

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Public Safety was held in the City Hall Auditorium on Wednesday, April 4, 2018.

Those in attendance included Mayor Elinor Carbone, Corporation Counsel Jaime LaMere, and Commissioners Darlene Battle, Douglas Benedetto, Robert Conforti, Richard Zaharek, Angelo LaMonica, and Glenn McLeod. Also present were Police Chief Michael Maniago, Fire Chief Gary Brunoli, Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp, Fire Marshal Ed Bascetta, Police Captain Wayne Newkirk, Traffic Operations Unit Officer Steven Pisarski, and Campion Ambulance Director of Operations Fred Rosa.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. starting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AWARDS: FIRE PREVENTION POSTER CONTEST**

Fire Marshall Ed Bascetta presented awards to the three Fire Prevention Poster Contest winners that were in attendance.

**MINUTES**

On a motion by Commissioner LaMonica, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes from the Regular Meeting held March 8, 2018.

**AWARDS: POLICE**

Sergeant Richard Dowd presented the Chief's Citation Award to Detective James Crean and Officer Robert Guida for their investigative and interview skills in solving a stream of burglary cases.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public.

Bruno Matarazzo requested clarification regarding the topic(s) of discussion in the Executive Session indicated on the meeting agenda. Mayor Carbone clarified that the purpose of the Executive Session would be strictly to discuss the promotion of a Police Sergeant.

Gary Eucalitto expressed his disappointment in hearing that the City is considering hiring a Deputy Police Chief in the current fiscal situation and stated that it is more important to fill other positions within the Department.

State Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Daniel Eddinger requested support in making Torrington a Purple Heart City. Commander Eddinger announced tentative plans for a meet and greet at Coe Park on April 21<sup>st</sup> and the unveiling of a Purple Heart parking spot on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Carbone confirmed the City's intent to designate a Purple Heart parking spot and Officer Pisarski agreed to meet to discuss the development at a later date.

Mike Simon expressed his disagreement with the pending recruitment of a Deputy Police Chief and stated that it is more important to have officers on the street.

Glenn Royals requested clarification regarding the hiring process for the Deputy Police Chief position.

**MOTION TO ADD TO THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Benedetto made a motion to add to the agenda by two-thirds vote a discussion on eliminating the Deputy Police Chief position. Commissioner Zaharek seconded the motion and the motion failed with three in favor (Commissioners Benedetto, LaMonica, and Zaharek) and three opposed (Commissioners Battle, Conforti, and McLeod).

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Commissioner Conforti, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to enter Executive Session at 7:07 p.m. to discuss the appointment of Police Department personnel, per CGS Section 1-200(6A). Chief Maniago and Corporation Counsel Jaime LaMere were also present.

**OPEN SESSION**

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to return to Open Session at 7:17 p.m.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to promote Officer Michael Giordano to the position of Sergeant, effective at the Chief's discretion.

**PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Zaharek, the Board voted unanimously to accept Police Chief Maniago's Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously to accept Officer Pisarski's Traffic Operations Unit Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner Zaharek, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously to accept Fire Chief Brunoli's Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Deputy Fire Chief's Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to accept Training Officer Shoppey's Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner LaMonica, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Emergency Management Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Fire Marshal's Reports.

On a motion by Commissioner Battle, seconded by Commissioner Conforti, the Board voted unanimously to accept the EMS Provider Activity Reports.

#### **BUSINESS: VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Volunteer Fire Departments.

Torrington reported that they are going to begin training with the City's Fire Department and have one volunteer in school to get his Black Helmet.

#### **PURCHASE OF AMMUNITION**

On a motion by Commissioner Conforti, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Purchasing Agent's recommendation and authorize the Torrington Police Department to waive the City bid process and purchase their ammunition for an estimated budgeted amount of \$41,000.00 off the State Contract #14PSX0243, Ammunition, New and Reloads from Eagle Point Gun in Thorofare, NJ, pending City Council approval on April 16th.

Commissioner Zaharek asked how long the proposed ammunition purchase would last the Department. Chief Maniago responded that \$41,000.00 would cover the entire year.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGETS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to open discussion to approve the Public Safety budgets and forward them to the City Council.

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Commissioner Benedetto asked Chief Maniago for the cuts he plans to make to the Police Department budget. Mayor Carbone identified the Chief's proposed cuts in the Public Safety Budgets packet.

