City of Shelton Fire Department
Board of Fire Commissioners
Minutes of Regular Meeting
June 20, 2006

Commissioners Present
Robert J. Araujo, Chairman
David Sekelsky
Merle Chase
Justin Sabatino
Bruce Kosowsky

Also Present
Captain Tim Hongo
Fran Jones, Training Coordinator
Shaun Wheeler

Chairman Araujo called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners to order at 7:45 P.M. All those present rose for the pledge of allegiance.

Public Participation

A.J. Grasso addressed the Board to discuss the hydrant situation on Patriot Way at Buddington Road and John Dominick Drive at Buddington Road. There was a lengthy discussion on how the hydrant on Patriot Way can be accessed with a stone wall in front of it. Mr. Grasso had stated that his original prints showed the stone wall and he didn't understand why nothing was said to him before the wall went up in front of the hydrant. The Board explained that they only get a request for hydrants along with a water map, not prints of the development, so they never saw anything with a stone wall. Mr. Grasso is either going to get in contact with the Aquarion Water Company to have the hydrant relocated, or see if something can be done with the wall so the hydrant can be accessed through it if need be. As far as the fourth hydrant on John Dominick Drive that the Board had requested, this now appears to be an internal issue and not the responsibility of Mr. Grasso. The Board thanked Mr. Grasso for taking the time to come in to rectify this situation.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to accept the minutes of the June 6, 2006 Regular Meeting as printed and distributed. Seconded by Commissioner Chase and approved unanimously.

Communications

Chairman Araujo reviewed the following communications with the Board:

- Shelton Police Departments "National Night Out" 12:00-3:00 P.M. on July 29, 2006
- Letter from White Hills Co.#5

  Gentlemen: At the monthly meeting of the White Hills Fire Company it was voted that a letter be sent to you to express the concern of this company as to the way in which appointments are made within the Shelton Fire Department. It was further voted unanimously by those present, that the Board of Fire Commissioners follow the written rule and not to deviate from such. If a deviation or temporary appointment be necessitated, it is strongly recommended that the present job description be adhered to. Furthermore, our commissioner has been instructed to vote that the Board follows the written rule. On behalf of the members of Co.#5 - Louis Cortigiano, Captain.

- Letter from Echo Hose Co.#1

  Dear Board of Fire Commissioners: I would first like to start by thanking you all for giving the members of Echo Hose Company #1 the opportunity to be part of this process. After much discussion of the term limits issue at our June monthly meeting, members of our company came to the conclusion that we have the Charter for a reason and that reason is to guide us in such instances as these. The Charter is specific on such things as policies, one being of term limits, and should be adhered to as stated. We will though back any decisions made by the Board of Fire Commissioners as they deem appropriate. Respectfully Yours in Firefighting – Captain John D. Sonsini

- Letter of Resignation from Patricia Kelley
- Letter from Richard Schultz, Planning and Zoning Administrator – re: hydrants
- Letter from Mayor Mark A. Lauretti - re: Fire Chief Position

  My understanding is that the term of the current Fire Chief is set to expire on June 30, 2006. Please advise as to the status of the appointment of a Fire Chief effective July 1, 2006.

  As you will note, the City Charter in Section 6.9.3.2 provides that the Board of Fire Commissioners shall appoint and may remove, subject to the approval of the

Mayor, a Fire Chief. I have again taken the opportunity to review memos from the Corporation Counsel's Office dated June 2, 2003 and March 1, 2005 suggesting that the Board of Fire Commissioners amend the job description and the appointment process, as well as the April 12, 2006 review of a new job description wherein the recommendation was made to the Fire Commission to seek the advice of the Administrative Assistant of the City and the City's Labor Counsel. As of this date, I am not aware of any conversations requesting any advise. If you will kindly advise as to the status, it would be appreciated.

I have also reviewed a copy of the draft job description provided to the Mayor's Office on June 14, 2006. My concern is that procedures are adopted that would provide a Fire Chief with the ability to operated the Fire Department on a day to day basis enabling the Fire Chief and his staff to perform the fire protection services necessary for the safety of the City. Therefore, I respectfully request the Board of Fire Commissioners perform their duties as required by the Charter and amend and adopt policies that will provide for a Fire Chief with the ability the operate the Fire Department on a day to day basis, without interference. Further, that the Board of Fire Commissioners, as required by the Charter, appoint a Fire Chief, subject to the Mayor's approval, by July 1, 2006. Please contact me as to the status.

- James Brown – NCI Rescue Truck on Display for your viewing at 6:30 P.M. on 6/21/06 at Echo Hose Co.#1

Additions to the Agenda

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to add under Old Business Item #5 Turnout Gear and Item #6 Testing Procedures, and to add under New Business Item #1 Vehicle Policies, #2 Vehicle Request and #3 Temporary Appointments. Seconded by Commissioner Chase and approved unanimously.

Old Business

F1 – Job Descriptions

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to table this item. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

F2 – Physicals and Mandatory Requirements

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to remove this item from the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

F3 – Air Packs

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to send a letter to Chief Millo asking him to provide the Board with any information and the status of the air packs. Seconded by Commissioner Sabatino and approved unanimously.

F4 – Status of Hydrants – Patriot Way @ Buddington Road and John Dominick Drive @ Buddington Road

MOTION made by Commissioner Kosowsky to table this item for further discussion after it is done. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

F5 – Turnout Gear

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to look into purchasing up to 10 sets of gear per company. Seconded by Commissioner Sabatino and approved unanimously.

F6 – Testing Procedure

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to send a letter to all Companies and Applicants that the Chief and Deputy Chiefs Test will be held on Thursday, July 6, 2006 at 6:00 P.M. in Room 104 at City Hall. Seconded by Commissioner Chase and approved unanimously.

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to have a Special Meeting on June 27, 2006 at 7:00 P.M. to open applications for the Chief, Deputy Chief and Quartermaster positions. Seconded by Commissioner Sabatino and approved unanimously.

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to have the Chairman and the Secretary handle sending out the letters to those applicants who pass the written exam for the Chief and Deputy Chief positions advising them of their scores and the date and time in which their oral interview will be conducted. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to have the oral interviews on July 18, 2006 starting at 6:00 P.M. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

New Business

G1 – Vehicle Policies

Commissioner Kosowsky discussed the need to go through the vehicle policy. There are many things that are not being adhered to including the filling out of log books, the mechanical issues with the vehicles, etc.

MOTION made by Commissioner Kosowsky to put this on the next agenda to address the vehicle policy regarding fire department vehicles. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

G2 – Vehicle Request – Out of State

MOTION made by Commissioner Sekelsky to allow Commissioner Sabatino to take Truck 40 to the New England Fire Show on Friday June 23, 2006. Seconded by Commissioner Chase and approved unanimously.

G3 – Temporary Appointments

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino that the position of Quartermaster be temporarily appointed to Jack Brand Jr. until a new appointment is made. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino that the position of Training Coordinator be temporarily appointed to Fran Jones for a period not to exceed 6 months or until the Board sees fit. Seconded by Commissioner Sekelsky and approved unanimously.

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to temporarily appoint the Chief until one is chosen. Seconded by Commissioner Chase. – Discussion

Commissioner Kosowsky stated that the Board has to go by what the policy says. Commissioner Sabatino stated that his job description says that he can be temporarily appointed as seen fit by the Board. Commissioner Sekelsky brought up that the ruling from Corporation Counsel says no. Commissioner Sabatino disagreed saying that the ruling states his term ended, it doesn't say he can't be temporarily appointed if there is nobody there. Commissioner Sekelsky feels that there are people there who can do the job. Commissioner Sabatino disagreed once again stating there are only assistant chiefs, not a chief to fill the position. Commissioner Sabatino feels that there needs to be a Chief for the Department until the Board appoints a new one, a "leader" running the department in administrative and day to day operations. Commissioner Sekelsky questioned if the "leader" of the Department has been there for the last 30 days for the Department.

Commissioner Sabatino stated that he was not sure what he has done in the last 30 days until he gets an activity report from him. Commissioner Sekelsky was asking Commissioner Sabatino if what he was saying is that he wants someone to lead the department on a day to day operation. Commissioner Sabatino stated yes we need him here for the next 30 days.

Roll Call Vote – In Favor: Commissioners Araujo, Chase and Sabatino
Opposed: Commissioners Sekelsky and Kosowsky

Motion Carried

MOTION made by Commissioner Araujo that all three people be notified in writing of their temporary appointments. Seconded by Commissioner Sabatino.

Roll Call Vote – In Favor: Commissioners Araujo, Chase and Sabatino
Opposed: Commissioners Sekelsky and Kosowsky

Motion Carried

Remarks/Comments for the Good of the Commission

Commissioner Kosowsky stated that it is amazing that after all the years in the Fire Department that we seam to worry about all the things the Fire Department does, but when you bring up safety issues like the issues of roads, that the position is that you put a sign up that says rough road on it. It is amazing that we are just so interested in what happens in the Fire Department but we are not interested on normal road conditions.

Commissioner Kosowsky also wanted to bring up as a taxpayer and resident, he feels that when he pays his taxes they should be good for all 12 months not 11 months, since the Board is not able to spend money out of their budget the last month of the budget year (June) for items needed.

Adjournment

MOTION made by Commissioner Sabatino to adjourn at 8:40 P.M. Seconded by Commissioner Chase and approved unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Michele Lewis