

## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Wednesday September 11, 2019  
Taftville Volunteer Fire Department  
134 Providence Street, Taftville.  
7:00 PM

**Committee Members Present:** Alderman William Nash, Alderman Joseph A. DeLucia.

**Committee Members Absent:** None.

**Administration and Staff Present:** Mayor Peter Nystrom, Alderwoman Stacy Gould and City Manager John Salomone, City of Norwich; Chief Patrick Daly and Lieutenant Timothy Rykowski, Norwich Police Department; Eric McDermott, Norwich Public Utilities; and Glen Aremony; American Ambulance.

**Volunteer/Central Fire Departments and Others:** Taftville Chief Timothy Jencks, Assistant Chief William Hadam, Deputy Chief Tom Jencks, Charles Miclette and Scott Boenig; Norwich Battalion Chief Keith Wucik and Ryan Flaherty; East Great Plain Deputy Chief Rich Huntley; Occum Chief Carroll Spaulding; Laurel Hill Chief Aaron Westervelt; and Yantic Chief Frank Blanchard, Chris Colenair, Bill Hayes and Ron Stolz.

**Citizens Present:** Joanne Philbrick.

**Call to Order and Quorum:** Alderman Nash called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. There was a quorum present.

**Approval of Minutes: Minutes of Wednesday June 12th, 2019.**

Alderman Nash motioned, seconded by Alderman DeLucia, to approve the Wednesday August 13, 2019 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Citizen Comment:** Joanne Philbrick of Elm Street, Norwich stated she was in attendance as a citizen due to resigning at the last City Council meeting. Joanne Philbrick stated she resigned for a number of reasons and due to a lot of things she witnessed in the City of Norwich. Joanne Philbrick stated while serving on the Council she received little cooperation from various department heads and members of the City of Norwich and was treated with much disrespect. Joanne Philbrick stated she could no longer put up with the harassment and at the recommendation of her doctor chose to resign. Joanne Philbrick stated while she will no longer be attending city council meetings her first concern has always been public safety and she will continue to raise concern over issues that arise. Joanne Philbrick wished to state that Central Fire has always treated her kindly

and visited her while she was in physical rehabilitation and also received flowers from both Yantic and Taftville departments which was a complete surprise to her and for which she was very grateful. Joanne Philbrick stated she will continue to do whatever is in her power to support the fire departments as a citizen and thanked all departments for their service to the city. Joanne Philbrick stated the fire departments do not get the recognition and respect that they deserve.

## **Old Business:**

**Apparatus/ Equipment Financing:** City Manager John Salomone reported inspections are set for Taftville for the end of next month. Chief Timothy Jencks added that the engine is being and the body is being built with inspection hopefully planned for the end of October and the truck in service by Thanksgiving. Chief Jencks stated the Rescue truck cab began production as well as the chase but no other updates. Chief Frank Blanchard of Yantic reported they are on the same schedule as Taftville with a mid-October, potential November delivery date. Alderman Nash asked for an updated on the IMC Bridge to which John Salomone stated it is not complete but he did not have any new updates since the last time they had spoken. Alderman DeLucia asked for the IMC Bridge to be on the next Public Safety Meeting agenda and made a motion for the City Manager to put together a write-up explaining what hurdles are standing in the way of the completion of the IMC bridge and the financial impact those hurdles have created. Alderman Nash seconded and specified he would like to have it by the upcoming Monday.

## **New Business:**

**Norwich Public Utilities Update** – Eric McDermott reported water heights are currently 4.2” inches deep river, 2.8” at Stony Brook and all hydrant flushing in the low zones is complete with Yantic area scheduled for the upcoming week, business zone the following and Occum area last. Eric McDermott stated the hydrant flushing should be totally complete by mid-October. Eric McDermott asked departments to notify them in advance of any drilling activity and that NPU is actively working with the Police Chief on a grant for their generator.

