

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Public Safety was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021. In response to the Governor's Executive Orders regarding COVID-19, Board members and the public were able to attend the meeting remotely using the ZOOM online meeting platform. The meeting was attended in-person by Mayor Elinor Carbone and Commissioners Douglas Benedetto, Glenn McLeod and Joseph McElroy. Police Chief William Baldwin, Jr., Fire Chief Peter Towey, Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp, Police Captain Louis Gonzalez, Drakeville VFD Chief David Maccalous, Trinity Health EMS Manager Jeff Ganung, Purchasing Agent Pennie Zucco and Commissioners Gregg Cogswell, Dustin Bingham and Darlene Battle participated by ZOOM.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m.

**MINUTES: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Bingham, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held January 6, 2021. Commissioner McLeod abstained.

**FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Fire Chief's report. Commissioner Benedetto questioned why the TFD dispatches paid firefighters for mutual aid responses instead of the volunteers and Chief Towey noted that was due to contractual obligations. Commissioner Benedetto also asked whether the City is reimbursed for mutual aid responses and Chief Towey reported that the City does not receive reimbursement. Chief Towey also discussed his plans to address overtime concerns by hiring additional firefighters.

**DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT: APPROVED**

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

**TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept Training Officer Shopey's report.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT: APPROVED**

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

**POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McElroy, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Police Chief's report. Commissioner Benedetto requested an update on the hiring process and Chief Baldwin explained that the TPD was at a standstill until more seats open up in the police academy. Commissioner Benedetto also requested an update on the officers' morale and asked the Chief if he was considering hiring certified officers. Chief Baldwin reported that the officers were doing well but the amount of overtime required takes a toll. He also expressed his concerns about hiring certified officers. Lastly, Commissioner Benedetto asked which design the TPD planned to use for the lettering on police vehicles and Chief Baldwin reported that the City would be moving forward with the new style, which will save the City approximately \$700 to \$800 per vehicle.

**EMS PROVIDER ACTIVITY REPORT: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McElroy, the Board voted unanimously to accept the EMS provider activity report.

**BUSINESS BY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the volunteer fire departments. Tarringford VFD reported that they were waiting on their Fire Engine apparatus to return to service. Drakeville VFD Chief Maccalous presented an extensive report which outlined all of the Drakeville VFD's activity during the month of January, including incident responses, hours of training and hours of service. Commissioner Benedetto requested clarification regarding a January 24<sup>th</sup> incident in Goshen and Chief Maccalous clarified that Goshen did not request assistance from the Drakeville VFD.

**FIRE APPARATUS REPLACEMENT: APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner Bingham, seconded by Commissioner McElroy, the Board voted, with five votes in favor and one (Commissioner Benedetto) opposed, to accept the recommendation of the Fire Chief and the Vehicle Replacement Advisory Board and approve the purchase of the 2019 E-One HP78 Demonstration Quint Apparatus, with required modifications and equipment from Greenwood Emergency Vehicles in Attleboro Falls, MA for the total cost of \$868,824.47, to be funded through the vehicle replacement account; pending authorization by the Board of Finance.

Chief Towey provided a brief background about the apparatus and the vehicle replacement plan and explained why it was a financially responsible purchase. Commissioner Bingham expressed his concern that another fire department could jump ahead of Torrington in purchasing the apparatus. Commissioner Benedetto questioned

what would happen to the 2007 apparatus and expressed his concerns about the cost to taxpayers. Chief Towey explained that the 2007 apparatus would be moved to the reserve fleet and the new apparatus would replace a 22-year old engine that was already in the reserve fleet. Fleet Manager Emil Castro explained that the purchase was already pushed off for two years and the budgeted amount has remained in the vehicle replacement account. Chief Towey and Mr. Castro also noted that pushing off the purchase again could cost the City more money in the long run. Commissioners McLeod, McElroy and Battle expressed their support for the purchase.

**BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS**

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

Chief Baldwin presented his proposal to hire supernumerary officers to supplement manpower shortages for extra duty assignments. Commissioner McLeod asked if supernumerary officers could be utilized as Fire Police or for other purposes in the City and Chief Baldwin explained that his intention was to utilize supernumerary officers solely for extra duty jobs, to be paid for at the expense of construction companies. Chief Baldwin also addressed Commissioner Benedetto's concerns about the certification of supernumerary officers, explaining that the officers would be required to maintain their certifications on their own time and at their own expense. Commissioner Bingham expressed his support and Chief Baldwin added that the supernumerary program could serve as a recruitment incentive for new or certified officers interested in continuing their careers beyond retirement.

**ITEM ADDED TO THE AGENDA**

On a motion by Commissioner Bingham, seconded by Commissioner Cogswell, the Board voted unanimously to add an item to the agenda for purpose of taking action regarding the establishment of a supernumerary officer program for the Torrington Police Department.

**APPROVAL OF SUPERNUMERARY OFFICER PROGRAM**

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Cogswell, the Board voted unanimously to approve Chief Baldwin's proposal to utilize supernumerary police to fill extra duty assignments on an as needed basis, in accordance with his memo dated February 2, 2021.

Commissioner Bingham asked if any retired officers had expressed their interest in serving as a supernumerary and Commissioner Benedetto requested clarification regarding the hiring process. Chief Baldwin reported that one individual already expressed interest and he explained that the retired certified officers could be moved into the supernumerary role without going through the typical hiring process.

Chief Baldwin also reported that two officers were on track to complete their field training on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, he provided an update on the examination of officers for promotion, discussed the anticipated impact that the Police Accountability Bill could have on the TPD budget and reported on manpower shortages that resulted from COVID-related illnesses and exposures. In addition, the Chief thanked Deputy Chief Tripp, Chief Towey and Trinity for their help with multiple incidents that occurred during the month of January, including a bomb threat at Bachi's Ristorante Bar & Grill, a fire at A&R Auto Body and a toxic chemical incident at the police headquarters.

Chief Towey thanked the Board for their support of the fire apparatus purchase and thanked the firefighters and VRAB for their research into the demo unit. He also notified the Board that he was seeking grant opportunities and working on assistance for firefighters grant applications.

Deputy Chief Tripp thanked the TAHD for providing COVID-19 vaccinations and the Community Health and Wellness center for their support with testing.

Trinity Health EMS Manager Jeff Ganung reported that Torrington received its 2<sup>nd</sup> new ambulance and he notified the Board that 6 new Chevy Tahoe fly-cars were being built.

**BUSINESS BY THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

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

Commissioner Cogswell requested information regarding the public safety impact of the winter weather that struck the state on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Chief Baldwin reported that the TPD was in contact with the Street Dept. Manager and one of the parking attendants was assigned to sidewalk enforcement to make sure the sidewalks were clear of snow. Chief Towey described the city-wide coordination efforts that take place during winter and extreme weather events and reported that the most recent storm did not cause any major issues.

Commissioner Bingham thanked Chief Baldwin and the TPD for their response to an intoxicated driver incident at the complex where he lives.

Commissioner Battle requested an update on the preparation of a letter and discussions with state legislators regarding the Police Accountability Bill. Mayor Carbone provided an update and clarified that a draft of the letter would be coming to the Board for their review.

Commissioner McElroy thanked the volunteer fire departments, the TPD, the TFD and Trinity for all that they do to keep the City safe.

Commissioner McLeod thanked Chief Baldwin and Chief Towey for their transparency and open communication.

Mayor Carbone provided an update on the budget process and reported that Chief Towey and Chief Baldwin submitted their budgets to the City's Finance Department. She also encouraged everyone to check out the new brewery that opened up at the old firehouse.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Bingham, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:52 p.m.

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

ATTEST: *Carol L. Anderson*  
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC  
CITY CLERK