

**Board of Fire Commissioners
Special Meeting
Wednesday, October 14, 2015
8:00 p.m. Mortlake Fire Department**

MINUTES

- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman, Peter Considine, called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

Attendance: Peter Considine, Chairman; Stephen C. Breen; Patrick Gauthier; Richard Ives; Jeffrey Otto. James Soler was absent.

Felix Ramos arrived at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Others Present – Jeff Warren, East Brooklyn Fire Chief; Bill Skene, Mortlake Fire Chief; Patrick Dragon (left early).

- 2. Approve Minutes: 5/13/2015**

Motion by J. Otto to approve the Minutes of May 13, 2015, as presented. Second by S. Breen. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

- 3. Public Comment** – None.

- 4. Discussion on Budget** – None.

- 5. Discussion on Financials:**

J. Otto stated that the Board of Finance had requested financial reports per quarter and then had approved that the reports be issued a month following the end of the quarter to allow time to put the report together. The first report covered two quarters and both Departments submitted those reports. A Board of Finance Member is interested in having the format changed so that the year-to-date (according to the Town's fiscal year) totals are shown on each of the quarterly reports. Mr. Otto asked that each Department modify their report which is due at the end of October.

Discussion ensued.

J. Otto stated that some Board of Finance Members are also interested in having the reports from the two Departments use the same expenditure line (Chart of Accounts). He acknowledged that this would be difficult to do at this time. He explained that the State (OPM) has mandated that all municipalities go to a standard Chart of Accounts (all expenditures of municipalities to be displayed in 1 of 22 categories) and the State may somehow enforce that individual agencies funded by the Town or individual departments that comprised part of the Town budget go to that Chart of Accounts. J. Otto suggested going to the Board of Finance to have the two Fire Department move toward that Chart of Accounts.

P. Gauthier suggested that the Town have a workshop so everyone will be on the same page. Rick Ives stated that there would be some flexibility.

J. Otto explained that individual agencies of the Town that generate expenditures in other categories (not included in the 22) so the detailed categories would need to be preserved (mapping subcategories). He warned that the Finance Department may need the reports earlier the first time this is implemented to ensure that it goes smoothly with the conversion to the new accounting software system. He stated that the Board of Finance meets on the third Wednesday of each month.

6. Discussion on Apparatus Replacement Schedule:

R. Ives stated that discussion had taken place in March/April regarding the monetary issue of buying trucks/holding on to them longer, needs of the Departments, 2 ET's on the schedule.

P. Gauthier stated that the same trucks have been around for ten years. An ET runs around \$650,000.00. It's time for both Departments to put together their best schedule and hire a consultant to determine if there are cuts/changes to be made.

R. Ives stated that he feels the concept is a good one, but he would want to be the one to hire the consultant.

J. Otto disagreed as the consultant will match what the person paying the bill wants. He feels that the two Fire Departments need to meet about what the future should have in store for fire apparatus in Town.

Stephen C. Breen stated that he agrees with J. Otto. He feels the current Chiefs and other officers should meet to discuss the plan to make changes/adjustments as it has been done as in the past.

R. Ives stated that he agrees and that his goal is to keep from buying another piece of apparatus (maybe more than one, but at least one) within the next 10 years.

B. Skene stated that representatives from the Board of Finance should tell the Fire Departments if they want to cut the trucks.

R. Ives stated that he doesn't recall anyone saying that 2 ET's are needed during previous discussions about calls and ET's. He said he would need to be convinced.

B. Skene explained that if it is decided to replace East Brooklyn's ET, but not to replace the Mortlake ET, insurance rates for the residents (on the East Brooklyn side of Town) would go up because they would not have an attack piece to respond with. R. Ives will look into this.

S. Breen concluded that a reduction in apparatus would like to be seen, but, if there is a reason why a reduction can't be done, then they need make a good argument of why it can't be done.

J. Otto provided two sheets/reports showing Brooklyn Fire and Medical Calls for January 2015 thru September 2015.

Discussion ensued.

J. Otto suggested that everyone think about this and come back next month to start having serious discussions about how to accomplish moving forward without replacing two ET's. P. Gauthier stating that they should look at the big picture, not just the ET's. P. Considine stated that it will be kept on the agenda for next month.

7. Scheduling of November Meeting:

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 11, 2015, 7:30 p.m., at East Brooklyn Fire Department.

8. Public Comment:

S. Breen asked if there is anything new from NECCOG regarding medical.

J. Otto stated that NECCOG received a State grant (\$88,000.00) and CEO's from the 16 towns felt that the best use for that money would be to study the pre-hospital emergency medical care system. Fitch and Associates from Missouri was awarded the contract. A questionnaire went out on August 11th to all R1, R2 and R5 agencies, hospitals, etc. To date, the response has not been good: 6 of 25 fire departments (East Brooklyn being one of the six that responded. B. Skene stated that he had not received it, but has started working on it since he was made aware of it.); 1 of 14 ambulance organizations; 3 of 4 paramedic organizations. J. Otto has been sending copies of the questionnaire to organizations who also have not received it and four more responded. A representative from Fitch and Associates will be here on October 16th and 17th to interview some of the agencies. J. Otto feels this study has the potential to have a profound influence on the EMS system in northeastern Connecticut. He stressed that, since most fire departments now are basically medical responders that also respond to the sighting of smoke, it is important to be active in responding and working on the solution.

S. Breen stated that since the majority of what they do is medical response, it is important to keep up with it.

There was some discussion regarding whether Killingly has filed an appeal.

9. Adjourn

Motion by P. Considine to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Second by R. Ives. Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary