

FIRE COMMISSION

Town of New Canaan, Conn.
60 Main Street
New Canaan, CT 06840
203-594-3140

MINUTES of December 11, 2007

FINAL and APPROVED

In Attendance:

Jack Horner, Chairman

Sven Englund, Commissioner

Roger Williams, Commissioner

Chief David Jonker

Firefighter Robert Petrone

Captain Michael Socci

Kristiana Glavin

Asst. Chief Karl

Asst. Chief Hennessey

Fire Marshal Fred Baker

Captain Angelo Gesualdi

Firefighter Paul Devan

Firefighter Al Buetti

Colleen Flaherty

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Horner at 7:34 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of the Minutes from the last meeting-

Minutes were read by Secretary Englund. A Motion to accept the November, 2007 minutes as amended was made and seconded. The Minutes were approved and entered into the Record.

Chairman's Report:

The Chairman reported the Finance Department data is now more up to date though some suspect account balances exist. He noticed at the Live Burn drill last month many volunteers did not have accountability tags and asked if this would this be fixed. Assistant Chief Hennessey said he was working on it and new software is required since the tags are not getting done in Wilton. Chairman Horner noted that we need to insure the work to raise bay doors and reinforce floors must be added to next year's budget.

Chief's Report:

Chief Jonker reported there were 71 calls in November, of which 7 were fires, 5 were rescues, 18 miscellaneous and service calls and 38 were false alarms. Note was made of the high false alarm volume.

The Chief reported on his strategic initiatives. The following items are completed.

- Dry Hydrant Inspections
- CMED is text messaging calls to cell phones

- The ground and aerial ladders have been inspected
- Sprinkler records for Avalon are recorded
- The Q course is completed
- SOPs have been updated
- Pre-plan of target hazards is complete

For the ISO re-evaluation the ladder truck mutual aid agreement with Wilton still needs signing. It was lost in Wilton and will be resent. Tarps are ordered. Updating hours records continues to put them in ISO formats. A request for reclassification of the out of hydrant district from a 9 rating to an 8B has been filed. This should be automatic. The Chief will check with insurance carriers to see if this will substantially benefit home owners. The DMV is tentatively scheduled to give the Q tests here January 6, 2008. Assistant Chief Hennessey is scheduling Aerial Ladder and Tanker Operations training here by the end of fiscal 2007-2008. The new probie curriculum is completed and being circulated. The new PPE quotes have been received and an order will be placed soon. The bail out system is still under investigation. SCBA training on the new equipment has been held for some career personnel and will be given to the rest of the career and volunteers. The Chief hopes to put the new SCBA in service in weeks. Driver training is on-going. LPG training for some career members was held in Ridgefield.

Commissioner Williams asked about the service work to Tanker 8. The Chief said some of the stainless steel tank wrap is loosened and will be re-glued. Assistant Chief Karl said the brake light switch needs work and a flow meter needs repair.

Commissioner Horner asked which initiatives are behind schedule. Chief Jonker listed the following items.

- GIS plotting is held up by the need to borrow the plotter at Town Hall.
- Cistern burials are going slow
- The mutual aid agreement on Ladder trucks is held up as explained above.
- Getting training hours into ISO format has been complex
- Getting the accountability tags from Wilton is stuck and they are subject to heat damage as experience shows from the live burn drill.

Assistant Chief Hennessey made note of the memo from Donna Peterson in the Finance Department on getting records up to date. The budget has a new line item for payroll for acting Captains and Lieutenants same as the Police Department. Extra duty hours will now be accounted for the same as the Police Department. The new draft budget for 2008-2009 was discussed and focused on the capital items projected for five years. Commissioner Williams requested and it was agreed to list the new fire station item as a "to be determined" amount rather than a fixed amount in the plan. A public meeting on January 3, 2008 at 7 PM in firehouse to discuss the budget proposals for next year was proposed. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the meeting. Chairman Horner will have it entered into the public Town schedule and announced tomorrow.

