

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the Board of Public Safety was held on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. Attendance was in person and by Zoom. Present at the City Hall Auditorium were Mayor Elinor Carbone, Commissioners Molly Spino, Joe McElroy, Doug Benedetto, Gregg Cogswell, Glenn McLeod, and Darlene Battle, Fire Chief Eric Borden, Deputy Fire Chief Tripp, Police Chief William Baldwin, Deputy Police Chief Bart Barown, Trinity Health EMS Manager Jeff Ganung, and Fleet Manager Emil Castro. Drakeville Fire Chief Mike Whittaker joined via Zoom.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Paul Rabeuf representing the Torrington Lions Club, wanted to thank the Torrington Police K-9 Officers for coming to a meeting and explaining what the K-9s did for the community. He also wanted to thank the Police and Fire Departments for their partnership with the Lions Club over the years.

Commissioner Battle arrived at 6:32 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Spino, the Board voted to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from October 4, 2023. Commissioner Cogswell abstained.

COMPLETION OF PROBATIONARY PERIODS

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept Officers Kyle Rickevicius and Joseph Rubino as regular members of the Torrington Police Department, after successfully completing their probationary period effective October 30, 2023.

SUPERCAB COMPACT PICKUP – TFD

On a motion by Commissioner McLeod, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board voted to authorize the Mayor to award, execute, and administer the purchase contract of a 2024 Ford Maverick, or equivalent from Litchfield Ford of Litchfield, CT in the amount of \$34,160, funded by the Vehicle Replacement Account, pending City Council approval, as explained in the Purchasing Agent's letter of October 26, 2023. Commissioner Cogswell abstained. Commissioner Benedetto asked why they are not looking at 2023 models, Fleet Manager Emil Castro explained that the City must go by the bid process, and whoever bids is what they must choose from. Unfortunately, the vehicles on the lot are two-wheel drive which is not suitable for the Fire Marshal's position. Commissioner Cogswell asked if the City received any bids from the State Contract approved vendors, Mr. Castro said that Gengras and MHQ are State approved, and the City received no bids from them.

ADD TO AGENDA

On a motion by Commissioner Cogswell, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously to add the Acquisition of Radio Equipment to the Agenda.

RADIO EQUIPMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Cogswell, seconded by Commissioner Benedetto, the Board voted unanimously, contingent on City Council approval, to authorize the Mayor, Chief Baldwin, and Chief Borden to utilize State Contract #19PSX0088 with Marcus Communications and Northeastern Communications (a/k/a NorcomCT) for the acquisition of radio equipment for integration with the Connecticut Telecommunications System CLMRN (Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network) as itemized on the attached quotes. Funding is to be provided by ARPA funds which had been previously approved by the City Council. Chief Baldwin explained that the Police Department's radios are over 10 years old, are outdated, and hard to find parts for. He said moving on the State system is more feasible, the State will maintain the towers and transmissions, but the Police Department will still have to maintain the equipment. Commissioner McLeod asked why the Board was just getting the request, Chief Baldwin said that it is a slow-moving process with the State and the goal is to get the entire City on State radios. Mayor Carbone said that the State will be putting a new tower in the City with funds that were passed at the last legislative session, this should help with transmission. Deputy Fire Chief Tripp added they decided on Norcom because it works well with their mobiles.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT: APPROVED

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Spino, the Board voted unanimously to accept Police Chief Baldwin's report for September 2023. Commissioner Benedetto asked why the parking ticket fines were so high, Deputy Police Chief Barown said that they have a new system in place that won't allow people who have past-due parking tickets to register their vehicles. At this point, they are still inputting all the individuals who have past-due parking tickets, so that number should start to go down.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT: APPROVED

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept Fire Chief Borden's report for September 2023.

EMS PROVIDER ACTIVITY REPORT: APPROVED

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to accept the EMS provider activity report for September 2023.

BUSINESS BY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Spino, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by the Volunteer Fire Departments. Drakeville Fire Chief Mike Whittaker shared the Department's ongoing efforts to recruit new volunteers. He also told the Board that Drakeville will be holding the annual Christmas Tree burn on January 15, 2024.

BUSINESS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Spino, the Board voted unanimously to consider business by Department Heads. Police Chief Baldwin, Fire Chief Borden, and EMS Manager Jeff Ganung gave the latest updates from their departments.

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

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

Commissioner Battle congratulated the Officers who completed their probationary period.

Commissioner McLeod asked Chief Borden when it comes to Mutual Aid for other towns, when will City Fire Department become their Fire Department or start charging them, Chief Borden explained that it is not a simple answer because every Department has struggles finding volunteers, but it will be something that they monitor. Commissioner McLeod said once the Policy Committee is established, they can put something in there regarding Mutual Aid. Commissioner Benedetto asked if the City could put some of our Volunteers together to be able to respond to Mutual Aid calls, Chief Borden said that our Volunteer Departments also have the same staffing issues, and it is easier to send a career department who is there and available every day and every night.

Commissioner Cogswell asked about the Yankee Pedlar's fire system and if it would be a quick turnaround if the current owners couldn't meet the deadline and have it pass inspection. Mayor Carbone told him that if the current owners failed to have the fire system installed by the deadline provided by the Court, the property would be turned over to the City, and the fire system would be installed. There is no need for additional hearings. Chief Borden explained to the Board that the fire system that would need to be installed would be a detection system, however, due to the structural damage inside if there was ever a fire, the Fire Department would still be on the defense, not allowed inside. Mayor Carbone stated that it is still a dangerous building.

Commissioner Benedetto asked about the intersection by Planet Fitness and the movie theater and said that he didn't think it was safe, especially for tractor-trailers. Deputy Police Chief Barown told him that the best person to contact regarding the changes would be Sergeant Baldis. Mayor Carbone explained to the Board that City Engineer Paul Kundzins oversaw the design for this intersection. They also tested with the plows and Fire Department to ensure the Trucks would be able to maneuver the intersection. This is not permanent; they are just testing it currently. Commissioner Benedetto also said that Torrington's Halloween Hoopla Friday night was a great event.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK