



Fire Commission

236 DANBURY ROAD
WILTON, CONNECTICUT 06897

Wilton Fire Commission Minutes of Monthly Meeting Fire Department Headquarters

January 4, 2005

Present: Commissioners Richard McCarty, Hesham El-abd and J. Casey Healy

Others: Chief Paul Milositz, Captain Jim Gies; Lieutenants Greg Kitik, Mike Michelsen and Kevin Czarnecki; Firefighters Glenn Johnson, Brian Elliott and Brad Carlson; special advisor Troy Ellen Dixon (arrived 1930 hours), First Selectman Paul Hannah, Administrative Service Manager Sarah Taffel and Town of Wilton summer intern Eric L. Sumberg (Captain Gies, Lieutenant Kitik and Firefighters Johnson and Elliott departed the meeting at approximately 1932 hours to respond to a request by the New Canaan Fire Department for mutual aid. They returned later in the meeting when the request was cancelled with Engine 4 in route to New Canaan)

A. **Call to Order:** Chairman McCarty, noting that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at approximately 1834 hours.

B. Approval of Minutes and Review of Monthly Reports

1. Summer Intern's Report - The Agenda was scrambled to hear a presentation from Mr. Sumberg regarding the Fire Department Study that he prepared for the Board of Selectmen under date of September 7, 2004, a copy of which was distributed to the Commission for review. Mr. Sumberg stated that the primary objective of the Study was to identify performance metrics for the Fire Department to use as a basis for improvement. Mr. Sumberg read the Study to the Commission. His conclusions and recommendations can be found on pages 25 through 27 of the Study. After reading the Study, Mr. Sumberg entertained questions from the Commission. Commissioner El-abd inquired why Mr. Sumberg did not meet with any members of the Commission; to which Mr. Sumberg replied that there was not particular reason. Commissioner El-abd also asked Mr. Sumberg to summarize his thoughts regarding the regionalization of fire fighting services and he inquired why the Study did not deal with the regionalization of dispatch in more depth. Mr. Sumberg replied that regionalization should begin with automatic mutual aid for every fire. He did not focus on dispatch for the reason

that automatic mutual aid should be a first priority. Chairman McCarty requested Mr. Sumberg's opinion regarding the man hours that would be required and costs incurred in order to implement the recommendations in the Study. Mr. Sumberg advised that the Deputy Fire Chief in Battle Creek, Michigan had spent approximately two years with the help from one other person on the project with a net result that in said Deputy Chief's opinion that cost savings were made for the Battle Creek Fire Department. The Commission thanked Mr. Sumberg for the presentation.

2. Chairman McCarty reported that Firefighter Joe Bisenius' father and Volunteer Firefighter Jeff Rees' mother had passed away. On behalf of the Commission, Mr. McCarty extended the Commission's condolences to Messrs. Bisenius and Rees and their families.
3. **A Motion** was made by Commissioner El-abd to approve the Minutes of the Commission's monthly meeting held on December 6, 2004. The Motion was seconded by Chairman McCarty and unanimously approved.
4. The Deputy Chief's report was tabled for the reason that he was out ill with a severe ear infection.
5. The Commission reviewed the Fire Marshal's Monthly Report for December 2004, which report noted that inspections had nearly doubled over the month of November 2004 as the result of Fire Inspector Meehan role in code enforcement activity. The Report also noted that Mr. Kohn expects this trend to continue. Two investigations were conducted during the month, the most serious being a fire at a Grumman Hill Road residence. The Life Safety Division disseminated friendly reminders regarding holiday decoration and candle safety and stressed the need to keep driveways and walkways clear of snow and ice in order to insure unimpeded access by emergency services.
6. Apparatus Supervisor's Report – The Commission reviewed Apparatus Supervisor Nathanson's report for the period commencing July 22, 2004 and ending December 31, 2004 entitled "Breakdown on Maintenance Repairs and Tires.
7. Utility Vehicle 6 – Chief Milositz reported that the new utility vehicle will arrive at the Department the first week of February 2005. Utility Vehicle 6 will have a red cab and body and a white box. Commissioner El-abd inquired whether the Commission wished to name the vehicle using one of the runners up names from the name the ladder truck contest. Commissioner Healy advised that he did not

for the reason that said contest was based upon naming a ladder truck, not a utility vehicle. While thanking Troy Ellen Dixon for all her hard work on the name the ladder truck contest, Chairman McCarty concurred with Chief Milositz's general opinion that vehicles can be dedicated but should not be named.