Assistant Chief Karl reported 687 hours of training completed by all personnel in the month of November. He reported the Engine 9 Replacement Committee is waiting for the return of budgetary quotes on the engine and the equipment list.

Fire Marshal's Report

Fire Marshal Baker reported there were 83 inspections, 9 plan reviews and 2 investigations for the month. NCHS fire pump controller repairs are still required while the responsibility for it is being determined. The Main Building at Silver Hill is under extensive reconstruction. The investigation of the dumpster fire at Winsome Farm showed the source of ignition was ashes from illegal burning put in the dumpster. Cisterns to be installed at the corner of Woodridge Circle and Wellesley Drive are in limbo. Public works needs to find the money for Woodridge Circle and may hold off digging until spring. Cost is estimated at \$15,000. The other at Parker's Glen Road will be installed by the contractor. The Fire Marshal's office situation has improved greatly and files have been retrieved. The Fire Lane Ordinance will come up for approval at the Town Council meeting on December 19th at 7 PM.

Commissioner Williams asked about the status of the gate in the Saxe Middle School parking lot. Assistant Chief Hennessey has checked and it is always up. Fire Marshal Baker has not heard back from Hans Otto. Captain Socci reported the gate is now gone.

Old Business:

The Fire Lane Ordinance was reported on above.

The Engine 9 Replacement Committee status is also reported above.

Assistant Chief Hennessey said the grant application to FEMA for a fire and smoke alarm system in the firehouse was filed for \$10,455 and the Town's contribution would be \$523. The Town has approved the \$523 should the grant be approved in turn by FEMA.

New Business:

The Commissioners unanimously voted to approve a meeting calendar for 2008. Meetings will be held the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM in the firehouse except in January it will be held on Tuesday the 15th due to interview scheduling and in November on Wednesday the 12th due to Veteran's Day falling on Tuesday.

The Commission interviews for new firefighters will be held on January 8 and 9 beginning at 6:30 PM.

The Commission interviews for promotions to Captain and Lieutenant will be tentatively held February 5 and 6 of 2008. The Commissioners will subsequently present their recommendations to the Selectmen.

Assistant Chief Hennessey presented a Wellness Plan for Captain Raidt and the Commissioners voted unanimously to approve it.

Captain Gesualdi said his last day on the job will be December 31, 2007. Thanks for his important contributions over 34 years and the Best Wishes of the Commissioners for his future happiness and health were expressed to Captain Angelo Gesualdi. A standing ovation closed the heart felt remarks.

Chairman Horner opened the discussion of the proposal to install gates at the east entrance to New Canaan High School. This is the agreed path used by fire apparatus and affects the Fire Department access and response to fire emergencies at the school. Neither the Fire Commission, Fire Department Chief Officers, or Fire Marshal had been informed of the proposal until just prior to the Selectmen's meeting on this issue. The Chairman's main points are:

- There are no available partial or total plans for the project.
- The Fire Department must have "unimpeded 360 degree" access to the building, as also agreed with the High School Building Committee.
- Are any other obstructions such as traffic islands in the plan?
- If the gate is siren activated to open what happens to non-siren equipped responders?
- Is battery backup for the gate actuators included?
- Does the plan include a new 2 story building?

Fire Marshal Baker said he had received no plans for approval but will ask the various departments in Town Hall tomorrow.

A general discussion ensued with the Commissioners, Chief Officers, Fire Marshal, Officers and Firefighters in attendance expressing their concerns for the fire safety of the students and employees at the High School with respect to emergency access while acknowledging the immediate needs for the safety of these people in the parking lot areas.

The date of the next meeting was set by Chairman Horner for January 15, 2008 at 7:30 PM in the firehouse.

It was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Sven R. Englund, Commissioner
Secretary of the Commission

Talley of Voting

Minutes of November 2007 were approved unanimously.

A motion to hold a public budget review on January 3, 2008 at 7 PM in the firehouse was unanimously approved.

A motion to approve the 2008 meeting calendar was unanimously approved.

A motion to approve Captain Raidt's Wellness Plan was unanimously approved.

Motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.