

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday February 12, 2020
Taftville Volunteer Fire Department
134 Providence Street, Taftville
7:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Alderman Mark Bettencourt and Alderman Joseph A. DeLucia.

Committee Members Absent: Alderman William Nash

Administration and Staff Present: Mayor Peter Nystrom, City of Norwich; Captain Jim Veiga, Norwich Police Department; Eric McDermott, Norwich Public Utilities; Robert Rautio and Colin Sagan, American Ambulance.

Volunteer/Central Fire Departments and Others: Taftville Chief Timothy Jencks, Assistant Chief William Hadam, Lieutenant Charles Miclette and Brian Hubbard; Norwich Chief Keith Wucik; East Great Plain Deputy Chief Jerry Verant; Occum Chief Carroll Spaulding; Laurel Hill: Deputy Chief Pete Clark and Michael Carlos; and Yantic Chief Frank Blanchard.

Citizens Present: Joanne Philbrick

I. **Call to Order and Quorum:** Alderman DeLucia called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. There was a quorum present.

II. **Approval of Minutes: Minutes of Wednesday January 8, 2020**

Alderman DeLucia motioned, seconded by Alderman Bettencourt, to approve the Wednesday January 8, 2020 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **Correspondence:** None.

Alderman Bettencourt made a motion to suspend rules and add New Business agenda item E. New Radios for Apparatus to the agenda. Alderman DeLucia seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Citizen Comment:** Joanne Philbrick of 10 Elm Avenue, Norwich stated she was conflicted as to the additions to the bond presented at the last meeting so she wished to get clarification as the City comptroller told her the additions to the trucks take away from communications funding. Joanne Philbrick also wished to know why Yantic fire trucks do not have City of Norwich insignia on them.

V. **Old Business:**

a. **Apparatus/ Equipment Financing:**

- i. **Yantic E-31:** Chief Frank Blanchard referred the citizen comment to go to the City Purchaser as Chief Blanchard stated he has reached out to Mr. Hathaway in purchasing to get a decal for the City of Norwich added to the truck and is waiting to hear back. Chief Blanchard added there has never been the City of Norwich wording on Yantic trucks in the past however the City manager asked it to be addressed. Chief Case added in the 60s there had been town seal on every City vehicle but didn't believe it was ever regulated. Chief Blanchard stated E-31 was placed into service that past Saturday.
- ii. **Taftville E-21:** Chief Timothy Jencks stated E-21 had been in service the past two weeks and already assisted with a fire.
- iii. **Taftville Squad Rescue:** Chief Jencks stated the body is complete with buffing being done currently so they are on target for their April 1st delivery date.
- iv. **Laurel Hill:** Captain Pete Clark reported a delivery date of February 19th with radios coming in on 24th and 25th of the month. Captain Clark stated after install the department would begin training and expect to get it into service within a month.
- v. **East Great Plain:** Deputy Chief Jerry Verant stated ET51 is scheduled for delivery mid-March truck committee would be going out for final inspection soon. Deputy Chief Verant reported last the department heard the cabin chase is complete and the body is manufactured so the next step is priming and painted before the body installation.

b. **2019 Fire Apparatus Study Update:** Alderman DeLucia City Manager Salomone was unable to attend and checked with the Chiefs on updates. Chief Frank Blanchard stated a Chiefs Meeting was scheduled for the end of and the report was an agenda item however no progress had been made so far. Chief Blanchard noted there had only had one meeting since September with Mr. Salomone where it was discussed.

c. **IMC Bridge Progress Update:** Chief Keith Wucik stated his understanding is that Leon Barnowski in IT is troubleshooting remaining issues on the police side otherwise the NPD system is up and running so IT is now transitioning into rest of IMC project. Chief Wucik said he knows

Leon was attempting get in contact with Emergency Reporting to get the other half of the IMC Bridge completed.

