

August 18, 2010
Regular Meeting Board of Fire Commissioners

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on the above date.

Present: President Rosenberg, Commissioners Gaskin, Klein, Lee, Meszoros,
and Fire Chief Rooney

Absent: Vice President Garcia

President Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

A moment of silence was held in honor of Fallen Fire Fighters, Lieutenant Steven Velasquez and Fire Fighter Michel Baik who died in Line of Duty while fighting a structure fire on July 24, 2010.

Motion was made and seconded to dispense with reading the minutes of the previous meeting.

Old Business

1. Local 834 – Grievance 2010-16; Dianne Micalizzi, Widow’s Pension. Associate City Attorney John Mitola represented that he was waiting for additional information from Mrs. Micalizzi and Berkley and requested that the grievance be tabled for one month. Attorney Mitola spoke with Mrs. Micalizzi and represented that she understood his request and would not be present tonight. Commissioner Meszoros motioned to table the grievance to the September meeting; Commissioner Klein seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

New Business

1. Communications:

a. None.

2. Commissioner Klein motioned to grant a Widow’s Pension Request to Marianne Velasquez, widow of Lt Steven Velasquez who died in the line of duty on July 24, 2010, and refer to the Board of Trustees, Pension Plan B, for implementation; Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

3. Commissioner Klein motioned to grant a Widow’s Pension Request to Laurie Baik, widow of Fire Fighter Michel Baik who died in the line of duty on July 24, 2010, and refer to the Board of Trustees, Pension Plan B, for implementation; Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

4. Executive Session for attendance review of the following individuals:

a. FF Frank Norris (B)

Commissioner Klein motioned to go into executive session at 6:10 p.m.; Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

Commissioner Klein motioned to end executive session at 6:16 p.m., Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

Commissioner Klein motioned to table the matter to next month's meeting and requested Deputy Chief Grace send a new letter to the treating physician requesting that all questions be answered and to clarify light duty; Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

b. FF Ronald Reed (B) – Executive Session Waived. Attorney Tom Bucci informed the Board that he has represented Fire Fighter Reed for a very long time on a number of different matters and Fire Fighter Reed came to him for assistance and also that he has represented the City of Bridgeport, so he has a conflict. He cannot represent Mr. Reed's interests, but Mr. Reed is desirous of getting a new attorney and come back in 30 days prepared to proceed.

Attorney John Bohannon introduced himself and represented that he was appearing on behalf of the Bridgeport Fire Department and further represented that Fire Fighter Reed was given a letter by Chief Rooney indicating that he would in fact have the opportunity to contest the Department's request for disability retirement this evening. Fire Fighter Reed reached out to Attorney Thomas Bucci to represent him this evening. The Department does not have an objection to a continuance of 30 days to the next meeting in order to address this matter. There was one thing he wanted Fire Fighter Reed to understand was that the Bridgeport Fire Department has done an analysis and they do believe that Fire Fighter Reed lacks the functional capacity to perform the duties of a Fire Fighter and they are in fact looking to give Fire Fighter Reed a disability retirement and he understands it to be involuntary because Fire Fighter Reed from what he was seeing does not want to be involuntarily retired. If Fire Fighter Reed wants to contest the Department's request it is incumbent upon him to contact counsel and be prepared to come to the next Board meeting to contest the Department's request because they fully intend to go forward with their evidence and show the Commissioners that this gentleman should be retired on a disability retirement.

Attorney Bohannon stated that he would give Fire Fighter Reed his cell phone number and any counsel the Fire Fighter chooses to retain can reach out to him for any information Fire Fighter Reed should require for his counsel, he will make sure it is provided to them on a timely basis so that they can prepare and come to the next hearing and put on any evidence they so desire, but he wanted it to be understood that this request is only a 30 day continuance to the next meeting and this Fire Department certainly intends to go forward to seek an involuntary non line of duty disability.

Attorney Bohannon stated that if Fire Fighter Reed's attorney needs a copy of the Pension Plan and copies of any and all documents relied upon by the Bridgeport Fire Department, they certainly are willing to provide those and any other information that they may need, he would be happy to supply it to go forward at the next meeting.

Commissioner Klein motioned to table the matter to the September meeting at which time they will be going forward; Commissioner Lee seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

Commissioner Klein asked Attorney Bucci if Fire Fighter Reed contacted another attorney and Attorney Bucci responded that he gave the Fire Fighter a few alternatives.

c. FF James Sanquedolce (B)

Commissioner Meszoros motioned to go into executive session at 6:25 p.m.; Commissioner Klein seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

Commissioner Klein motioned to end executive session at 6:30 p.m., Commissioner Meszoros seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

Commissioner Klein motioned to retire Fire Fighter Sanquedolce effective September 3, 2010 with a non line of duty disability pension and he is to take the initiative to report as soon as possible at headquarters to get the appropriate paperwork to process in a timely manner; Commissioner Lee seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

5. Commissioner Meszoros motioned to accept the Report of Sick and Injury; Commissioner Klein seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

6. Commissioner Meszoros motioned to accept the Payroll Register; Commissioner Klein seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

7. Policy and Procedure review. Nothing.

Commissioner Meszoros stated that he was not notified during the time when the two Fire Fighters passed away. He felt that the Commissioners should have been notified by the Department. He wanted to know if there was any way it could have been communicated. Chief Rooney responded that he could give the telephone numbers of the Commissioners to the Public Safety Communications Center.

8. There being nothing further to come before the Board, Commissioner Lee motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Klein seconded and the Board passed it unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.