

**Board of Fire Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 10, 2018
7:30 pm East Brooklyn Fire Department**

- 1. Call to Order** **Call to Order: First Selectman**, Richard Ives called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. (19:30 hours).

Attendance: Rick Ives; Lou Brodeur; Patrick Gauthier; Jeff Otto; James Soler.
Felix Ramos was absent with notice.

Others Present – Jim Warren, East Brooklyn Fire Chief; Sandra Brodeur; Matt Bomster, East Brooklyn Fire Department.

- 2. Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 8, 2017**

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 8, 2017. Second by J. Soler. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

- 3. Public Comment** – None.

- 4. Equipment Discussion**

L. Brodeur stated that the ambulance was in an accident (nobody was injured) causing approximately \$13,000.00 in damage. After five days of waiting for an insurance adjuster to come to assess the damage, they had it towed to Bowen's Garage in Eastford so that they could at least order the parts needed to repair it. It took a week for the adjuster to come out. The ambulance was returned from Bowen's within three weeks.

J. Otto spoke with the VFIS Representative and will be meeting with him next week to go over the coverage. Both companies will be asked for quotes again as there are other problems with the insurance policies (e.g. values for buildings are not where they should be). He explained that Mr. Ives would like to aggregate the buildings and secure coverage. Values listed in the current policies for vehicles are outdated.

R. Ives spoke with McNeil today and informed them that the Town does not want to deal with Wilcox and Reynolds anymore. He will speak with McNeil again tomorrow and hopes to come up with a plan.

L. Brodeur stated that the Road Rescue went out on Monday to have the suspension repaired. He expects that it will be out for two-to-three weeks.

J. Warren stated that they fixed the primer on the ET again and the packing needs to be replaced again. The panel in the center and the pump valves are starting to stick, rust, and break apart. He

explained that this ET is supposed to be replaced with the mini pumper. They will trade both the Rescue and the ET together to reduce the price of the mini pumper. They will take the Cascade out and put it inside the station.

Lou Brodeur asked about the truck replacement schedule. **J. Otto** explained that there is a two-year difference in the age of the trucks. Discussion ensued regarding the budget and that it is probably going to be rougher than last year with the State. Mr. Otto feels the Fire Commissioners could present a strong case for funding the apparatus replacement in East Brooklyn. However, he feels it is questionable whether a budget can be put together for the next fiscal year that would allow for the planning of apparatus replacement for Mortlake. Mr. Ives agreed. There was discussion.

5. Department Discussion

a. Recruitment

J. Warren stated that they are still handing out applications.

L. Brodeur stated that they haven't been doing any advertising, but they took in three new applicants. He explained that the applicants are younger and that means that the training budget increases. Mr. Brodeur mentioned that S. Breen is still working with his niece on social media advertising and also that Mr. Breen had been re-elected as Chief and that Sandra Brodeur is the new Treasurer.

b. Retention – No discussion.

6. Financial Reports Discussion

J. Otto gave a reminder that the next quarterly report is due on February 12, 2018.

P. Gauthier asked two questions regarding the upcoming budget process:

- Should drafts be ready in February for vote in March?
J. Otto explained that the Finance Director sent a Memo stating that Boards and Commissions have until February 28th.
- When reviewing the budgets, does the Board of Finance look at zero-percent increases? Should the budget be increased so that cuts can be made without impacting the real needs of the Department, in case they require that a specific percentage be cut?

J. Otto explained that the Board of Finance has no particular protocol that they use in terms of reviewing the budgets. They ask that the Departments submit a request for the funds needed to carry out the program that is planned and if they can't afford it, they start making cuts and the Departments will have a chance to discuss it. He stated that it is looking like it is going to be a rougher year than last year, so a zero-percent increase is the right way to look at it.

There was discussion regarding insurance. Health insurance costs may need to increase. Discussion continued.

There was discussion regarding an additional generator expense at Mortlake. Mr. Brodeur explained that it is the overage on putting the generator in due to burying it. Originally, the Town was supposed to do the saw cutting/trenching, but had to hire out resulting in a \$4,000.00 bill. They also had to purchase two bollards for the propane tank.

7. Other Business

a. Review 2018 Meeting Schedule

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to accept the 2018 Meeting Schedule. Second by J. Otto. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

J. Otto stated that he had sent out the Fire Reports.

P. Gauthier asked about budget account numbers. He adds EBC on the side. There was discussion regarding the computer software used.

S. Brodeur stated that Mortlake is switching to Quick Books. There was discussion regarding whether the Fire Departments could use the Town's software. Mrs. Brodeur explained that they are registered incorrectly as 501C4 with the State. In March or April, the accountant will correct the classification from 501C4 to 501C3. Discussion continued.

8. Public Comment

S. Brodeur brought up the discussion regarding P. Gauthier's question regarding whether to increase the budget in case of cuts. She stated that the budget should be presented to represent what is really needed.

9. Next Meeting – February 14, 2018, at East Brooklyn Fire Department

East Brooklyn Fire Department was listed in error. The February 14, 2018 Meeting will be held at Mortlake Fire Department.

10. Adjourn

Motion was made by L. Brodeur to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. Second by P. Gauthier. Motion carried unanimously (5-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,

J.S. Perreault
Recording Secretary