VI. **New Business:**

a. **Road Closure Advisory Protocols:** Alderman DeLucia reported the issue of road closure advisory protocols was brought up at the Public Works meeting director and Mr. McLaughlin did researched the issue. Alderman DeLucia said it appeared that the correct advisory protocols were already in place and in response to the citizen comment at the last Public Safety Meeting he does not believe a Public Works member needs to be in attendance at the Public Safety Meeting as long as communication is in place. Alderman DeLucia added there may need to be revisions of who is advised of closings by updating the email list. Chief Blanchard stated Public Works had reached out to him about updating participation so there has been follow-through. Chief Blanchard added in regards to the Sunnyside Bridge Project discussed at the last meeting that the project is moving forward April 15th and should have a six-month duration, aside from any issues.

b. **Department Updates:**

- i. **NPU Update:** Eric McDermott reported NPU is currently developing annual training for gas and electric systems for fire and police so they would be reaching out to department representatives and asked that they meet after the next month's Public Safety Meeting to walk through training items. Eric McDermott said NPU is coordinating with Norwich Fire Department to provide a facility for confined space training and invited other departments to reach out to them if needed.
- ii. **Emergency Management:** Chief Keith Wucik reported no weather events and that EOC's and SOG's had been completed. Chief Wucik stated EM is working with City MIS and police to create a cyber-security plan for the City.
- iii. **American Ambulance:** Operations Director Robert Rautio reported 699 emergencies, 252 advance life support calls, 441 basic life support calls for January 2020. Director Rautio stated sick person, general breathing problems, psychiatric, fall and chest pain were the top five categories for call responses. Director Robert Rautio stated three new ambulances were put in service and parked

in Norwich. Director Rautio stated American Ambulance is in talks with regional IMT and local fire departments to update their Salamander Identification System.

- iv. **Norwich Police Department:** Captain Jim Veiga reported 3,387 calls for service and 168 arrests for the month of January. Captain Veiga stated NPD has one dispatcher in training and are holding reviews for a second dispatchers as well as holding reviews for officers as they are now down two or three. Captain Veiga stated the four new cruisers had been ordered with the bids awarded to the same company NPD has done business with in the past.
- v. **Firehouse Status Updates:**
 - **Taftville:** Chief Timothy Jencks reported 58 calls for the past month with mutual aid received one time and provided three. Chief Jencks stated he had been working with the City's HR on current training for new members and he met with the Opioid Task Force to see how Taftville can lend a hand. Chief Jencks stated Taftville is in the process of reviewing pre-plans and run cards. Chief Jencks stated their new engine is in service with the decommissioned engine going to the City garage the following day. Chief Jencks stated Taftville has five members who all passed state EMR training last month and picked up some new members.
 - **East Great Plain:** Deputy Chief Jerry Verant reported 77 calls for the month of January as well as routine apparatus maintenance. Deputy Chief Verant stated EGP is also updating run cards and sent a training notice out to the chiefs for trainings on the 14th and 15th of the month. Deputy Chief Verant reported one member in Firefighter 1 and one in EMT training and added that EGP is looking at quotes to get the firehouse re-sided.
 - **Occum:** Chief Carroll Spaulding reported 12 calls for the past month, 2 mutual aid calls, 4 members taking EMT courses, two new members into EMT school and one member into fire EMT instructor training. Chief Spaulding stated Occum's training budget is depleted but the comptroller was able to find some funding for the time being. Chief Spaulding let the departments know the bridge on Route 97 between Norwich and Baltic will be closed briefly sometime in April.