**Emergency Management:** Keith Wucik stated he is acting Chief while Chief Montoya is deployed. Chief Wucik reported Emergency Management is currently working on electrical and efficiency upgrades with a few upcoming trainings planned.

**American Ambulance:** Glen Aremony reported American Ambulanced ordered four more replacement ambulances with delivery scheduled for November.

**Norwich Police Department:** Chief Patrick Daly reported 169 criminal arrests in the past month along with 124 vehicle accidents. Chief Daly stated they have one recruit in the academy now, another coming off field training in November and another potential candidate for the academy which will assist with current understaffing. Chief Daly stated they have been working with NPU on a grant in attempts to replace the Police Department generator which is 40 years old and had extended outage issues this past June. Alderman Nash asked if the Police Department has received any quotes yet to which Chief Daly stated they have not.

### **Firehouse Status Updates:**

**Taftville:** Chief Timothy Jencks reported 55 calls since the last meeting, 19 of those overlapping and some including mutual aid. Chief Jencks stated he met with the Fire Marshall on Mill 2 and new approach as far as placing the apparatus and that site work for Mill 2 is starting. Chief Jencks reported all overhead doors in the firehouse have been serviced and all alarms serviced on the electrical doors. Chief Jencks said they have continued working with Police on the juvenile review board this past month and with lighting at several serious motor vehicle accidents. Chief Jencks stated Taftville is part of the County Tanker Task Force and are currently revamping things to make the Task Force more convenient and useful. Chief Timothy Jencks reported Taftville was able to get an upgraded exhaust motor in the firehouse bay due to a mishap on the manufacturer's part. Chief Jencks stated firehouse needs include parking lot expansion and they plan to be working on a design phase for replacing the Ansul System in the kitchen that they can bring up during budget season.

**East Great Plain:** Deputy Chief Rich Huntley reported EGP responded to 88 emergencies in the past month including a fatal tractor trailer rollover which had them on scene for eight hours along with Yantic. Deputy Chief Huntley stated regular trainings were held and they gained two new members. Deputy Chief Huntley reported regular maintenance on apparatuses however Ladder 5 is still out of service indefinitely. Deputy Chief Huntley also stated pump and ladder testing were completed with some issues occurring during pump testing and Chief Milton wished him to announce they will be holding EMR classes over the weekends at the end of October and to contact him if interested.

**Occum:** Chief Carroll Spaulding reported 31 members along with new applicants and 117 over the past month. Chief Spaulding said he is working with the existing budget and currently has four members in EMT school with another five planning to attend CUE class to become drivers. Chief Spaulding stated upcoming events include their open house on September 28<sup>th</sup> and their Chicken BBQ on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Chief Spaulding reported both trucks went down for valve issues which were repaired along with a repair to

the ladder on Engine 42. Chief Spaulding stated the Scotland Road overpass is back open and the tow hoses are being connected back through to the reinstalled hydrants in Baltic with milling scheduled to occur in the next two weeks and paving to follow. Chief Spaulding also stated that Engine 41 has been put on the Tanker Task Force.

**Yantic:** Chief Frank Blanchard reported 39 calls for service in the past month with six being mutual aid, 11 back-to-back, and nine of the calls involving 20 minutes or more on scene. Chief Blanchard stated membership is still at 60 and have water supply and confined space trainings scheduled for the month. Chief Blanchard stated the work at the station for the Fire Marshall Abatement is underway with Phase 1, the fire escape, having begun about two weeks prior and concrete footings poured that day. Chief Blanchard stated steel is set to go up in the next twenty days and are still awaiting pricing on phase two but are still about 83,000 dollars short to complete the entire project. Chief Blanchard reported they are in need of funding for the first floor A/C unit and for a design solution to remove the underground oil tank as it expires in 2020.

Alderman DeLucia asked for an approximation of the cost of Phase 1 of the Fire Marshall Abatement. Chief Blanchard responded about 106,000 dollars with the whole bid accepted by the city about 340,000 dollars.

