

Regular Meeting of the
Board of TFD Fire Commissioners

DRAFT -- Meeting Minutes – April 21, 2021

Thompsonville Fire Station, 35 N. Main Street, Enfield, CT

1. Call to Order: by Comm. Perry at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll Call: present were Comm. Perry, Comm. Bouthiette, Comm. Gillespie, and Comm. Pliszka. Absent was Comm. Dodd. Also, present was Chief Deskis.

3. New Business:

Comm. Pliszka said we discussed the Covid-19 money. I think we should send a letter to the Town requesting some of that money. Comm. Perry said I never the breakdown of how much money the Town received. Comm. Pliszka said Chief Deskis called over to the Town Hall about it. The paperwork states that the Town is supposed to submit everything that we sent them. Chief Deskis said that is correct. Comm. Pliszka said the Town doesn't want to do anything for us. Chief Deskis said I asked about the money that may be available to us. I am not sure if they didn't want to talk to me because of the lawsuit going on. Comm. Perry said that should not matter. That is a separate thing. Comm. Pliszka said we had to submit our expenses to the Town and then the Town was supposed to submit it to the State. Comm. Perry said the Town either did not submit it or submitted it and took the money. Chief Deskis said I don't think the Town received any money yet. Comm. Pliszka said they did not even take our proposal. Chief Deskis said he did not make a proposal yet. I wanted to know if it was possible for us to get any money. I had brought up the Pequot and PILOT monies. I haven't heard anything back about that. Comm. Perry asked what department are you contacting. Chief Deskis said both the Town Manager and the Director of Finance. All my communications for the Town Manager go through Deb McCarthy first. Comm. Perry said so I can contact Deb McCarthy and find out exactly where we stand.

Chief Deskis said the money is supposed to go to supposed to go to Fire, Police, and EMS. I know that the police and EMS will get money. Comm. Perry asked has anyone else requested money. Chief Deskis said I am not sure.

Comm. Pliszka said the other thing I wanted to mention was the PILOT money. Chief Deskis said that money does not have to be shared with us. I just testified about a bill that would allow the fire departments to directly receive the PILOT funds. Right now, the money goes to the towns and they can do whatever they want with it. Comm. Perry said a fire department that is part of a town would have received the money. Chief Deskis said they definitely would have gotten the money. Comm. Pliszka asked are you talking about the casino money. Chief Deskis said he is talking about the PILOT money

for State buildings. We provide services to these buildings. A woman from the State of CT said that Hazardville supposedly received our money. How did Hazardville get the money when there is no college in their district? She also said they received hospital money too. Hazardville doesn't know anything about the money. I think what happened was the Town of Enfield received the money and just reported that they gave it to Hazardville. I talked to some of their commissioners and they said they didn't receive anything. Comm. Perry said she will call Hazardville's commissioners.

Chief Deskis said the same thing happened with the Pequot Fund money. The casinos give all the towns in the state a certain amount of money. Again, that doesn't have to be shared with fire districts. If our district received money, we would not share it with the Town. We all just need to get together and figure things out. I believe if we are providing a service to a State or a Town building, we should get something for it.

Chief Deskis said he also questioned the State about the capital improvement grant we receive every year. Some of the districts in the State are receiving large amounts of money. There is one district that has already received 2 Covid-19 relief grants. It doesn't seem very fair. Comm. Perry asked what was the average payment for our town. Chief Deskis said it's all spaced out. I don't know how these dollar amounts are calculated.

Chief Deskis said we still cannot connect to GoToMeeting. Next time we will have to use Microsoft Teams. Comm. Perry asked have we heard from anyone at Beirne Wealth. Chief Deskis said they would have to call the phone number on the agenda. Comm. Perry said we will move onto the Chief's report.

4. Chief's Report:

Chief Deskis said the kitchen area and the administrative lobby will be painted this month. The members have picked out a paint color. The work will be completed in the late afternoon when there are not many people around. All the holes in the walls will be plastered over. Then we can hang up all the pictures we have.

