



*CITY OF SHELTON
SHELTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, August 2ND, 2011
7:30 P.M., Room 104*

Commissioners Present:

Tim Manion, Vice-Chairman
John Sonsini, Commissioner
Ben McGorty, Commissioner

Commissioner Absent:

Gary Field, Commissioner

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Manion called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Assistant Chief Tim Hongo stated that he started the inventory in Central Storage. He will email Commissioners some rough inventory sheets, some new request forms, etc., hopefully by tonight. Please review and let him know if you want anything changed or revised. When back from trip, Tim hopes to have complete inventory to hand off to the Quartermaster.

Chris Jones came forward to discuss the High School and the issues that have been ongoing as far back as 2006 when complaints were made in regards to fire code violations, sprinkler systems, etc. Tonight Chris would like to give a brief timeline of the events.

Back in October 2008, Chris stated that he brought up the situation of the sprinkler's in the renovation of the high school. He stated that they did not feel that the high school should have been sprinklered (at least in certain areas). Chris stated he got reports back stating that there are no sprinklers needed in the high school (in certain areas). Chris then explains that here we are now (two months later) on December 30th, 2008; this is when we had a very intense fire in a storage room at the High School. Chris wanted to stress that it was not just a storage room; it was probably 30 ft. by 30 ft. (much larger than led on to believe). He stated that the High School had a fire; it caused a lot of damage. This damage is somewhere around 6 million dollars so far for fire renovation.

So around January 26th of 2009, under the freedom of information, Chris requested from the Fire Marshall's office, the Shelton High School inspection folder/file. Chris just wanted to go in and look to see if everything was up to code, up to speed. Chris asked for any copy of any City of Shelton Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal inspection reports / or violation reports for the past ten years. The Fire Marshal let Chris sit in the office and handed him the folder and said 'here you go'. Chris stated that there were no inspection reports in it for the last ten years. There were a couple of sheets that were

scribbled on with notes, some documents, some memos, but there were no inspection reports.

Chris then decided to file a complaint with the Director of Building and Safety, Mr. Robert Ross, of the State Fire Marshals office and asked him to look into this. He wanted them to look into the Fire Marshals office as far as inspections went, which he put in the letter to please consider that letter a complaint. Chris did not get a personal response back, but on Tues. October 27th, 2009 in the Connecticut Post, there was an article that stated that State Fire Marshals office had completed its investigation into alleged proprieties at the Shelton High School and had concluded that there is no violation of state statue. Case closed. Chris stated that he was amazed that this happened. Chris said he was sticking to his guns. Chris stated that if they had sprinklered the storage area/maintenance area, as it was suggested they do, maybe the fire would have been a five minute fire before being put out. That would have saved a lot of money.

Chris went on to state that he had been researching the minutes of the Shelton High School Renovation Building Committee and he went back to 2009 of March when they first started talking about fire doors. Then Chris fast forwarded to the last meeting from July 13, 2011. Chris explained that here we are 2 ½ years later and Item number 5 on agenda is interior fire doors. Chris wanted to know, has this been done or not? Chris stated he didn't think so, because we read now in the paper a couple of weeks ago, the Shelton High Accreditation Committee did their inspection of the high school as far as curriculum, the building itself, violations. They seem to have found some very serious violations; which were found back in November 2010. The Violations, which require the installation of sprinklers in some classrooms and the replacement and/or repairs of fire stairs and exit doors in order to be resolved, were part of the report by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, conducted by the academics review of the high school. Chris stated that they found all these same code violations prior to the fire back in 2008. And the state didn't find any of those violations he wondered?

Now we read the other day in the paper, that in Seymour, they are combining their two elementary schools and doing a 32 million dollar renovation. So from the looks of it, their fire marshal has taken charge of the situation due to the code violations that occurred during the 32 million school renovation/expansion. Fire Marshal Paul Wetowitz stated the school must have an ongoing fire watch in place whenever there are students or staff in the building. Fire Marshal Paul Wetowitz stated he has authority to bar school from opening on Sept. 6th, 2011 if a fire watch is not in place. Chris explained the Accreditation Commission that had been at Shelton High School last November, found all these same serious code violations. Chris Jones went on the read the article on Paul Wetowitz. Chris wants know what is going on with the City of Shelton and the safety of their kids.

