



OXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT



SB CHURCH MEMORIAL TOWN HALL
OXFORD, CONNECTICUT 06478-1298

Office of the Fire Commission

OXFORD CENTER VOL. FIRE CO.
QUAKER FARMS VOL. FIRE CO.
RIVERSIDE VOL. FIRE CO.

The minutes of the regular monthly meeting of the Oxford Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC) held in the Oxford Town Hall at 486 Oxford Road, Oxford, CT on Monday, Oct. 21, 2013 are as follows:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brian Francione at 7:04 pm with Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

In attendance: Chairman Brian Francione, John Downs Sr., Mike Rubin, Mark Krassner, George Hamila, Chief Scott Pelletier, Asst. Chief Andy Coy, Asst. Chief Ron Prajer, Vic Noll and guest Selectman George Temple.

MOTION made to accept the minutes of Sep. 16, 2013 meeting was made by Mark Krassner and seconded by John Downs, Sr. All were in favor. MOTION carried.

Public Session:

Chairman Francione then opened the meeting to the Public.

Ed Roman, Bowers Hill Rd. Oxford, CT requested clarity on a question raised at Quaker Farms meeting in regards to the Commissioner from each fire company needing to be a member of "good standing" and if someone did not meet the criteria (not a member of good standing/not active member) would they still be able to serve on the Board of Fire Commissioners? Assistant Chief Prajer suggested it was up to the Company to enforce and it should go by their bylaws and questioned if there was currently an issue. Ed Roman stated no it was just a question. Commissioner Francione stated if the person was not in good standing they should not be on Commission or any other Board for the Fire Department. Commissioner John Downs asked if a 50 year member would still be allowed to be on the Board. Brian Francione stated yes as long as they were in good standing. Vic Noll questioned what happens if during their term if this occurs and that once appointed there is no provision for this to be maintained. Chief Pelletier suggested it was up to the Selectmen to determine. Further discussion ensued.

Anne Luskay, 10 Cortland Place, Oxford, CT: If the firefighter is appointed to Commission and is no longer in good standing then the mechanism for the fire company is to send a Letter to the Selectmen and ask for their removal.

James Guise 389 Oxford Rd. Oxford, CT: Questioned when the letter will be discussed that was sent by Center.

Dan Gramigna 8 Perkins Rd. Oxford, CT: Requested that the Board consider having an open session at the end of the meeting as well after communications have been read.

MOTION made by Mark Krassner to continue Public session under new business. Seconded by George Hamila. Brian Francione, Mike Rubin in favor. John Downs, Sr. abstained. MOTION carried.

Communication:

Correspondence was received from the following:

1. Oct. 8, 2013- Letter from Oxford Center Volunteer Fire Company to Board of Selectmen re: OCFC Concerns re: Fire Commission/Commissioners

Committees/Workshops:

Organizational Structure: On hold pending Ordinance

Ordinance: In progress

Policy and Procedures: in progress awaiting Ordinance

Chiefs/Department Report: Chief Pelletier updated the Commission on the following topics:

1. Fire Prevention completed for year with exception of Pre-schools and Nursery schools.
2. Truck maintenance continuing, Tanker 53 – issue with level switch covered under warranty. Tanker 33- pump test problem with relief valve – fixed. Tanker 43 – completed fuel injection pump.
3. Driveway at Riverside – progressing, currently waiting on Bond documents.
4. Town-wide truck committee – specs approved by Chief. Selectman authorized it out to Bid
5. SCBA bottles ordered and have come in. Vic is currently inventorying and will be distributing
6. Hurst equipment purchased and operating, waiting on 2 mounting brackets
7. Issue with driveway at Center, public works repaired problem
8. Radio receiver site – currently working with Beacon Falls region 14 high school. Site appears good, details not yet finalized.
9. Last Chiefs meeting: discussed outstanding capitol items

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

MOTION made to continue Public session to review letter from Center made by Mark Krassner, seconded by Mike Rubin. All in favor. MOTION carried.

Assistant Chief Andy Coy questioned if Roberts Rules of Order are used for Board of Fire Commissioner meeting. Commissioner Francione stated yes.

