

MINUTES OF THE 897th CORPORATION ANNUAL MEETING November 13, 2023

President Gina Kline called the meeting to order at 19:02
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Present: 51

Membership News:

- Oath of Membership – Rich Nardone and Marcin Rupar
- Returning members – Tom Reller has returned as a member and will be with Company 4. Mike Transue has returned as a member and will be joining the training division.
- Neil Derrik has become a Retired member.
- Service stripes were given out to the following members.

Service Stripes:

- The following members received their service stripes. For 4 years Rylee Bernetich, Jeffrey Borges, and Chip Carpenter. For 8 years Tom Waldeck, For 16 years Diane Delap, and Mark Wilson. For 24 years Brian Baldwin, Dennis Bianchi, and Dave Costill. For 28 years Steve Gottlieb and Kristen Shaw. For 32 years Nancy Crozier and David Theriault. For 52 years Nick Mathein.

Jeff Borges made a motion to accept the September 11th Corporation minutes with Nick Mathein seconding.
Motion passed.

Presidents Report – Gina Kline

- The board approved the proposed Capital Improvement Budget. The following is a breakdown of what is proposed for the 24/25 budget year. \$695,000 which breaks down to \$200,000 for architect for the fire department projects. \$375,000 for initial payment for Tanker 20, \$85,000 new chassis for truck 15 and \$35,000 for new generator at Company 2.
- Fundraising we have received 500 responses to the letter and have so far received \$35,000 in donations.
- Chief Appell still needs members for the Safety Committee.
- The board approved the proposed Operating Budget. The total requested is \$858,000, which is a 3% increase. The board approved consolidating the Corporate budget with the Operations budget which will consist of money for the annual dinner, clambake, and member events such as tickets to the Yard Goats games and the Wolfpack games and the company holiday parties.
- and the Operations Budget.
- Jamie DiPace requested the board look into the new cancer bill that was just approved for the state of Connecticut and to make sure the insurance company will pay for any member who gets cancer. Jamie also requested the board to look into whether the town will let give a member the tax abatement if they should get cancer and not continue as an active member and also check into surviving spouse receiving the tax abatement of a member who passes due to cancer from being a firefighter. President Kline told the membership that she would send out a link so they could read the bill and what the specific wording is for this. The board will be looking into these issues.
- Tax Status Change – Assistant Treasurer, Steve Gwizdak has filed the paperwork to change from a 501c4 to a 501c3. It takes approximately 180 days for the IRS to approve any changes. This change will allow donations to be matched if companies do that and also allows us to apply for grants that we are currently not able to apply for.
- It was suggested that the collection for Pot O' Gold attendance go up to \$1.00. The membership agreed to this and this will start at the December corporate meeting.

Correspondence:

- Thank you notes were read.

Treasurer's Report: Kristen Shaw

- Report was available to the members and there were no questions.

Town Representative Report: Gina Kline

- Nine Architects submitted Statements of Qualifications for Design/Renovation of Company One, Company Four and Company 3.
- After a scoring process, four finalists were chosen, (Kastle Boos, Labella, Tecton and Mitchell).
- The four finalists were interviewed on October 11th and 12th.
- One Architect was chosen which is Tecton.

AV-1 Chief Appell

- From July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, there were 665 incident calls. Currently we are at 635 incident calls.
- The fire at Secret Lake had no smoke detectors. Company 3 had a lot of members turn out for this fire.
- The Cotswold fire came in as a general fire alarm and it was an actual fire. Our members can't be complacent on general alarm fires because you never know if there is an actual fire, especially if there is no one home.
- VCOS – Chief Appell told the members that at VCOS they stressed the importance of physical health and mental health. The chief said that he will be working on some type of program to welcome new members and their spouse/significant other so that they know what being a member is.
- There will be outside testing done at Company 1 and 4 and also at the property across from the high school.
- The Tecton submitted pricing proposal for the building committee. This will be discussed at the building committee's December meeting and if they accept, they will present it to the Town Council at their January meeting. Once this is down then the town will have the contract drawn up.
- Chief Appell and Assistant Chief Speich will be inviting members to have some discussion with them. The invitations will go out to groups of members that have so many years on the department.