B. Old Business

1. Radio and Dispatch – Chief Milositz reported that a joint committee of the Fire Department, Police Department and the Wilton Volunteer Ambulance Corps will next meet on January 13, 2004. He advised the Commission that the Committee had found a way to load dispatch procedures into the CAD system on a street by street and type of incident basis, which information will allow the computer to advise what manpower and equipment should be dispatched to a given incident. In addition to better response time, the long term benefit to the Department will be better and more accurate records management. The Chief noted that dispatch training is on-going and performance has improved steadily. Chief Milositz also reported that Department is working on the assignment of the Station 2 engine to all emergency medical services calls within Station 2's district.
2. Mutual Aid – Chief Milositz reported that the Georgetown Volunteer Fire Department has submitted a map to him depicting the areas in Georgetown in which that Volunteer Department requests mutual aid. Chief Milositz advised the Commission that he will meet with Georgetown Volunteer Chief Heibeck to work out the details of an automatic mutual aid agreement.
3. Performance Reviews – Chief Milositz reported that he and special advisor Ken Walsh continue to work on a re-draft of the performance evaluation forms.
4. Post Minutes of Commission Meetings on Web Site – The Commission requested that Chief Milositz arrange to have the Commission's monthly meeting minutes posted to the Department's web site commencing with the minutes of the Commission's meeting held on December 6, 2004.
5. Budget for fiscal year 2006 – The Commission's budget presentation to the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for January 10, 2005. Mr. Hannah advised the Commission that the Board will require a better understanding of the proposed renovations to Station 1. While Mr. Hannah appears to favor the renovations in general, he wants to insure that in the event a budget for the renovations is bonded, the bonded amount is sufficient to complete the requested renovations. Commissioner El-abd inquired whether the Board would consider moving the replacement of Engines 2 and 3 back into the capital budget for fiscal year 2006

from fiscal year 2007 in light of the fact that the \$14 million Town Hall renovation project was defeated at the June 2004 Town meeting. Mr. Hannah disagreed with Commissioner El-abd's premise that the replacement was moved from fiscal year 2006 to 2007 because of the Town Hall renovation project. Notwithstanding that fact, Mr. Hannah stated that the Commission is free to request the engine replacements in fiscal year 2006 provided that the Commission can demonstrate to the Board that there is a compelling reason to expedite the capital expenditure. Discussion ensued on the definition of compelling and the consensus of the Commission was that a case would have to be made that the two engines would not be reliable beyond the coming year. Chairman McCarty noted that while engines 2 and 3 are a few years past the manufactures projected life expectancy, Apparatus Supervisor Nathanson has opined that the engines should be reliable for another two years.

C. New Business

1. Wilton Fire Department Training Program – Chief Milositz made a power point presentation regarding where the Department's training program is currently and where it should be. The presentation included the legal requirements and other standards for training as well as a review of what the Department's current training program is. It is the Chief's opinion that the Department can improve its training. Chief Milositz recommends that Deputy Chief George Peters and he take a more active and hands-on approach to training, including, but not limited to, researching applicable laws and standards to develop minimum requirements for proficiency training and developing lesson plans. The next steps outlined by the Chief in the presentation were to: (i) make the training program the number one priority for the Department in 2005; (ii) develop a timeline for milestones; (iii) form a training committee; and (iv) increase involvement at all levels within the Department to work toward achieving the training goals. Commissioner Healy inquired whether the 2006 budget line item for training, including the overtime associated therewith, was sufficient to achieve his stated goals; to which Chief Milositz responded that the 2006 budget is adequate for this purpose. Commissioner Healy then inquired whether the training committee would be formed by the Commission's February 1st meeting. Chief Milositz advised that he would make every effort to do so. Thereafter, Commissioner El-abd proposed that Fire Inspector Bill Meehan be put in charge of volunteer training, citing that volunteer training has been a constant problem during his tenure on the Commission. Chairmen McCarty cautioned Commissioner El-abd that any comments directed towards Deputy Chief Peters were inappropriate for the reason that the Deputy Chief was not in attendance at the meeting and he has the right to be present in the event that his job performance is being discussed.

Commissioner El-abd advised the Commission that he had spoken to Mr. Meehan and confirmed his willingness to assist with training. Chairman McCarty stated that Mr. Meehan job description as Fire Inspector does not include training, which falls outside of the Fire Marshal's office and Life Safety Division to which Mr. Meehan is assigned. Commissioner Healy concurred noting that pulling Mr. Meehan back to the operations side of the Department would involve overtime that is not budgeted for and presented collective bargaining issues. A strenuous debate followed regarding Commissioner El-abd's recommendation and whether the Commission should schedule special meetings to further discuss and implement changes to the training program. The consensus of the Commission was that Commissioner El-abd was free to pursue his proposal regarding Mr. Meehan with Chief Milositz and that it was not necessary at this time to schedule special meetings for the reason that Chief Milositz had developed and was implementing a training plan.

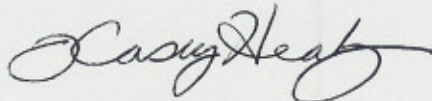
D. Executive Session

1. **A MOTION** was made by Commissioner Healy to retire to executive session to discuss the status of the contract between the Town of Wilton and Local 2233 of the International Association of Fire Fighters. The motion was seconded by Chairman McCarty and unanimously approved. The Commission, Chief Milositz, First Selectman Hannah and Ms. Taffel retired to Executive Session at approximately 2030 hours.

- E. Adjournment:** At approximately 2045 hours the Commission ended the executive session and upon motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting of the Commission will be held on February 1, 2005 at Fire Department Headquarters.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Casey Healy
Secretary - Fire Commission