Chief Maniago stated that the Police Department would still need an extra \$350,000.00. Mayor Carbone added that the City is looking in to the possibility of implementing an early retirement program for City employees and Chief Maniago indicated that the Police Dept. budget is pending the outcome of that decision.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board discussed tabling the approval of the Police Dept. budget until all of the cuts are presented. Commissioners LaMonica, Benedetto, and Zaharek expressed their opposition to filling the Deputy Chief position and Commissioner McLeod stated his beliefs on why the position should be filled.

Mayor Carbone suggested bringing the discussion regarding the Police Dept. budget to a Special Meeting of the Board of Public Safety to review the proposed cuts before the Regular City Council meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>, immediately followed by a special joint meeting with the City Council. Commissioner LaMonica stated that he would not be able to attend a meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The Board voted unanimously to table the approval of the Police Dept. budget.

#### **Animal Control Budget**

Chief Maniago explained that the Animal Control budget cuts are on hold as well because the Mayor is actively seeking an opportunity for State funding. Mayor Carbone suggested advancing the budget as presented to the City Council and explained the bill that is before the legislature which would provide assistance to regional Animal Control facilities, such as Torrington. She stated that the City is advancing quickly on the design of a new Animal Control facility.

On a motion by Commissioner Conforti, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted to advance the Animal Control budget as presented to the City Council with five votes in favor and one opposed (Commissioner Benedetto).

**Traffic Dept. Budget**

Chief Maniago updated the Board on additional proposed cuts that were made to the Traffic Dept. budget since the Budget Subcommittee meeting and stated that the additional changes would result in a total of \$21,500.00 in cuts to the Traffic Dept.

Commissioner Benedetto asked Officer Pisarski how the cuts would affect the Traffic Operations Unit and Officer Pisarski stated that the Unit would be limited.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner LaMonica, the Board voted unanimously to table the approval of the Traffic Dept. budget.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Brunoli presented the **Emergency Management Budget** and stated that the budget is down \$421.00 from the previous year.

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Conforti, the Board voted unanimously to move the Emergency Management Budget on to the City Council.

**Volunteer Budget**

Chief Brunoli presented the additional cuts that have been made since the most recent Budget Subcommittee meeting and proposed a \$34,750.00 cut to the volunteer budget

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Zaharek, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Volunteer budget at \$61,069.00.

**Fire Dept. Budget**

Chief Brunoli presented his proposed cuts, including laying off one firefighter, and stated that he is not permitted to use funds from the Department's capital accounts to offset operational expenses.

Commissioner Benedetto expressed his disagreement with laying off a firefighter and cutting training, and stated that he would not move the budget forward as presented. Chief Brunoli explained that there is no other option and discussed issues concerning the performance and liability of the Volunteer Fire Departments. Commissioners Battle and McLeod stated that they would not move the proposed budget forward either and expressed their desire to have all positions in every department filled.

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to table the approval of the Fire Department budget.

**BUSINESS: DEPARTMENT HEADS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner LaMonica, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads.

Chief Brunoli described an incident on March 27, 2018 in which the Tarringford Volunteer Fire Department was unprepared with no water in their truck. He recommended that the City discontinue dispatching Tarringford until they have enough people to properly provide the necessary service. Chief Brunoli thanked the Mayor, the Board, the Fire Department, his wife, and citizens of Torrington for the opportunity to be the City's Fire Chief.

Deputy Chief Tripp thanked Chief Brunoli and wished him luck.

**BUSINESS: MAYOR & MEMBERS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Mayor and Members of the Board of Public Safety.

Commissioners LaMonica, Benedetto, and Zaharek requested clarification regarding the City's process for hiring a new Deputy Police Chief, including the selection of Commissioners to serve on the hiring committee.

Chief Maniago explained the position requirements and the process for accepting and screening applications, which was done through South Central Criminal Justice Administration of CT. Mayor Carbone further explained the hiring process leading up to a conditional job offer for the Deputy Police Chief position. She addressed the Board's involvement in the process, and stated that the process is still underway.

Commissioners Benedetto, LaMonica, and Zaharek expressed frustration over their lack of involvement in the hiring process and recommended starting the process over again with full Board participation.


Commissioner Benedetto thanked Chief Brunoli for his service and recognized members of the Police Department for their attendance at the meeting. He expressed his disappointment in the handling of the Deputy Police Chief position.

Commissioner Conforti thanked the Police Officers for showing up and congratulated Fire Chief Brunoli. He expressed his agreement with Commissioner Battle, and stated that he does not want to see any positions disappear.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Conforti, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:52 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Jonathan R. Draper, Asst. Clerk*

ATTEST:   
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC  
CITY CLERK