

BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
June 23, 2020

Minutes of June 23, 2020 Meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission. The meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission convened at 08:30 hours via Zoom meeting with Commissioners Bond, McLaughlin, Perkinson, Sheehey, and Sweeney. Chief Locke and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney were also present.

Meeting End Time

Meeting end time set for 09:00.

Minutes of the February and May Meeting

Motion to accept minutes made by Commissioner Perkinson and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey.

Chief's Oral Report

Chief Locke updated via email prior to the meeting:

The items below are updates on what is happening around the Department.

COVID – What can I say... it has been our life since March, and I am so impressed by our staff. During the first few weeks, we were forced to change policies daily just to keep up with changing guidance. DC Collette managed this process and the Department smoothly, while DC Plante and I worked at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Each of the shift commanders rose to the challenge; leading their shifts and ensuring everyone was safe. The Training Chief and the Fire Marshal adapted to the situation, but still got their work done in an efficient manner. Finally, our Captains, Lieutenants and Firefighters did exactly what they do best; provide high quality care and service to our citizens. I am grateful to work for this group of people.

Fleet – We expect the new ambulance to arrive in July. While we initially planned on it arriving sooner, the COVID crisis pushed back delivery. All other units are in service except for an occasional maintenance issue.

Personnel – We currently have one vacancy due to a resignation. I anticipate a couple retirements in the coming months. We continue to have several people out on various types of leave, but are trying hard to avoid mandatory overtime.

Regional Dispatch – The process has been placed on hold for financial reasons. Each community is working through budget challenges, so there is not funding available right now for the increased start up expense.

Budget – We continue on a budget freeze and are only purchasing items we absolutely need. The City is trying to close a budget shortfall created by loss revenues and every department is under the same guidance.

FY 21 Budget – As you have most likely seen, the Mayor has submitted his FY 21 budget to Council and it is set to be discussed in the coming weeks. The budget does require some shared sacrifices with several reductions. Unless revenues pick up, it will be a very lean year.

Grant – We still have the new Plymo-Vent exhaust system to install. This is another project that has been delayed due to the pandemic. We hope the project will be completed in the coming months.

ISO – As previously reported, we have received our updated ISO rating and improved to a PPC 2 classification. We are the highest rated department in the State.

Arbitration – The Union filed the intent to arbitrate the workers compensation case the Fire Commission ruled on previously. The case was heard in April and just recently, a ruling was made in favor of the Union.

3rd Ambulance – The decision to implement the third ambulance is being discussed with the Union. The Mayor opted not to implement the approved tax increase because of the pandemic, so funding for the additional positions is not in the FY 21 budget. Discussions over the coming days seek to find a solution between the City and the Union.

The Commissioners also asked if the current talk of reducing the police budget would have an impact on the department. While Chief Locke sees the benefit to adding to social programs such as Street Outreach and mental health professionals, there is still a need for the officers to secure scenes for many types of calls.

Old Business/New Business

Commissioners Bond and McLaughlin are up for re-appointment this year. They are both waiting to hear if they are re-appointed.

Commissioner Sweeney has given resignation for his position on the Commission. Chief Locke presented him a Service Award for recognition of all he has done for the department. Commissioner Bond asked if the other commissioners had any ideas of great candidates to recruit and see if there is any interest.

Due to scheduling conflicts that next meeting is being changed from August 4, 2020 to July 28, 2020 remaining at 08:30.

Open Session

Nothing at this time.

Adjourn

With nothing further the meeting adjourned 08:53.