**Laurel Hill:** Chief Aaron Westervelt stated pump and ladder testing was completed and caused their pump to be down for a few days. Chief Westervelt reported the delivery of Pump 61 has been pushed back as International Chasse was unable to deliver at the previously scheduled time and are now predicting the first or second week of December. Chief Westervelt stated the firehouse has begun two new projects with the first being concrete and asphalt replacement around the firehouse and then in the following month or so the exhaust system and dehumidifier.

**Norwich:** Chief Keith Wucik reported 193 calls in the last month with a 20 percent overlap and Norwich currently has one new recruit in the academy. Chief Wucik stated they are still running short on equipment as their Fire Marshall vehicle has been out of service for four month and the city garage does not believe the second Fire Marshall vehicle will last much longer. Chief Wucik reiterated that their needs include the replacement of the Fire Marshall vehicle along with Squad A and the windows in the firehouse.

**Other:**

**a. Community Survey Results:** Chief Patrick Daly stated about seven months prior the Norwich Police Department released a community survey and now have the results available. Lieutenant Timothy Rykowski introduced himself and stated he is the evening shift supervisor at NPD but was also assigned with the task of managing the community survey project. Lieutenant Rykowski distributed copies of the survey results and discussed seven questions he found relevant in relation to community to police communications, response time, and other matters. Alderwoman Stacy Gould asked how many responded did they receive to which Lieutenant Rykowski responded 150 which the National Police Foundation felt was average. Alderman DeLucia suggested seeing if the school system could assist in getting a future survey out to parents. Lieutenant agreed and stated NPD is also planning to provide flyers to officers for distribution when the survey opens back up around the beginning of October.

**Fire Department Report Review:** City Manager John Salomone distributed copies of the report summary and stated in November 2017 the Norwich voters approved a bond for five trucks and in 2019 purchase orders were issued. City Manager Salomone stated in February 2019 the City asked him to perform a needs analysis and make a future replacement schedule so in the past few months he has been meeting with the chiefs to develop standards for the existing and future equipment in order to systemize the selection of equipment. John Salomone stated the standards were developed based on various factors from the condition of the apparatus to the replacement cost and from there categorized years of useful service from 1-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-15 years, 15 years plus and 20 years plus with aerial trucks on a longer schedule as they have more use for life. City Manager Salomone stated a spreadsheet was put together displaying how all major apparatuses in the City could be replaced which would include the original bond issue in 2017 and an additional 3.4 million bond issue of working capital. City Manager Salomone continued that the idea would be to put aside funds each year so that future bond issues would not be required and to have a capital contribution line item in the capital budget for the next 20 years. John Salomone said when he originally arrived at this number he shared it with the chiefs and expressed his disappointment and belief that it was too high an amount to support a capital contribution on a yearly basis so he continued to run difference scenarios with varying truck replacements in order to come to a middle ground amount that he could bring to the Council for consideration. John Salomone stated if the City were to fund all but five trucks over the next 20 years it would come to about 600,000 dollars per year or 22 percent of the capital budget which he stated was still high but a reduction from his original finding. John Salomone reiterated the original amount was 3.4 million and so with a reduction of five trucks a smaller bond issue of 2 million would be required but it would be the only bond issue

needed. City Manager Salomone reported he made a recommendation to the Council of eliminating five vehicles over the next 20 years as they become obsolete but a determination would still need to be made on what vehicles are replaced. City Manager Salomone stated with fewer vehicles the departments would need to alter run cards and mutual aid situations but that part of the study could be done during the implementation phase. John Salomone said the Council would need to make a decision during the next year's budget process and could chose to add more than 2 million to the capital budget but they cannot go lower than 2 percent of what the operating budget is for the City. John Salomone added that the lease purchases for some of the equipment will be completed in 2020 which will free up some money in the budget but there is still the 2.8 million in bond issues that need to be considered over the next 15-20 years. City Manager Salomone said he felt that 20 percent of the capital budget based at 2 million is a challenging goal but could be accomplished opposed to fully funding the apparatus which would be about 850,000 dollars per year in addition to the bond issue for the five additional trucks. John Salomone said within the study there are spreadsheets that break down the replacement options from replacing one truck to all five with assumption of 2.5 percent inflation rate. City Manager Salomone said that he did regret releasing the Report to the Council before showing it to the chiefs but it was an issue of timing. City Manager Salomone ended by stating there is not an easy solution short of fully funding all apparatuses but with the rising mill rate it may not be an option.

