service until next season. The Police Department is allowing the district to use one of their boats for this season.

Chief Trzaski spoke about a lesson plan prepared by DFM Parmelee for Beman Middle School's STEAM Program involving different types of machines. The lab portion will take place at SFD headquarters. Additionally, as a result of the fire marshals' involvement in the adult fire setting training at Whiting Forensic Hospital, they have been invited to present at the *2025 IFIRE Conference on International Perspectives on Child and Adult Fire setting: Advances in Research and Practice*. The conference will be broadcast throughout the world.

DC Fischer and Training Captain Turenne organized a mock DUI incident for the juniors at Xavier High School on 4/25/25. The Middletown Police Department, Life Star, Middlesex Hospital, Hunters Ambulance, and possibly Biega's Funeral Home will also be involved. The chief reported that Kleen Energy recently purchased a trailer that holds 500 gallons of foam concentrate to be used on site.

10. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

a. Building Committee: Commissioner Thazhampallath

Chief Trzaski provided an update in Commissioner Thazhampallath's absence.

b. Pension Committee: Commissioner Gregorio

MOTION to appropriate \$5,000 to hire an ERISA attorney to review pension documents as they relate to negotiations by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

c. Public Safety Telecommunications: Commissioner Giuliano

There is nothing new to report.

d. Riverfront Redevelopment Update: Commissioner Pessina

There is nothing new to report.

11. OLD BUSINESS

a. District Economic Development Updates

There is nothing new to report.

b. By-Laws Revision

MOTION to accept the report of the By-Laws Committee as provided tonight with revisions by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved. A public information meeting will be held on May 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. Set Dates/Times for Budget Workshops

MOTION to schedule a budget workshop on April 28th at 6:00 p.m. by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

MOTION to schedule a public hearing on the budget on April 28th at 6:30 p.m. by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

MOTION to schedule a budget meeting on May 15th at 6:00 p.m., said meeting to include a public hearing by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

MOTION to schedule the budget meeting for the district concurrently with a special meeting of the district to adopt by-law changes for June 17th, both meetings to convene at 8 a.m. The first order of business is voting on the budget and by-laws by members of the district. The meetings of the commissioners to reconvene at 8 p.m. to accept the results of voting by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

b. Discussion of Budget Promotion – A discussion did not take place.

c. Discussion of Budget Mailer – The budget mailer will include notice of the vote for the proposed by-laws revisions.

13. APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN SOUTH FIRE DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN AND UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION, UNIT 3919

MOTION to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between South Fire District of the City of Middletown and United Public Service Employees Union, Unit 3919 by Comm. Gregorio/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

14. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 8:27 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney recommended that the commission investigate recovery fees relative to responses to CVH. He urged the commission to keep the budget flat by using funds the district already has and expressed his disappointment in the reduced hours for voting. Mr. Penney asked for clarification as to who in the department is the FOIA public liaison.

15. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION

Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 8:31 p.m.

16. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Submitted by,

Alyse McEwen

Alyse McEwen

Recording Secretary

APPROVED 5/12/2025

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