

City of West Haven Fire Department Allingtown

COMMISSIONERS

John Panza, Chair
Robert Lathrop, Vice Chair
Iris Diaz
Aaron Haley
Andrea Palumbo
Frederick Brown, Alternate
Robert Pimer, Alternate



Michael T. Esposito
Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal
mesposito@cityofwesthavenfd.org

Regular Meeting

CITY OF WEST HAVEN FIRE COMMISSIONERS ALLINGTOWN

Board of Fire Commissioners
February 5, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.
City Hall
Harriet North Room, 2nd Floor
355 Main Street, West Haven, CT

AGENDA

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of December 4, 2018 & January 8, 2019 meeting minutes.
4. Public Session
5. Finance
Invoices
6. Communications
7. Report of Chief
8. Report of Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal
9. Old Business
Parkview Commons Project
Budget FY 2018 - 2019
Headquarters Roof
Chief's Position
Headquarters – Exterior repair
Discussion and vote on proposed bylaws
Parking Situation Admiral Street
Discussion and approval of two new firefighters

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City of West Haven Fire Department Allingtown

10. New Business
Budget FY 2019-2020

11. Executive Session.
Vacation and Sick Time
Personnel Issues
Discussion of two new firefighters

CITY OF WEST HAVEN FIRE DEPARTMENT ALLINGTOWN
February 5, 2019
Minutes

A Meeting of the City of West Haven Fire Department Allingtown was held on Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT.

Present were Commissioners John Panza, Iris Diaz, Andrea Palumbo, Aaron Haley and Frederick Brown. Also present was Deputy Chief Esposito.

Commissioner Panza called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

Business Manager Brooks called the roll and declared a quorum. Commissioners Lathrop and Pimer were absent.

3. Approval of December 4, 2018 & January 8, 2019 meeting minutes.

Commissioner Panza asked if the minutes had been updated for the September 4, 2018. Business Manager Brooks replied that I have not been able to update the minutes because I cannot get them off the old recorder. I tried and I can't get them. I don't believe you can change them after they have been approved. Commissioner Palumbo responded that she would like to see that in writing. Can we ask corporation council to see if the minutes can be added as an addendum or something? Business Manager replied that she can ask but my problem is I don't know where I'm going to get them. She asked if John taped them that night. Sometimes you tape them. Maybe you have them. Commissioner Palumbo suggested talking to Ruth Torres. She puts them on Facebook. Business Manager responded that she would ask and get an answer back to you. Brief discussion on the approval of the September 4th minutes being approved. They had been approved at the October meeting. Commissioner Lathrop made a motion to approve the September 4, 2018 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Haley and approved unanimously. Commissioner Panza made a motion to move the approval of the December 4, 2018 and the January 8, 2019 to Old Business, seconded by Commissioner Palumbo. The vote was unanimous with the exception of Commissioner Diaz who opposed the motion.

Public Session

Robbin Hamilton of 92 Bedford Street, West Haven, CT wanted to thank Acting Chief Esposito for going to a meeting about the finance director. We seem to be on track financially. I hope we can stay on track so we should be. I hope there are more meetings as well.

Margaret Krzeminski of 1 Robart Street, West Haven, CT stated that there was a tax increase from the MARB. I see two new firefighters on the agenda. Can you explain? Acting Chief Esposito explained that we are short two firefighters and have been for some time. Commissioner Panza added that Deb and Mike met with the Mayor and they will catch us up on that a little later. Margaret asked about the Superior Spring bill (\$5,119.66). Acting Chief Esposito explained that it went for the DOT inspection and needed brakes all around. They found that a couple of springs were broken and it also needed some front end suspension work done. Margaret asked what truck it was. Acting Chief explained that it was E-2 that's twenty years old. It needs to be replaced. We've been asking for funds to replace it for the past two years and we have gotten nothing for it. In two years the ladder truck will be paid off and then we were thinking that we could use that money to use for a new truck. We need approval to do so. Margaret asked about the Regional Water Authority bill (\$82,821.23). Acting Chief Esposito explained that it's for the public fire use of the water mains and we pay a rate per foot. Margaret asked if we know if anyone is retiring this year. Acting Chief Esposito replied not at this time. Margaret asked if Fairfax Street station was fixed.

