

**Board of Fire Commissioners**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Wednesday, July 13, 2022**  
**7:00 pm via Zoom &**  
**Clifford B. Green Meeting Center**  
**Suite 24, 69 South Main Street, Brooklyn, CT**

To join this meeting, follow the below instructions:

**Join Zoom Meeting**

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**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order** – Michael Podzalne, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. (19:06 hours).
2. **Attendance:** Michael Podzalne; Austin Tanner, First Selectman; Leo Berube; Patrick Gauthier; David Lee, Board of Finance Liaison; (all present in person). James Solar (present via Zoom). Felix Ramos was absent.

**Others Present (in person)** – S. Breen, Mortlake Fire Chief; Brian Pepin, East Brooklyn Fire Chief; J.S. Perreault, Recording Secretary.  
John Livernoche, William Skene and Will Wheaton, Sr. were present, in person, in the audience.

**Present via Zoom** - Jenn

3. **Approve Minutes**
  - a. **Regular Meeting of May 11, 2022**

Motion was made by D. Lee to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 1, 2022.

Second by L. Berube. No discussion.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote (6-0-0).

4. **Public Comment** – None.

5. **Equipment Discussion**

Chief Pepin reported:

- They are putting a plan together for future purchasing. They do not have any big purchases planned at this point.

Chief Breen reported:

- They have more photos of the truck, the cab is mounted to the chassis, the body to be built in South Dakota, delivery in November or there will be penalties. There was discussion regarding equipment included.

Mr. Lee asked if there have been any purchases or major/significant repairs in the new budget year. Chief Breen answered that they have not made any purchases yet, but he explained about how the skid unit on Service 190 went down due to a frozen pump during the winter. However, all but the \$500 co-pay was covered by insurance.

There was discussion regarding the need by East Brooklyn for water (the well goes dry after washing one truck) and for a washer to keep equipment clean which are a big problem. They have a dryer. Gear needs to be kept clean for safety which is a huge priority. Mr. Tanner stated that there is an ARPA request for this.

There was discussion regarding the need by Mortlake for a dryer. They have a washer. Each Department needs both a washer and a dryer, but will work together until to get the gear cleaned.

## **6. Department Discussion**

### **a. Recruitment**

Mr. Podzalne explained that he had sent the fillable form to each of the Chiefs, but he had not gotten it on the Town website yet. Chief Breen suggested that there be a link on the Town website to the Departments' websites.

Chief Breen reported that Mortlake accepted eight new probationary members last month (5 brand new and 3 Members from the East Brooklyn Fire Department who joined to assist with the ambulance).

Chief Pepin reported that East Brooklyn has an influx of cadets.

### **b. Retention – No discussion.**

### **c. Paid Staff – Subcommittee Update**

Regarding the Tax Abatement Program, Mr. Podzalne explained that, as currently presented, the R-1 responses are helping for East Brooklyn, but are working against Mortlake for the 20 percent requirement. The Chiefs have been directed to carve out the non-priority, R-1 responses to make it equal for both Departments. They will be auditing the responses through September (trial period) and the hope is to have this formalized by October to present to the Town. The two Departments will have the same types of calls that they are asked to respond to and the same numbers applied to, whether it is a tax abatement program going forward short-term or mid-term program, a true compensation program. Tied into that also is the exhaustion of the unnecessary need for Fire Department response for certain things. He explained that, if possible (due to licensing), R-1 responses will be amended to curtail a delay in ambulance and high-priority EMS calls. There was discussion.

Regarding the definite need for daytime staffing, because it is a severe problem, Mr. Podzalne explained that he, the Chiefs and the Sub-Committee Members will be putting together a proposal to utilize ARPA funding to take care of daytime responses. The hope is to have a rough draft prepared to present at the September meeting.

## **7. Financial Reports Discussion**

David Lee explained that the Board of Finance had discontinued the request for quarterly financial reports, however, there has been discussion to request entities that receive Town grant money to provide a document (following the close of their fiscal year) stating how the grant money received for that particular fiscal year was spent. It will need to be certified, by someone within the organization, that it is valid. They are still vetting this process, so more information will be coming. There was discussion. Mr. Lee explained that the budget requests for next year will not include insurance.

## **8. Other Business – None.**

## **9. Public Comment – None.**

## **10. Next Meeting – September 14, 2022.**

## **11. Adjourn**

Motion was made by L. Berube to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. (19:32 hours).

Second by A. Tanner. No discussion.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote (6-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault  
Recording Secretary