Chris stated that the reason he is here tonight is because he went to the Charter of the City of Shelton, just to see who is who in the city of Shelton. Chris stated that upon approval from the mayor, the BOFC shall appoint or remove the Fire Marshal and any other paid employees of the fire department in accordance with the proceedings set forth in general statues. Chris Jones asked the BOFC to look into what is going on. Pending on what comes out of report that the state had done this summer, which he thinks is

going to be ugly, that school should not be opening come this Sept. 8th or the first day it's suppose to open. If that high school is not code compliant, something needs to be done. Chris Jones suggested paying one/two fire fighters to be on fire watch until something is done. Chris doesn't want to see school security taking this over. Chris is going to stay on this, for the next month Chris is going to watch and see what happens.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of Regular Meeting May 3rd, 2011

Commissioner Sonsini motioned to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on May 3rd, 2011 as posted. Commissioner McGorty seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

2. Minutes of Special Meeting June 14th, 2011

Commissioner Sonsini motioned to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on June 14th, 2011 as posted. Commissioner McGorty seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

E. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Vice-Chairman Manion went over a court ruling that stated that the BOFC IS in charge of the Fire Marshal, the Chief's office and any member of the Shelton Fire Department. The lawsuit was handed down a week ago. When things like this happen, Manion stated that the Board must step in.
2. Vice-Chairman Manion read aloud a letter from Mike Ullrich.

August 1, 2011

To: Board of Fire Commissioners

From: Mike Ullrich

Re: Fire Chief's Position

Gentlemen,

I would like to express my thanks in your continued support of me becoming the next Fire Chief of the City of Shelton; however it seems that politics has once again reared its ugly head.

I have heard many rumors that the Mayor has suggested that you appoint one of his buddies to be the Chief. I ask that you continue to follow the proper procedures for appointments and not make any appointment from outside of the current list of candidates.

The process needs to be fair and in the open, not done in back door deals as it appears some would like to do (not the commissioners).

I would like to ask that a meeting be set-up with the Board of Fire Commissioners, the Mayor and me to resolve whatever outstanding issue or issues that the Mayor has with appointing me as Chief.

Thank you,



Mike Ullrich

- 3. Vice-Chairman Manion read aloud the letter that was sent to Mayor on candidate Mike Ullrich for Chief.



**CITY OF SHELTON
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

RECEIVED
JUN 15 2011
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Board of Fire Commissioners

June 15, 2011

Mayor,

I am sending this to inform you that the Board of Fire Commissioners at there meeting held on June 14, 2011 voted unanimously to resubmit Mike Ulrich for the position of Fire Chief. We understand that you denied his approval but after lengthy discussions between the Board of Fire Commissioners, the Officers Council and many members of the department we (the board) feel this very important issue deserves another look. After all the media attention and discussion since our first recommendation to you it seems that there may be personal issues between you and the candidate from many years ago. I as the vice-chair am asking for Mike and myself to meet with you and put everything on the table and see if we can resolve this issue as soon as possible. Mayor, I understand that you have the final say but I am baffled that you will not approve a person as qualified as Mike. It's not that we (the fire department) haven't been down this road before but now the entire department is really thinking you just hate the volunteers and do not care, I have heard this on many occasions and think you should be aware.. We have worked very hard to get the department moving in a forward direction again and then to be basically slapped in the face for all our work is very discouraging.

Thank You,
Respectfully Submitted,
Tim Manion
Tim Manion
Vice-Chair
BOFC

disapproved *Manion*
Date *6-17-11*

Approved _____ Date _____
CC: BOFC
Human Resources

- 4. Vice-Chairman Manion read aloud letter from LT. Mike Plavcan.