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Acting Chief Esposito replied that we just got the last blind in and installed. The only other thing is there is a leak around the chimney. We need to have the roofer come back and fix that.

Anthony Krzeminski of 1 Robart Street, West Haven, CT asked how much money was collected of the supplemental tax increase and what account has it gone into. It's supposed to go into the pension fund. That's what we were told from the Mayor. Business Manager Brooks responded that actually to date I don't know how much money they have collected on that but I am working close with finance to keep getting reports. I sent over today for an update report because I am working on the budget. So I can possibly get that for you in about a week and for the board as well. Anthony said he doesn't want the money to just go in the general fund. He wants it to go where it's supposed to go. Debbie stated that it goes to a couple of things. Commissioner Panza asked if it goes for Fund 1. He stated that Funds 2 & 3 is holding their own. Whatever interest they are making can pay the Retirees for those funds. Business Manager Brooks will give an update on where the money will go after public session.

Teddy Brown of 56 Highview Avenue, West Haven, CT asked who sets the tax rate for the Allingtown district. Commissioner Panza replied that it was the Mayor who set it. Business Manager Brooks explained that she usually does the budget with the help of the Chief, then I sit down with the board and they review it and they have their input as well, then it goes down to the Mayor's office. She does review it and makes cuts and additions where she feels are necessary and then we get it back to review. Then it goes to city council and they have to approve it. They have to agree with any cuts or additions the Mayor has done and we go as well and we have to show if we need that money, why and answer any questions that they have about the budget. Teddy asked who raised the taxes. Business Manager Brooks replied that the MARB did. They had to bring it to the council and get their approval. Commissioner Panza added that the board reviews it and then it goes to the Mayor. There are certain dates that certain things have to be done. Teddy said that nobody knows who raised the taxes. The MARB or the Mayor or council. Nobody knows. How do you raise the taxes on something you know nothing about? Commissioner Panza stated again it wasn't we in general meaning not this board. Commissioner Palumbo responded that it was done so the city wouldn't go to a Tier 4. Teddy and Sean said it was a recommendation. More discussion followed.

Anthony Hill of 41 Tetlow Street, West Haven, CT stated that you are the commissioners of the fire department and you don't know anything about what's going on. Commissioner Panza replied we know a lot of what's going on, we know a lot about the men, we know what our duties are. But again you only know what you are told. We set what we think we need in the line items but we have no say once that budget leaves us. Anthony asked who voted on the tax raise. Commissioner Panza replied that the council voted on that tax raise. I pay taxes as well and your frustration is felt by all of us.

Sean Brown of 56 Highview Avenue, West Haven, CT Stated that he looked at the fire department consolidation study from 1996. Why are we hiring another agency when we can tweak this one? You are robbing the public. What does the board have to do with it? Commissioner Panza replied that we did not know until it was put out to bid. Sean said well somebody has to know something about it. Acting Chief Esposito explained that the Mayor put together a committee to sit and answer questions about the fire departments so then we could refer an agency that we felt could do the best study. The committee consisted of the three chiefs, Retired Chief Massaro, the finance director and Mike Milone from the MARB.

Treasurer Mike Last explained that there was a deficit for FY 2017, 2018 looks okay and 2019 the MARB wanted a supplemental tax to be imposed. Part of the reason was because a company called Milliman that does the pension actuarial had said that there was not enough money appropriated to put in the pension investment. They wanted more money to be appropriated for the medical line item and a few other smaller items. MARB would not release the 8 million to the city unless the City of West Haven Fire Department Allingtown had a balanced budget. They had two conditions on which they would release the funds and they were (1) City of West Haven Fire Department Allingtown balanced budget and (2) Have a study done of fire department consolidation.

Sean Brown stated that he doesn't see any reason to do a new study when you can tweak the old study. Now the board wants us to email our questions to them. Why have a meeting? We should just email the Mayor because the board has no say so. You tape the meetings. That's your email. We aren't getting any answers from this board. Who are we supposed to go to? You need to tell us where to go. How about sending the minutes to the Mayor or the council?