Chief Deskis said the floors in the kitchen area need repair. The floor is pretty worn out. Stripping and waxing them is not working any more. We will get estimates to replace the tile.

Chief Deskis said we will start the bell project soon. We are either going to put down blocks or concrete to mount the bell on to.

Chief Deskis asked Comm. Perry if he should discuss the consolidation. Comm. Perry said it looks like Shaker Pines and Hazardville are going to consolidate. Our district and North Thompsonville may consider it in the future. We are not looking at it right now. A study was previously done and we were not happy with the results. All the fire districts

collectively agreed to approach another company. Those plans were dropped. Now all of a sudden Hazardville and Shaker Pines are combining. It didn't seem like the other 3 districts were invited to join the consolidation right now. Chief Deskis said they are looking at a few consulting companies. Nothing is set right now. The process is in the research and planning stages. It is easier to consolidate 2 districts than all 5. Comm. Perry said our district has more debt and is more complicated than the others. I don't feel like we are ready to consolidate at this time.

Chief Deskis said many projects have been completed in our district. This is a good sign that we are coming out of the pandemic. The vaccines have become more available through-out the state. Things are looking good for our district.

Chief Deskis said the department's S.C.B.A's should be delivered soon.

Chief Deskis said there was a major fire at the Casket Building on N. River Street since our last meeting. Our department along with our mutual aid partners were able to contain the fire and keep it from spreading to other structures. All of our members did a great job. They worked almost 24 hours until the building was demolished. Thankfully, no one was seriously injured. The fire investigation is still under way. Comm. Perry said I should have formally thanked everyone at the station for the work that they did. I apologize for not doing so. I was very impressed in how fast the departments worked together to put the fire out. The fire at Thistle Lane was well controlled too.

Comm. Perry said the department responded to a call involving an infant that was in respiratory distress. Chief Deskis said that was Captain Pliszka's shift. Comm. Perry thanked Capt. Pliszka and his group. This proves that the fire department isn't around just to put out fires. We pay our taxes for times like this. Chief Deskis said he would like to hold a ceremony when the weather is nicer. I would like to include the members that got promoted and newly hired as well.

5. Presentation of Actuarial Report by Milliman:

Jennifer Castelhana, from Milliman, presented the actuarial report via telephone call.

6. Update from Beirne Wealth Consulting Services, LLC:

Lindsey Allard and Madison St. John, from Beirne Wealth Consulting Services, LLC, gave an update on the 457 deferred compensation plan and on the performance of the pension plan via telephone call:

Ms. Allard said an invitation was sent out to each active participant in the 457 plan to schedule a meeting with our investment advisor. We can also schedule in person meetings as well if the Board is open to it. We are open to offering both in-person and virtual meetings too.

Ms. Allard reviewed the pension performance report as of March 31, 2021.

Comm. Pliszka said the members were wondering if their defined benefit information can be put on the KTRADE account. Ms. Allard said unfortunately, we cannot because they are managed by 2 different platforms. Comm. Pliszka said that is what I told the members but I thought I would ask anyways. Ms. Allard said we cannot merge the 2 accounts. We can answer any questions about the pension plan when we meet with the participants about the 457 plan.

Ms. Allard thanked the Board for their time. We look forward to seeing you next quarter. If anything changes, we will keep you up to date. If you would like us to come to the next meeting or sooner, we are happy to do so.

7. Public Communications:

None.

8. Commissioners' Communications:

None.

9. Old Business:

None.

10. Approval of Minutes from March 17 regular meeting and March 31 special meeting:

MOTION to accept the minutes of the February 17 regular meeting made by Comm. Bouthiette, seconded by Comm. Gillespie. Discussion: none. Roll Call- Motion passed 4-0.

11. Adjourn:

MOTION to adjourn made by Comm. Gillespie, seconded by Comm. Bouthiette. All in favor by ayes at 7:52 pm.