Print

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Print - Close Window

Subject: Company 1 Parking
From: LT. Mike Plavcan (homer0827@aol.com)
fireinspector@sbcglobal.net; t.marion@yahoo.com; t.manion@cityofshelton.org;
To: j.sonsini@cityofshelton.org; JSonsini@live.com;
Cc: dvwart@snet.net;
Date: Tue, 02 Aug 2011 16:50:33

Commissioners,

As of today, Tuesday August 2nd, the members of the Echo Hose H&L are no longer allowed to park in the lot across the street from the firehouse per the owner of Shelton Auto Body. This unfortunate event takes away most of our memberships parking. With that being said, I would like to request that the city mark off spots on the side of the firehouse in the city parking lot for Fire Department personnel only. My recommendation would be some sort of painted verbage on the asphalt or signage on the side of the firehouse. At one point these spots were designated, but the neighboring lawyer removed the signage from the building. This would allow the membership to have designated parking spots when responding to alarms. If one of you could get back to me with a response to this request, it would be greatly appreciated. Thanks.

Yours in Service,
LT. Mike Plavcan
Shelton Fire Headquarters

5. Vice-Chairman Manion stated he had copy of Fire Marshal's monthly activity report / with graphs.



City of Shelton
Fire Marshal

54 Hill Street
Shelton, Connecticut 06484

James M. Tortora
Fire Marshal
203-924-1888 ext. 340

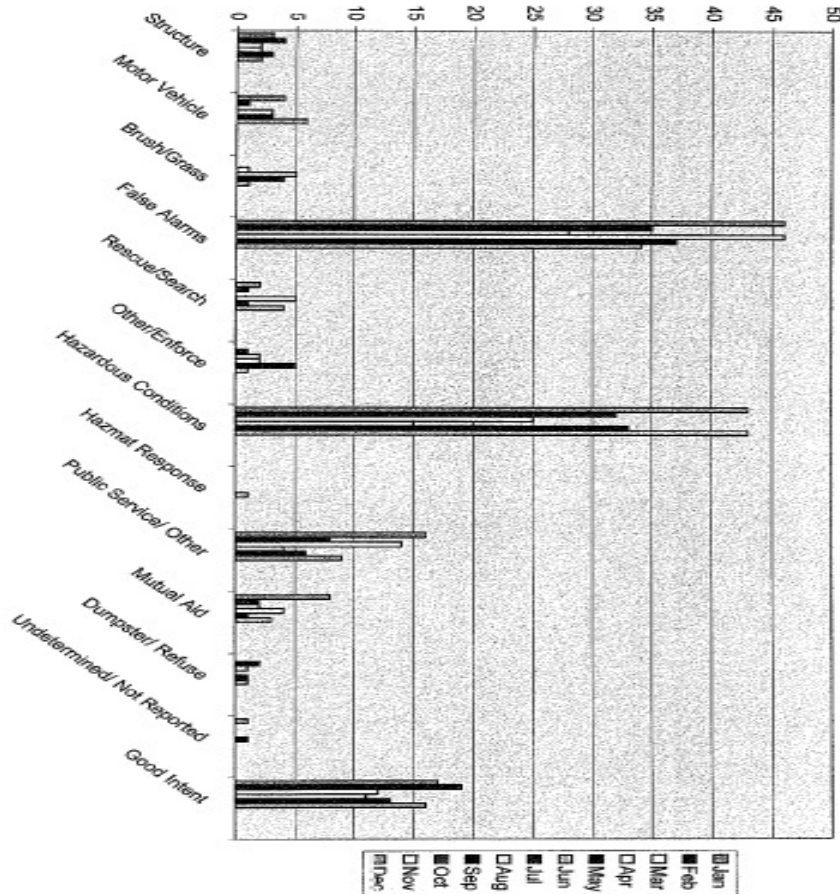
07/07/2011

TO: Tim Manion, Vice Chairman
Board of Fire Commissioners

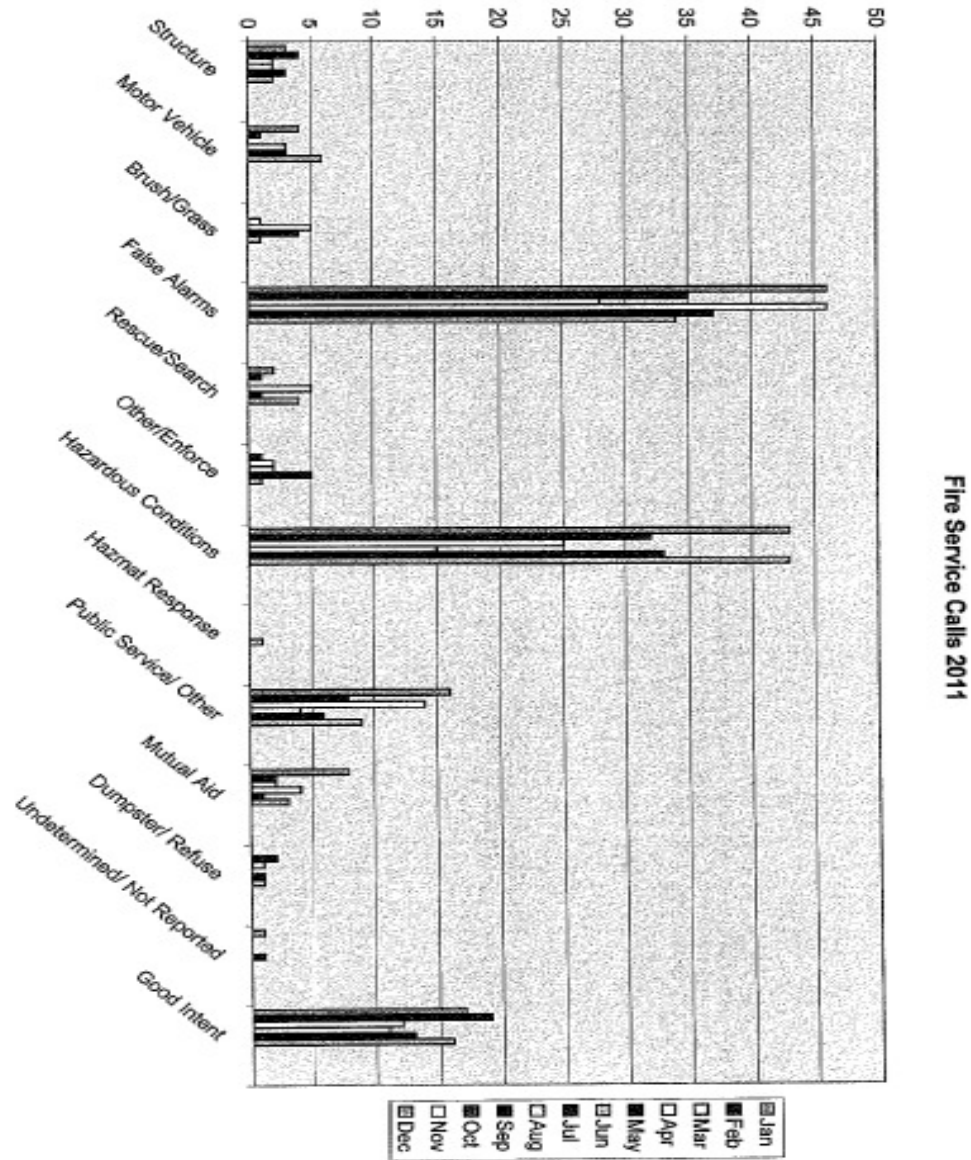
RE: Monthly Report

Tom,
Please find enclosed the updated report for the responses for the Shelton Fire Department. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.