- **Yantic:** Chief Frank Blanchard reported membership at 60 with 56 calls for the past month and training for February to focus on annual certifications. Chief Blanchard stated NPD would be coming to the firehouse for a presentation on crime scene management and he would follow up with NPU regarding confined space training. Chief Blanchard stated the new Engine 31 would be in service soon with the old Engine 31 being decommissioned and sent to the City garage. Chief Blanchard reported their budget is on task however they did have a failure that night on an overhead door which was currently being repaired and the doors have been in their budget for replacement. Chief Blanchard stated two members had completed Fire 2 in the past month with two more enrolled in Eastern CT Fire School for Fire 1 and Fire 2. Chief Blanchard stated he also met with the Opioid Task Force and was contacted by DEEP in regards to reviewing protocols and response procedures for US Foods which is required every 10 years. Chief Blanchard stated it is still in progress and he would have more information in the future but Yantic was working with individuals to host a CMCI drill at Dodd Stadium in November.
 - **Laurel Hill:** Deputy Chief Pete Clark reported one member had graduated Fire 1 in the past month and three new members who had signed on. Deputy Chief Clark stated their new truck would be delivered on the 19th so they were currently preparing training.
 - **Norwich:** Chief Keith Wucik reported 201 calls in the past month and that the new fire fighter particulate hoods had arrived. Chief Wucik stated critical needs include the Squad replacement and that NFD had conducted mayday training for all four platoons and addressed some communication problems that were discovered. Chief Wucik stated NFD was also working with the Opioid Task Force to create a GIS system to track opioid responses.
- c. **Decommissioning of replaced and out-of-service Fire Apparatus:** Alderman DeLucia stated he added the agenda item due to the Sunnyside Bridge discussion last month. Chief Frank Blanchard updated their plan is for the City garage to store the old Engine 31 until the bridge project is underway then place the Engine on the other side of the

bridge with air packs and water in case of emergency as it should only be needed for two or three months during a warmer weather season. Alderman DeLucia stated his question is if there is a protocol to follow when apparatus are decommissioned. Chief Timothy Jencks answered there is; everything usable radios, etc. are removed from the trucks and if the apparatus is expected to be outdoors there is a winterization process at the City garage. Chief Jencks stated there isn't anything in writing but a general understanding and there have also been times where other departments adopted older vehicles from other departments. Chief Blanchard stated historically it is included in the bid for the truck manufacturer to remove the vehicle for a cost if there is not ability for repurposing. Chief Blanchard stated for this previous bid there was not a trade in value for the trucks so they will likely be sold at auction, scrapped or parted out.

Alderman DeLucia made a motion to amend New Business agenda item D from Motor Vehicle Traffic Enforcement to the Norwich Police Department 2019 Crime Report Update. Alderman Bettencourt seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Alderman DeLucia said the Motor Vehicle item would be brought up at the April Public Safety Meeting.

- d. **Norwich Police Department 2019 Crime Report Update:** Captain Jim Veiga discussed the NPD 2019 Crime Report and highlighted various statistics. Captain Veiga stated crimes reported to the FBI include murder, rape, assault, larceny and motor vehicle theft and highlighted those numbers from 2019 to 2018 opposed to the previous 16 years. Captain Veiga reported 25 rapes in 2019 versus 35 in 2018, 22 robberies in 2019 versus 28 in 2018; 98 assaults in 2019 versus 45 in 2018; 103 burglaries in 2019 versus 83 in 2018; 365 larcenies in 2019 versus 356 in 2018; 51 motor vehicle thefts in 2019 versus 42 in 2018; and 145 serious crimes in 2019 versus 108 in 2018. Captain Veiga stated a major drive in the increase of burglaries is due to a rash or several car burglaries but otherwise compared to the past 16 years it appears the numbers are trending towards results from a decade prior.
- e. **New radios for apparatus:** Alderman DeLucia stated it came to his attention that the cost for outfitting the five new trucks with communications equipment would total \$182,000 so he wished to discuss what is involved with that price. Chief Frank Blanchard stated the radios being purchases are needed for the firefighters to do their jobs and should have been included in the original bid but were removed by City purchasing. Chief Blanchard said dual band radios are required to

communicate with various neighboring departments and with other departments within the City. Chief Carroll Spaulding stated Occum received a quote from a local vendor for \$12,000 for radios for the Squad and \$15,000 per each low band radio in the trucks. Chief Timothy Jencks nationally a switch is being made away from low band systems. Alderman DeLucia stated it puts the overall cost at just over 3 million dollars for the five trucks including the additional add-ons and expressed his concerns with going over the approved 3.2 million dollar bond with the remaining three trucks.

VII. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020 – NFD Headquarters

VIII. **Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Alderman Bettencourt seconded by Alderman DeLucia, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:57 pm

*Respectfully Submitted,
Katherine Rose*