

Town of Hamden
Fire Commission Special Meeting
Wednesday, May 28th, 2023 at 6:00 PM
Meeting Room: MTH-111
Memorial Town Hall at 2372 Whitney Avenue, Hamden

A special meeting of the Hamden Fire Commission opened on May 28th, 2023 at the Hamden Memorial Town Hall, located at 2372 Whitney Avenue.

Commissioners In Attendance: Gary Tinney, Chair; Samod Rankins; Victor Mitchell; Nancy Hill
 Also In Attendance: Brion Tierney, Battalion Chief; Liana Paglia, Substitute Clerk for the Commission
 Absent: Cherlyn Poindexter

- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman Tinney called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. A roll call was taken, confirming a quorum was present.
- 2. Comment(s) From the Public-N/A**
- 3. Correspondence**
 - a. Chief Tierney notified commissioners that the Veterans Commission sent a card expressing their appreciation for the FD's participation and support in the Memorial Day Parade.

He then read an email from Mr. Jeremy Roto-Rodrigo who complimented an off-duty firefighter who came upon a rollover accident while driving north on Route 8 and administered rescue breaths to an unconscious driver. The firefighter was successful in his efforts, and the driver was transported to the hospital, breathing without assistance.

Chief Tierney notified the commission that a citizen concerned about the environment called about a truck left idling while work was being done on a fire hydrant. Chief Tierney explained that the truck was idling so that the emergency lights could continue to flash. He explained that if the lights are left on, but the truck itself is off, the battery will drain. After taking the concerned citizen's points into consideration, the new policy will be to use traffic cones for longer visits.

Lastly, Chief Tierney notified the commission about a complaint made by an administrator at Arden House, who claimed a lack of response from two (2) separate calls for service. Chief Tierney read aloud the results of the investigation, and the response to the administrator. He explained that dispatch code records were reviewed and confirmed that both calls had response times under four (4) minutes, which was well within the average response time of seven (7) minutes. He also acknowledged that a potentially disrespectful comment was made to a nurse by one of the FD staff. He affirmed that the situation is being looked into and an appropriate response will be issued by the party involved.

- 4. Message from the Chair**
 - a. Chairman Tinney thanked everyone, especially the HFD for their involvement and support of the Memorial Day Parade.
- 5. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Mr. Rankins made a motion to approve the May 17th minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Mitchell. All were in favor.
 - b. Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the May 24th minutes, which was seconded by Chairman Tinney. Mr. Rankins abstained. All were in favor.
- 6. Old Business**

- a. Volunteer Firefighters update
 - i. Mr. Mitchell was happy to update the commission that after a productive meeting with the Fire Chief, the volunteer firefighters will be back on a running schedule. They will act as second ring on the ground to fires, and will cover stations if they are responding to a fire. Mr. Mitchell was also happy to report that an ongoing request for a TOH computer was fulfilled. This will allow for ESO training and improved record keeping. He also notified the commission that seven (7) men completed and passed the driving course last month. Mr. Mitchell stated that September 1st is the intended start date. At this time, rules/policies are being devised and codified.

Mr. Rankins asked how many certified volunteers have entered the ranks, to which Mr. Mitchell replied eight (8). He went on to say that the chief is no longer allowing individuals outside of Hamden to actively belong to the ranks. Mr. Rankins noted the gravity of this rule and said this would be addressed with the chief immediately. Chairman Tinney questioned the age range of the active volunteer firefighters. Mr. Mitchell said most of the volunteers are in their twenties. Chief Tierney acknowledged that he had the opportunity to work with the volunteers on a brush fire, and was impressed with their work ethic.

- b. Discussion regarding female FF boot camp
 - i. Mr. Mitchell said that the woman in question did express interest in completing the training next year in Hamden, but has not confirmed with him yet.

7. New Business

a. Departmental reports

- i. Chief Tierney went over some highlights from the reports, which included eight (8) structure fires, 338 EMS calls, 62 public service calls, and 36 false alarm calls. He stressed the danger of the former middle school located at 550 Newhall St. which has had four (4) structure fires in 2023 alone. The main problem is that there is virtually no way to keep people out of it.

b. Update personnel roster

- i. There was a discussion regarding the seven (7) vacancies: five (5) firefighters, one (1) lieutenant, one (1) assistant chief. Ideally, Chief Tierney would like to see three (3) vacancies filled as paramedics; going above the mandated number would offer some relief to the other staff. Currently, one (1) is injured, two (2) are out on long term sick and one (1) intends to leave permanently. In total, there are 15 paramedics, but only 13 are technically active. Names for the August 28th recruit class have to be submitted by July 24th. The list of four (4) potential paramedics must be certified before it goes to the Fire Commission. The Civil Service Commission meets on July 20th, so the commission will have to meet between July 20th and July 24th, in order to move forward with the certified list.

c. Update regarding number of paramedic applications received to-date (see above)

d. Update on paramedic testing (see above)

e. Discussion on hiring FF/EMTs for the upcoming August Connecticut Fire Academy recruit class (see above)

8. Executive Session, if requested- N/A

- 9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Mitchell made a motion to adjourn at 6:38 PM. Mr. Rankins seconded, and all were in favor.

Next regular meeting—July 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm

Submitted by: Liana Paglia, Substitute Clerk for the Commission