Selectman George Temple stated that the Ordinance needs to set the boundaries of what is operational and what is administrative. He likes the way the Fire Department is currently sticking together and supporting each other and not acting like individual companies providing a sense of unity and discipline. He would like a clear delineation between the operational portion of the Fire Department which is the Chiefs and that the administrative duties such as budgets, new pumpers, capital plans etc. should be the Commission. Jim Guise stated that boundaries are very important and that Centers position is that it is very difficult for any Commissioner to be involved administratively as well as operationally and this is not personal towards any Commissioner. Selectman Temple stated that Chief Pelletier has been administratively and operationally completing these tasks. Brian Francione added that the Board of Fire Commissioners wants to work with the Chiefs with the Commission completing the administrative tasks to lighten their load working together as one unit. Jim Guise added that Centers letter was about defining those boundaries. Brian Francione added that the Board of Fire Commission is administrative only. Selectman Temple reiterated that further discussion is needed to determine the types of things the Commission should do and not do keeping in mind there are civilians on the Board as well. Dan Gramigna added that those boundaries should have been set prior to the Board of Fire Commissioners being implemented as the Board if being set up by asking them to set the boundaries. Selectman Temple stated he agreed it was unfair to the Commission but they are in the Charter and that it is in the Ordinance that the boundaries are set. It's not about pitting the Chiefs against the Commission it's about the Commission augmenting the Chiefs with no duplication in efforts in tasks. He added another meeting may be needed to reach a consensus. John Downs, Sr. read a letter dated May 5, 2012 that all Fire Commissioners received which outlined the charges of the Oxford Fire Commissioners. He stated that the Commission has worked 4-5 months on this Ordinance. They sought input. At their first meeting the Commission questioned Selectman Temple on the question of Line officers or Assistant Fire Marshalls being on the Board and the answer was it was not a problem. The Commission took the input provided and reduced the terms from 6 years to 3 years. The Commission feels it should move forward with the Ordinance. Further discussion ensued in regards to lack of attendance at Ordinance workshops, no added input until a final Ordinance was provided and the need to find a solution that works.

John Downs, Sr. asked if it would be a good thing to say tonight to abolish the Board of Fire Commissioners. Selectman Temple added that he had no authority to abolish the Board of Fire Commissioners as it's in the Charter but let's find out about what works for everyone.

Kyle Leak 25 O'Neill Rd. Oxford, CT stated that the letters sent from the Company voiced their opinion and are validated by the letters sent. Selectman Temple added he understood the frustration when there are regular meetings but perhaps that there should be a joint meeting. Ann Luskay stated that speaking as the Secretary of Center that their questions were to get guidelines and parameters, to find out the authority of the Fire Commission and that the Company only meant to offer recommendations. Mark Krassner added that the Commissioners decided upon 3 year terms in order for the Commission to be able to easily move forward while bringing only 2 new members up to speed. Selectman Temple added that this makes sense and that he liked the 3 year term as it added more continuity. Brian

Francione added this is what is put forth in the proposed Ordinance currently. Further discussion ensued in regards to how the Board could augment the Chiefs.

Vic Noll, 17 White Gate Rd. Oxford, CT questioned Selectmen Temple if the firefighter from each company is on the Board to represent each Company. Selectman Temple stated that the Company should represent the entire Oxford Fire Department not one individual company. Further discussion ensued. Vic Noll also questioned if a Line Officer should be on the Commission. Selectman Temple added there is no problem with a Line Officer being on the Commission it is a volunteer position.

Ed Roman added that he appreciated the time and that in summary that the group should review the language, and then sit down and discuss it further to have the opportunity to come to a consensus and to move forward. Selectman Temple thanked everyone and stated he did attend as he also wants everyone to reach a consensus and the Fire Commissioner's feels the frustration as well. He added that the Fire Commission is in the Charter. Johns Downs, Sr. asked Selectman Temple if he would be moving forward with the proposed Ordinance provided by the Fire Commission. Selectman Temple stated not until a consensus is reached.

Gary Pelletier, 140 Governors Hill Rd. Oxford, CT added that it took them 2.5 years to get the truck specifications together and that the Ordinance is something that everyone will have to live with for a long time.

Brian Francione asked if a workshop should be scheduled or if this should be completed during this meeting. Selectman Temple added that at least this many people should added the workshop and that if the Board of Fire Commission has a meeting and only 2 people show up that he will be inclined to go with what the Board says. Brian Francione asked Selectman Temple if the firefighters on the Board are appointed. Selectman Temple responded yes. Brian Francione added the Officers and Term limits were the biggest concerns. Ed Roman added that the companies would like input into the final draft and added that perhaps they should be provided time to read it again and provide input one last time and move forward. Further discussion ensued. Decision that each individual company will review current proposed Ordinance at their next meeting. A workshop will then be scheduled at the next Fire Commission meeting on Nov. 18th.

MOTION made by Brian Francione to rescind the currently proposed Ordinance at least until after the workshop to obtain further input, seconded by Mark Krassner. All in favor. MOTION carried.

No further new business.

Good of the Commission:

Reminder of next Fire Commission meeting on Monday, Nov. 18 at 7pm.

Brian Francione thanks everyone for attending the meeting.

MOTION made to adjourn meeting made by George Hamila and seconded by John Downs, Sr. All in favor. MOTION carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Caruso, Recording Clerk

Board of Fire Commissioners

13 OCT 28 PM 1:10

TOWN OF NEW BRIDGCT



TOWN CLERK