

## Special Board Meeting, May 13, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Gina Kline at 18:06.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Board Members Present:** Bruce Appell, Brian Baldwin, Jeff Bernetich, Jeff Borges, Jamie DiPace, Gina Kline, Tom Post, Kristen Shaw, and Mark Wilson. Excused: Steve Gwizdak, Jim Speich

**Other Members Present:** Jamie Appell, Pete Buonome, Chip Carpenter, Tori Haskins, Sue Jansen, Nick Mathein, Jay McCaffrey, Jim Reber, Sid Shafran, Pete Tedone, Dave Theriault, Phyllis Wilson

President Gina Kline called this special meeting of the board to discuss the proposed Duty Engine Pilot Program and the status of the Corporation's 501(c)(3) application.

### 1. Planning Committee – Duty Engine Pilot Program

Assistant Chief Speich presented his plan to pilot a duty engine program beginning in July and requested Board input since long-term implementation of such a program represents a significant change in how the Department operates. He noted that the concept of duty shifts for volunteer departments is not new, and has been adopted by other volunteer departments outside of Connecticut.

The financial implications of the program were discussed. While no additional compensation is planned for the pilot, if implemented, members would be compensated \$100 for every 12 hours of coverage. Once fully implemented, four-member duty crews would cover a twelve-hour period (6pm to 6am) seven days a week, resulting in a total annual expense of \$146K. Members would still be considered volunteer as long as the individual compensation received is less than 13% of the average firefighter salary in Connecticut.

Sleeping accommodations will be necessary at Company 3 if the full program is implemented following the pilot. Chief Appell is getting estimates and working on approvals for a storage container outside of Company 3 for gear storage. He is also working to secure drawings and cost estimates to renovate the meeting room at Company 3 to accommodate 4 bunk rooms. He will share the estimates and plans with the Board once available.

Additional work is needed to determine the logistics related to scheduling, training, accountability and compensation, but overall, the Board was in favor of the plan presented by Assistant Chief Speich.

### 2. Finance Committee – 501(c)(3) Application Status

President Kline provided an update on the Department's application to convert to a 501(c)(3). The correspondence from the IRS was shared which states that the department does not meet the organization test of IRC Section 501(c)(3) which requires the presence of specific language in the organizing documents in order to qualify. The addition of the required language to the AOGs is not sufficient.

Given the need to change the Corporations' Articles of Association, President Kline wanted the Board's position on whether to proceed or withdraw. After some discussion, it was decided to keep pursuing the change. President Kline will be reaching out to area departments who successfully converted to understand their process and how they were able to meet the qualifying criteria set forth in the IRC Section 501(c)(3).

Meeting adjourned at 18:55 with a motion by B. Baldwin, Second by J. DiPace, Approved unanimously.