James M. Tortora
Fire Marshal



Fire Service Calls 2011



F. REPORTS

1. Fire Chiefs Report - none
2. Fire Marshal James Tortora – monthly activity report above. Manion stated that they will be asking for a lot more in future.

3. Training Coordinator – Board will be setting up special meeting for interviews.



**City of Shelton Fire Department
Training Coordinator**

To: Board of Fire Commissioners
From: Jo Lynn Van Wart
Subject: Monthly Report – July 5, 2011

Commissioners,

The following is the Shelton Fire Department training report for July 5, 2011

Training:

- Students completed the written exams for both FF1 and FSI-1
- Ongoing rope rescue training is being held at Co#4

Possible Future Training:

- Advanced EVOC class during July or August
- Incident Safety Officer—day and evening August/September
- FF2
- FO1

Miscellaneous Items:

1. Notification was received from Fairfield Fire School that our insurance for live fire training has expired. (a copy of notice is attached)
2. Invoices for those members from Monroe who took Fire Service Instructor 1 have been prepared and sent.
3. A list of those students who failed or did not show for the FF1 practical exam is attached to this report. The out of town students need to be billed for the class.

4. Quartermaster Report – none

5. Commissioner Sonsini

Commissioner Sonsini asked a question about the boat. He also asked about the Apron to see what was going on. Vice-Chairman stated he would call next day with info.

6. Commissioner Manion

Commissioner wanted to thank everyone for the changes in meetings that had been made due to his recovery after his back surgery. He wanted to send thanks to all four fire companies.

7. Commissioner Field – absent

8. Commissioner McGorty

Commissioner McGorty stated last week was stressful. Town went from 10 out-of-service vehicles last week to being only down 3 out-of-services this week. For the record, Commissioner McGorty would like to thanks Tracey's and Firematic for coming and helping out on that fuel situation. Also, Huntington would like to use the old JB's van; they would like to use it for their hazmat vehicle. They would also like permission to write on top of it. (tabled to next month).

Additions to Agenda:

Commissioner McGorty motioned to add letter from Communications/ from LT. Mike Plavcan regarding the banning of parking across the street per the owner of Shelton Auto Body to New Business / Item number 5. Commissioner Sonsini seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

G. OLD BUSINESS

1. Hose Bid/ Ground Ladders

Hose bid is out. We lost 44 lengths of hose/most of it 5 inches.

2. Chiefs Appointment

Vice-Chairman Manion wanted to make a motion to move on to the next candidate Chief Daryl Osiecki and nominate him for Fire Chief. Motion is dead – no second.

Commissioner McGorty motioned to restart the hiring process by reposting the job for Chief. Commissioner Manion seconded the motion.

Commissioner Manion amended motion to add Deputy Fire Chief.

Commissioner McGorty motioned to post for the Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief position within the Shelton Fire Department. Commissioner Manion seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed 2-1 (Commissioner Sonsini opposed).

3. Policy Review

We need to get a workshop going. Get everyone's input.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Acceptance of PT Stipend Positions

Commissioner Manion motioned to move Item 1 / Acceptance of PT Stipend Positions to Executive Session due to it being a personnel issue. Commissioner McGorty seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

2. Apparatus Purchase

3. Specifications

4. Referendum/Bonding

Commissioner Manion motioned to send a letter to the BOA so they can get onto a referendum by September 8th in order to purchase two squads. Commissioner McGorty seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

This will include item number 2, 3, and 4.

5. Parking

Manion and Board discussed parking issue going on.

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner McGorty motioned to enter Executive Session at 8:45 p.m. to discuss Personnel matters. Commissioner Sonsini seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Sonsini motioned exit Executive Session at 9:06 p.m. Commissioner McGorty seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner McGorty motioned to send a letter to the candidates to interview on August 16th at 6:30. Commissioner Sonsini seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McGorty motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Sonsini seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Wells

Kimberly Wells / Clerk

1 Tape on file in the Town Clerk's office