

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Public Safety was held in the City Hall Auditorium on Wednesday, March 4, 2020. Those in attendance included Mayor Elinor Carbone and Commissioners Dustin Bingham, Joseph McElroy, Douglas Benedetto, Robert Conforti, Darlene Battle and Glenn McLeod. Also present were Police Chief William Baldwin, Traffic Operations Unit Supervisor Steven Pisarski, Fire Chief Peter Towey, Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp, Trinity Health EMT Mark Zarrella, Harwinton Westside VFD Chief Scott Kellogg and Charlotte Hungerford Hospital EMS and emergency management personnel Fred Rosa and Paul Rabeuf.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **MINUTES**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Bingham, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held February 5, 2020.

#### **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.

Nicholas Tella opposed the parking meters downtown and stated that they hurt businesses.

Fred Rosa provided an update regarding COVID-19 and informed that Board that Charlotte Hungerford Hospital is prepared to address the virus should it come to CT.

Steven Cloutier questioned whether there would be an Executive Session regarding his employment with the Torrington Police Department.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION TABLED**

On a motion by Commissioner Bingham, seconded by Commissioner McElroy, the Board voted unanimously to table agenda items four through six, regarding an Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of an employee, specifically concerning discussion of alternative employment/retirement actions for Police Officer Cloutier.

#### **2019 FEMA GRANT PROGRAM**

Chief Towey provided an overview of the two regional projects for which the TFD applied for funding through the 2019 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. He explained that the grants are competitive and applying as regional entities could increase their likelihood of being awarded the grants.

Commissioners Benedetto, Bingham, Conforti and Battle requested clarification regarding the costs to the City if the applications get approved. Chief Towey explained that the ten percent maximum cost-share for the Regional Communications Project would be \$47,010.60 for the TFD, \$3,500 for Drakeville VFD and \$4,600 for Torrington VFD, while the maximum cost-share for the SCBA/EAS Project would be \$10,000 for the TFD and \$8,010.35 for each VFD. He further explained that the TFD has \$45,000 in capital reserves to put toward the projects.

Commissioner McLeod expressed concern that more SCBA packs were not purchased previously and Commissioner Bingham questioned whether the VFDs would be able to cover their cost-share for the projects. Commissioner Benedetto asked Harwinton Westside VFD Chief Kellogg if he approved of the Regional Communications Project and Chief Kellogg expressed his support for joining Torrington in the grant application. Commissioner Bingham questioned whether the projects would result in insurance savings and Chief Towey stated that overall safety would improve but he could not guarantee a direct benefit to insurance costs.

**Regional Communications Project:** On a motion by Commissioner Bingham, seconded by Commissioner McElroy, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the City of Torrington Fire Department, the Drakeville Volunteer Fire Department and the Torrington Volunteer Fire Department to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Harwinton Westside Volunteer Fire Department for a Regional Communications project (RCP) with funding through the 2019 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

**Regional Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and Electronic Accountability System Project:** On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Bingham, the Board voted unanimously to authorize the City of Torrington Fire Department to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Drakeville Volunteer Fire Department and the Torrington Volunteer Fire Department for a Regional Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and Electronic Accountability System Project (SCBA/EAS) with funding through the 2019 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

#### **PARKING ENFORCEMENT DISCUSSION**

Chief Baldwin explained the benefits of parking meters and enforcement downtown, including revenue and supporting businesses by keeping traffic moving. Commissioner McLeod asked how the money from parking meters is collected and Officer Pisarski explained the process and security protocols by which the Traffic Division collects and counts the money. Mayor Carbone reminded the Board that the State began imposing a 6.35% tax on parking fees and discussed the benefits of parking enforcement on businesses.

Chief Baldwin also informed the Board that he will be proposing an increase to the administrative fee that the TPD charges construction companies for traffic maintenance at extra duty road jobs.

**POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Police Chief's report. Commissioner Benedetto expressed his concerns regarding overtime and questioned whether the P.A.L. officer's regular work schedule could be adjusted to reduce overtime. Chief Baldwin explained that would not be possible because Officer Simon serves the TPD in a number of capacities beyond the P.A.L. program.

**TRAFFIC OPERATIONS UNIT REPORTS**

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

**FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

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

**DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

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

**TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT**

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

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

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

**FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT**

On a motion by Commissioner Battle, seconded by Commissioner Conforti, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Fire Marshal's report.

**EMS PROVIDER ACTIVITY REPORT**

On a motion by Commissioner Conforti, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, 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 McElroy, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Volunteer Fire Departments. Drakeville VFD Chief Maccalous clarified that Drakeville's cost-share for the FEMA grant projects would need to come out of the VFD's savings, which will shorten the amount of time that the Department can stay open without additional funding. He also stated that the Drakeville VFD was not included in the previous purchase of SCBA bottles. Commissioner Bingham asked whether the VFDs would require additional training if the City is awarded the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters grants and Chief Maccalous stated that training would be necessary.

**BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS**

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

Chief Baldwin addressed Commissioner McElroy's concerns regarding signage for the firehouse and reported that the incorrect and outdated road signs were replaced. He also commended TPD officers for participating in the St. Jude telethon, announced that the P.A.L. Cops and Coaches basketball game was a success, reported on an incident in which shots were fired at Franklin Drive, and informed the Board that another officer decided to leave the TPD to pursue a different career. Commissioner McLeod expressed his concerns regarding police officers' benefits and salaries.

Chief Towey commented on the incident at Burr Pond on February 23, 2020 in which ice fisherman were rescued from the freezing waters and thanked the first responders involved. He also announced that there will be a sheltering exercise with the Red Cross on May 2, 2020, expressed his appreciation for the firefighters who participated in the St. Jude telethon, announced that the statewide written exam for prospective firefighters would take place on March 14, 2020, and informed the Board that the Stop the Bleed campaign would continue into Torrington schools. In addition, Chief Towey and Mr. Rabeuf reported on emergency preparedness for the COVID-19 virus.

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


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

Commissioner Bingham thanked Chief Towey for reaching out to him to explain the MOUs for the 2019 FEMA Grant Program. Commissioner McElroy reported that he attended the air management training for the Drakeville and Tarringford VFDs and expressed his appreciation for the firefighters who helped save lives at Burr Pond. Commissioner Benedetto thanked Lt. Johnson for stopping the spread of false information online regarding an incident at Franklin Drive. Commissioner Conforti thanked Chief Maccalous for the information he provided and congratulated the TFD for their response to the incident at Burr Pond. Commissioner McLeod expressed his appreciation for the open communication from the TFD and TPD and Commissioner Battle agreed. Lastly, Mayor Carbone expressed her appreciation to the Board for withholding email responses to each other outside of regular meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:53 p.m.

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

ATTEST:   
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC  
CITY CLERK