Alderman DeLucia stated he review the report and had several observations and questions. Alderman DeLucia stated first there is no mention of Norwich Fire Department apparatus replacement considerations and how they fit into the process as historically it's been described as departments taking turns receiving funds so he would have liked to see what the decision making process was up until now for Norwich Fire receiving trucks when needed. Alderman DeLucia added that there is rubric or criteria listed for the determination of Priority of Replacement, Useful Life, and Remaining Useful Life as the terms are defined but not the process for ranking them. City Manager John Salomone responded that would be the matrix described for the amount of years, number of runs made in those years, the volume of runs, the age of the truck and its condition. Alderman DeLucia continued that the coding of multiple vehicles as 1, 1a, 1a\*\*, etc. is not defined, and suggests that six (6) pieces of fire apparatus are in immediate need of replacement, in addition to the five (5) vehicles already on order and currently under construction. Alderman DeLucia asked if that was a fair assumption to which City Manager Salomone responded it was to a certain extent as there will be some immediate needs over the next 5-10 years as the recent truck purchases do not catch up for 10 years of not making any replacements. Alderman DeLucia responded that statement in itself is a justification to lower the overall fleet by five trucks if the City will already

need to replace 6 more trucks.

Alderman Nash asked if Fleet Maintenance was involved in the report development to which City Manager Salomone stated he provided a general synopsis along with his input and was present at some of the earlier meetings. Alderman Nash responded he was happy to hear of fleet maintenance's involvement in the report but was under the impression that John Raymond was not involved in the negotiations for what truck would be replaced next and feels as though he should be. Alderman Nash added when he was reviewing the matrix he was confused as to why Squad A was not in the top three for replacement when it's been requested for the last twelve years and while he understands from the study that the City is being unsustainable with the ability to purchase fire trucks it is something that needs to be brought under control. Alderman Nash stated the Committee is being asked to push another 2.8 million dollar bond request towards citizens yet he feels the study is complete and appreciates the deadline for the report being met but is aware not all were aware of the five truck reduction. Alderman Nash continued that there is more work to be done so the meetings among the City Manager and chiefs should continue as the survey was a start but is not yet a complete study that can be presented to the Council. Alderman Nash read aloud the following next steps they would like to see accomplished:

- Define and revise the report to include the criteria rubric for Priority of Replacement.
- Define and revise the report to include the criteria for determining the Useful Life of each type of apparatus (engine, tanker, aerial ladder, etc.) and provide the data that supports the criteria.
- Include the Fleet Maintenance Supervisor as a permanent member of this committee.
- Create a separate supplemental list of all of the fire service support vehicles city-wide.
- Create a matrix (or matrices) that ranks the order of replacement from 1 to "x", according to the committee's data-driven determination, and with the input of the Fleet Maintenance Supervisor.
- Prepare a list of five (5) apparatus to be eliminated by attrition and the corresponding revisions to the overall fire response plan and run cards to accommodate that reduction.

Alderman Nash and Alderman DeLucia asked City Manager John Salomone if at the next Chief's Meeting a deadline for an updated report can be established and then relayed back to them at the next Regular Public Safety

Committee Meeting.

**b. 2020 Meeting Schedule:** Alderman Nash made a motion to approve the draft 2020 Public Safety Committee Meeting Schedule. Alderman DeLucia seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Future Agenda Items:**

IMC Bridge

Updated Fire Report Deadline

**Adjournment:** Upon a motion by Alderman DeLucia, seconded by Alderman Nash, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:33 pm

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Katherine Rose*