Commissioner Panza asked Treasurer Last about the \$350,000 short fall. Treasurer Last replied that you are trending favorably in this year.

4. Finance: list of processed invoices for January was reviewed and accepted.
5. Communications : Thank you note from Linda and Stan Margolies for the help they received from the fire department. Captain Oleschuk was on duty.

The board received a letter from the city clerk stating when agendas and meeting minutes should be clocked in and posted. Business Manager Brooks asked if there were any minutes for the November 21, 2017 meeting. Mike Walsh had asked for them.

6. Report of the Chief: Acting Chief Esposito gave a verbal and written reports for January which will be kept on file.
7. Report of Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal: Deputy Chief Esposito gave a written reports for January. Written report will be kept on file.
8. Old Business:
Commissioner Diaz asked about the FOI that Anthony Krzeminski had submitted in an email to the board. Acting Chief Esposito replied that Debbie has it. It is finished. The board reviewed the information and gave it to Anthony.

Budget Fiscal Year 2018-2019-Business Manager Brooks explained the supplemental tax and where the changes were made to the budget. Commissioner Panza asked for a copy to be emailed to the board.

Parkview Commons Project-Acting Chief Esposito explained that the pipe work is done and there have been some communication with the city as to when they will start the building.

Headquarters Exterior Repair- Acting Chief Esposito said that it is getting worse. There's mortar on the ground and a couple of bricks are breaking away. He showed the commissioners some of the mortar and brick pieces that have fallen from the building. The roof is bad as well. There are leaks in it. Commissioner Panza told Acting Chief Esposito to get the policy from the city on repairs.

Discussion and vote on proposed by laws- Brief discussion. Commissioner Panza stated that they would do this next month.

Discussion and approval of two new firefighters-Acting Chief Esposito explained that Debbie and I met with the Mayor. We went over the numbers that she has asked for which were the cost of hiring versus the cost of overtime coverage. She agreed that hiring would be a cost saving and said to go ahead and bring it to the board for approval. Acting Chief Esposito explained that the reason why I had wanted to meet with you after we met with the Mayor was because we needed to get these men registered with the school. Well we missed that date. However I have found out that New Haven is going to have a class that starts in March. So at this time I need to

know if I can start the process. Have them come in to meet the board and start setting up appointments for physicals. Brief discussion followed. Commissioner Panza responded that the board wanted to hire a Chief and the two firefighters at the same time. Acting Chief Esposito replied but you don't have to pay overtime for a Chief and you do for the firefighters. Commissioner Panza stated that this was the way they are going to do it.

9. New Business: Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020-Business Manager Brooks explained that the budget has to be downtown for Thursday February 7, 2019. Acting Chief Esposito explained that we had a meeting on the 22nd with the Mayor and the department heads regarding the budget submittal. When Deb sent the agenda to you to have a special meeting on the 23rd about the hiring of the two new firefighters; she included discussion of Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. Commissioner Panza asked if it was done. Business Manager Brooks replied that it was not completed yet but it would be done for Thursday. Commissioner Panza asked for the budget to be emailed to the board when it was completed.

Commissioner Brown thanked Acting Chief Esposito for his dedication and commitment to the department. He added that he is doing a great job.

Commissioner Brown spoke about the importance of replacing trucks by reiterating the accident that happened a few years back. No one was hurt and those two firefighters have since then retired. Brief discussion followed.

A motion was presented to close Regular Session at 8:48 p.m. and go into Executive Session by Commissioner Palumbo, seconded by Commissioner Diaz and approved unanimously.

A motion was presented to close Executive Session and return into Regular Session at 9:36 pm. by Commissioner Palumbo, seconded by Commissioner Haley and approved unanimously.

A motion was presented to adjourn by Commissioner Palumbo, seconded by Commissioner Diaz and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

All minutes are subject to the final approval of the City of West Haven Fire Department Allintown Commissioners.

Minutes recorded by Business Manager Brooks