AV-2 Assistant Chief Tom Kline

- The radio project is moving along.
- Thank you to all the members that showed up for the past 2 fires.

AV-4 Deputy Chief Aaron Gelber

- If you are thinking about taking Firefighter I or II in the spring please let Chief Gelber know. These classes usually fill up fast.
- This winter there will be training on ion batteries.
- Eoin Mogilewsky-Wilson is taking Firefighter I classes, and Garrett Long is taking Firefighter II classes.

Captains Reports:

- Dave Bourgoin - Sean Freiman can now drive Engine 7 and Rescue 8. Saturday after Thanksgiving is the Simsbury Torchlight parade. If you haven't attended it is as great parade with all apparatus decorated.
- Captain Bobby Sanderson - Welcome Marcin Rugar and Ben Shapiro to Company 4
- Captain Dave Theriault – Ron Salonia passed his Q requirements and Graydon Salonia passed his EMT course.
- Lieutenant Peter Tedone - Thank you to all who helped out at the Company 2 Halloween party.
- Everything ran smoothly at election day traffic duties. Fire Police now have new PPE gear that will keep them warmer and dryer.

Explorers: Tom Post

- There are two new Explorers and there is another candidate that will be interviewed.
- The Explorers will be helping serve the meal at this Wednesday's Hartford County Chiefs' dinner and meeting.

Committee Reports

- Annual Dinner – Jean Barton told the members the RSVP's have to be in now. Tonight is t-shirt night, make sure you get one.
- Community Outreach- Dennis Bianchi
 - The department did the West Avon Congregation, the Italian Festival, the Company 2 Halloween part, the Montessori school Trick or Treat event and the townwide Halloween Party at the Senior center.
 - Dennis sent some fire prevention materials to the sister school in Arizona for Fire Prevention Day.
- Fire Prevention Day – Tom Post did a fire extinguisher class at Avon Health for 79 employees and 49 employees at Orofol. Pine Grove Nursery School and Fire education classes at Roaring Brook and Pine Grove schools.
- Since May 3, 2023, until today, over 45 members have stepped up to help with Community Outreach/Fire Prevention. **Thank You all for your help whether it was 1, 2 or 20 times or more he couldn't do it without your help!!!**
- Future Projects – Trivia night possibly late February or early March. Bingo at the end of March or beginning of April.

Old Business:

- **23-44 By-Law Changes**
 - By-Law Article III Corporation Executive and Line Officers. President Kline explained the proposed changes. After some discussion about whether to keep the board at the same number or reduce the number of the board the consensus was to vote the proposed changes now and for the board to appoint a committee to look into what steps will be needed to make this By-Law change and report back to the board. Mike Hornish made a motion to accept the proposed changes with Bobby Sanderson seconding. The vote was taken and the following members opposed the changes: Ken Sedlak, Marita Corrado, Mark Wilson, Jason Mickus and Jim Devanny with Aaron Gelber abstaining. Motion passed.
 - By-Law Article V Membership – President Kline explained the proposed changes to the membership. A motion was made by Ken Sedlak to approve the proposed changes with Alexa Shuck seconding. Motion passed.
- **23-47 Board Elections**
 - There were four candidates for the board. They are as follows: Jeff Bernetich, Nancy Crozier, James DiPace, and Mark Wilson. All voting members were given ballots for voting.
 - The results are as follows: Mark Wilson-3 year term starting 1/1/2024, Jamie DiPace-3 year starting 1/1/2024 term and Jeff Bernetich will fill the vacant seat immediately.

New Business:

- **23-46 Honorary Membership**
 - President Kline brought before the membership the questions of making Heath Maguire an Honorary member. Dave Theriault made a motion with Jim Devanny seconding to make Heather Maguire an honorary member. Motion passed.

Other Business:

- Welfare and Cheer – Jean Barton, Peter Bounome and Diane Delap were all under the weather.
- Pot O' Gold and Attendance – Mark Wilson won attendance and there was no winner for Pot O' Gold so that money will be kept until the December Corporation meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made by Dave Theriault and seconded by Nick Mathein. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 21:05 p.m. (GB)