

SOUTH FIRE DISTRICT
445 Randolph Road | Middletown, CT

Board of Fire Commissioners
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Monday, June 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at the firehouse and via Zoom - Meeting I.D. 864 0421 6915

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Kleckowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 7:01 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney asked for an explanation of the tax refunds in the amount of \$8,000+, that meetings of the By-Laws Committee be properly noticed per FOIA, and who the By-Laws Committee members are. He mentioned any proposed changes to the by-laws cannot usurp the charter and that the by-laws be reviewed by legal counsel before going to referendum. Mr. Penney expressed his concern about the building renovation project being over budget by \$1 million+ without any explanation as to where the money is coming from; it will be a burden to the taxpayers. Mr. Penney suggested that if the July and August meetings are cancelled, not paying the commissioner stipends should be considered.

5. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:04 p.m.

6. MINUTES TO BE ACCEPTED

a. Regular Monthly Meeting of May 13, 2024

Commissioner Pessina moved to accept the minutes.

b. Special Meeting of June 3, 2024

Commissioner Pessina moved to accept the minutes.

Commissioner Giuliano seconded both motions. He indication that unless there are additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes, they become automatically accepted.

7. TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORTS – MAY 2024

a. Refunds: \$8,548.34

MOTION to accept refunds for May 2024 in the amount of \$8,548.34 by Comm. Thazhampallath/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

b. Acceptance of the Tax Collector's Reports

The Tax Collector's Reports were accepted as presented.

8. FINANCIAL REPORTS

MOTION to combine and accept the three financial reports by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

- a. **Monthly Expense Detail: April 2024 and May 2024**
- b. **Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual: July 2023 through May 2024**
- c. **Cash Balance Report: May 2024**

The financial reports were accepted as submitted.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS – MAY 2024

Chief Trzaski and Deputy Chief Fischer provided an overview of the administrative reports.

10. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

a. **Building Committee: Commissioner Thazhampallath**

Commissioner Thazhampallath advised that a groundbreaking ceremony is being planned.

b. **Pension Committee: Commissioner Gregorio**

Commissioner Gregorio advised that the next committee meeting is being planned for September.

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

Commissioner Giuliano provided an overview of the presented report.

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

Commissioner Pessina provided an update of the progress of Tate's Restaurant. The restaurant is open and anticipated to be completed before the July fireworks.

11. OLD BUSINESS

a. **By-Laws Committee Update**

Commissioner Giuliano advised that the committee has not convened as the commission's focus has been on the budget. By-Law Committee members are Commissioners Giuliano and Pessina, John Killian, Melissa Roming, and Kathy Kiley.

b. **Commissioner Representation for Union Negotiations – Local 3918 and 3919**

Commissioner Kleckowski advised that she and Commissioner Giuliano are the representatives.

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Employment Status: Firefighter Matthew Pantera – Date of Hire June 5, 2023**

Chief Trzaski advised the commission that Firefighter Pantera has met and exceeded what was required of him as a probationary firefighter.

MOTION to move Firefighter Pantera from probationary status to permanent status retroactive to June 5, 2024 by Comm. Giuliano/Comm. Pessina. Unanimously approved.

b. **Discussion of the possible cancellation of the July 2024 and the August 2024 regular meeting**

No action was taken.

A discussion took place regarding economic development in the district. "Economic Development" will be a permanent agenda item under "New Business."

13. OPEN PUBLIC SESSION – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Chairwoman Kleckowski opened the public session at 7:39 p.m.

Dan Penney

Mr. Penney expressed his concern about people being told that the proposed budget is “flat,” which he said is not the case. He appreciates the proposed real estate mill rate not being increased but said that the motor vehicle mill rate was not. Regarding CNR, he suggested that eliminating expending funds for the pick-up truck and furniture could have gotten the expenses to zero. Mr. Penney spoke of other missed opportunities such as no bid projects, overtime, and the elimination of commissioner compensation. He expressed his concern about administrative salary increases being determined without executive session and publicly discussing the decision for each individual staff member. As an elector, he will recommend to his constituents to vote no.

Commissioner Thazhampallath asked for verification that the tax rate for motor vehicles went down by 1.8 mills and that real estate and personal property remained the same. Commissioner Giuliano verified his statement.

14. CLOSE PUBLIC SESSION

Chairwoman Kleckowski closed the public session at 7:43 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Alyse McEwen

Alyse McEwen
Recording Secretary

ACCEPTED 7/8/2024

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