

**BLUE HILLS FIRE DISTRICT  
MEETING OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
LOCATION: 1021 BLUE HILLS AVENUE  
BLOOMFIELD, CT  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2017  
@ 7:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The monthly meeting of Fire Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and a moment of silence was observed for the purpose of paying respects to Hurricane victims in Texas, The Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico and for the victims of Las Vegas shooting.

**PRESENT** – Present at the meeting was Chair Marzouca Jaunai, Vice Chair Jacqueline Massey Greene, Commissioner Tanya Farmer, Chief Robert Farmer, Fire Marshall Bill Lewis, Interim Director of Finance and Administration, Firefighter Vincent Jaunai, District Clerk Val Thompson and Attorney Patrick McHale.

Chair Marzouca Jaunai made a Statement on expected conduct and decorum at Commission Meetings. The goal is to restore the public trust in this Board and its work. As Chair of this Board, I will run the meetings with decorum and respect, following Roberts Rules of Order. Doing so will allow everyone to be heard so that the Board can make decisions with both public and internal discussion and without confusion.

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to accept the minutes of July 5, 2017, July 26, 2017, and August 4, 2017, with corrections. The motion was seconded by Chair Marzouca Jaunai. The motion carried.

Chair Marzouca Jaunai made a motion to hire Kevin Harrell as a full time firefighter at the Blue Hills Fire District. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Farmer made a motion to accept the memorandum of agreement between the Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association and the Blue Hills Fire District with regarding the assignment of duties previously performed by Assistant Chief Rickis. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Massey Greene. The motion carried unanimously.

**CHIEF'S REPORT:** Chief Farmer stated there were 48 calls in the month of September and two suspicious fires. New software was installed in the apparatus'. The UHF Radio System will be upgrading sometime next year. The cost will be around one Million dollar. Blue Hills Fire District and Bloomfield Center will remain on the UHF Radio System. Blue Hills Fire District may need to share in the cost of maintaining the infrastructure. Chief Farmer received a letter from Captain Fred Nelson outlining his concern for station 1 and station 4 in reference to tampering with the apparatus and personal items. (See captain's report for detailed information). Chief Farmer notified that manpower on the weekends is very low. (See Chief's report for detailed information) Deputy Chief Ray Hansen passed away, a life member of the Blue Hills Fire District. Service will be Saturday, October 14, 2017.

**FIRE MARSHALL' S REPORT:** Fire Marshall Lewis stated that the extension that was given to have the hall brought up to code will expire on Wednesday, October 18, 2017. After the expiration date the hall should

not be used. Chair Marzouca Jaunai stated that she has been working with Captain Nelson to get this done.

**INTERIM DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION REPORT:** Mr. Errol Bartley stated the District's finances are in good standing. Payments for the points check were processed. The point checks are distributed twice yearly in April and in October. Vice Chair Jacqueline Massey Greene wanted to know what is the formula that was used to calculate points. Chief Farmer stated he will email the information to the Board.

**TRAINING REPORT:** Chief Farmer stated that another firefighter has completed firefighter 1 training. State and Federal requirement by OSHA.

**CAPTAIN'S REPORT:** Captain Fred Nelson wrote a letter to the Board of Fire Commissioner and to Chief Farmer, stating his concerns with station 1 and station 4 in reference to tampering with the fire apparatus and personal items. He is recommending that the district installed security camera systems at both fire houses.

**SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT:** Chief Farmer stated the officers will be meeting soon to continue working on the SOG.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH REPORT:** Firefighter Jaunai stated that the six weeks internship program was a great success. Graduation was on August 14, 2017. Special thanks to all who helped make this continuous program a success. Blue Hills Fire Department will be participating in the Boo Bash over at 330 Park Avenue on October 27, 2017.

A motion was made by Commissioner Farmer to approve the department annual outing. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Massey Greene and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Massey Greene to buy nonperishable items for the hurricane victims in the amount of \$500.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farmer and carried unanimously.

**DEPARTMENT CONCERNS/GOOD WELFARE:** Chair Marzouca Jaunai stated that on September 15, 2017, Blue Hills Fire District hosted the annual smoker for both Bloomfield Center Fire Department and Blue Hills Fire Department. The attendance was great. Thanks to all the members who contributed their time to make the Smoker a great success and a special thank you to Safety Officer Vinny Serignese, who prepared the entire menu and Captain Fred Nelson.

The commission discussed who should be developing district rules and procedures. Commissioner Massey Greene made a motion that the Commissioners develop rules and procedures. The motion was seconded by Chair Marzouca Jaunai. Commissioner Farmer opposed. The motion passed by the majority vote.

**CITIZEN STATEMENTS/COMMENTS:**

**Questions Posed:**

What is the dollar amount that was budgeted for the annual outing?

What is the dollar amount that's being contributed to the hurricane victims and why?

What is the work schedule for Kevin Harrell? Is the position union or non-union? What's his salary and was it budgeted for this fiscal year?

Will Assistant Chief Roy Rickis duties be given to another individual?

Why is the retired Assistant Chief receiving \$55,000 of tax payer's money?

**PAYMENT OF INVOICES AND VOUCHERS:** A motion was made by Commissioner Farmer to pay all invoices and vouchers. The motion was seconded and carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Commissioner Farmer to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 P.M. The motion was seconded and carried.

Please note the next meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2017

## Citizen's Questions Submitted and Approved for Answers: November 7, 2017

1. What is the dollar amount that was budgeted for the annual outing?  
\$12,000 was budgeted for the department's special events for our members.
2. What is the dollar amount that's being contributed to the hurricane victims and why?  
\$500.00 was donated to the hurricane victims – approximately \$386.00 was spent on water, and non-perishable items.
3. What is the work schedule for Kevin Harrell? Is the position union or non-union? What's his salary and was it budgeted for this fiscal year?  
Firefighter Harrell's work schedule is 7:30 am – 3:30 pm - 40 hours per week. – it is a union position, his salary is \$22.16 per hour. Yes, it was budgeted for this FY.
4. Will Retired Assistant Chief Roy Rickis duties be given to another individual?  
The duties were shared between Lt. James Davis and Chief Robert Farmer
5. Why is the retired Assistant Chief receiving \$55,000 of tax payer's money?  
The Assistant Chief was a paid employee for over 23 years (worked more than ½ of those years without benefits) and approximately 23 years as a volunteer, for a total of approximately 46 years of service to the Blue Hills Fire District. Approximately 12 years ago a Simple IRA Matching Program was implemented for paid staff, at which time 3% of the Assistant Chief's salary was matched (approximately \$36.00 per week). The majority of the Board believes and voted for this award. His hard work; dedication and diligence have greatly benefited the Blue Hills Fire District and he deserves this service award. The retired Assistant Chief will be paid approximately \$5,000.00 per year for the next 11 years.
6. Accusation of using District Fund to travel to Boston  
The Bus Trip to Boston was not funded by the Fire District. It was funded by the "Back Room" a separate entity from the Blue Hills Fire District, established more than 50 years ago for past and present members of the Blue Hills Fire District. The "Back Room" funds are generated from our rental property, dues and various fundraisers throughout the year. Seven families traveled to Boston, including mine along with Commissioner Farmer and one of her sons.