

CITY OF NORWALK  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE OF THE COMMON  
COUNCIL  
JUNE 23, 2022

Attendance: Jenn McMurrer, Chair; Dominique Johnson; Thomas Keegan; Josh Goldstein; Tom Keegan; Nicol Ayres; Diana Revolus (arrived at 7:06PM)

Staff: Michele DeLuca, Deputy Director Emergency Management; Gino Gatto, Fire Chief; Broderick Sawyer, Fire Marshal

I. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Ms. McMurrer called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES 5/26/22

Change "Mc Murrer" to "McMurrer" throughout.

**\*\* MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED WITH (5) FIVE IN FAVOR AND (1) ABSTENTION- MS. AYERS.**

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public comment this evening.

Ms. McMurrer said this is Mr. Keegan's last Public Safety and General Government meeting that he will be attending and that it has been a pleasure to learn from and work with him and he brings such joy to this job, and always does it with a smile and grace and she respects his honesty and she appreciates that, and he will be greatly missed and wishes him all of the best in his next chapter.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

**Fire Department**

**AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT, SHARON CONNORS TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO THE SOLE BIDDER, SEA SUPPORT INC. UNDER BID #, 4165R FOR THE PURCHASE OF REFURBISHED AND CERTIFIED-TO-NEW 25' SAFE BOAT, DEFENDER CLASS, NOT TO EXCEED \$240,000. THE 25% MUNICIPAL GRANT MATCH OF \$60,000 HAS**

**BEEN ALLOCATED FOR IN THE 2022-23 CAPITAL BUDGET. ACCOUNT NO# 363185-5738-G0008 (DC ED PRESCOTT)**

Deputy Chief Prescott said that are looking to purchase a refurbished boat similar to what the police department has to replace their seven-year-old boat. He said this is their smaller boat that is accessible to the islands and shores as well as around the pilings which they are responsible for as part of Homeland Security.

**\*\*MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Police Department- No action items**

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- **Fire safety education – Fire Marshal Broderick Sawyer**

Ms. Ayers asked if there is any friendly literature available that can be given out to constituents particularly for elderly residents and if so, what his recommendation is for the best ways to distribute it. Fire Marshal Sawyer said to contact his office and they have brochures for senior adults in both English and Spanish and he can be reached at (203) 854-0248 or [bsawyer@norwalkct.org](mailto:bsawyer@norwalkct.org). He also said that some of the brochures are available at City Hall.

Ms. McMurrer asked for the highlighted points on the literature that he had distributed in terms of keeping homes safe and in case of a fire. Fire Marshal Sawyer said the most important think is to have working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and the Fire Marshal's office will install them Monday through Thursday from 4:00PM-7:00PM for single- and two-family residents. He also recommended having an escape plan and eliminate any ignition sources as well as proper disposal of old batteries. He said if there is a fire in your home to be sure to close doors behind you to create a barrier between yourself and the fire to allow time to escape and the escape plan should be practiced consistently and have a meeting place. He said it is also important to dispose of smoking materials correctly and recommend having a metal can filled with sand that is 10' away from the house with a metal lid.

Ms. McMurrer asked how may fire and carbon monoxide detectors are needed depending on the square footage of a house. Fire Marshal Sawyer said to follow the manufacturers recommendation but there should be one smoke detector on every level of the home including the basement but not in the attic if it is not a livable space. He said he recommends a battery backup for carbon monoxide detectors and should be installed where there is not CO naturally.

Ms. McMurrer asked for some examples of what she be a part of the escape plan. Fire Marshal Sawyer said the best thing to do is to have an escape plan to get out of the house but said for those that live in an apartment building an escape plan may not be that simple so those residents may want to protect in place by feeling the door with the back of your hand and see if there is a pathway to get down the hallway. He also said once you have exited the house not to go back in even for a pet and once the fire department arrives, they will get the pet and because pets are closer to the ground will have a longer survival time that people.

Chief Gatto said that escape ladders are great to have on the second floor and if one is purchased it should be practiced on how to use it and the most important thing to do is to close bedroom doors at night and to have a working smoke detector in every bedroom on every level.

Mr. Keegan discussed the importance of proper disposal of fireplace ashes and said there have been a number of tragedies in the last number of years because of improper disposal of fireplace ashes. Fire Marshal Sawyer said the proper disposal of fireplace ashes is the same as for smoking materials and should be placed in a metal can filled with sand that is 10' away from the house with a metal lid. He also discussed the importance of maintaining the fireplace and chimney.

Mr. Keegan discussed the importance of learning the early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and need to be mindful of how to protect ourselves.

Chief Gatto said on the Fire Department's website there are safety tips that are updated each season. Fire Marshal Sawyer said there are also links available to fire safety information on their website and are available for download. Ms. McMurrer said there is also a fire safety library with a lot of robust information and can be found at [www.norwalkct.org/474/safety-library](http://www.norwalkct.org/474/safety-library)

Mr. Goldstein asked about fireworks safety. Fire Marshal Sawyer said the only fireworks that are legal in Connecticut are sparklers and fountains and if someone is setting off fireworks that are not legal in your neighborhood to call 911.

Ms. McMurrer requested Fire Marshal Sawyer repeat the information regarding the service that the Fire Department offers for the installation of battery-operated smoke detectors. Fire Marshal Sawyer said the Fire Marshal's office will install battery operated smoke detector Monday through Thursday for single- and two-family residents from 4:00PM-7:00PM by contacting his office and is a free service. Ms. DeLuca added that the American Red Cross also has a smoke detector installation program.

Ms. DeLuca said on October 1, 2022, the annual open house will be held at the Public Works Center and will include Fire, Police, DPW and EMS and would love for the committee members to help with the outreach.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business discussed this evening.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

From the desk of Fire Marshal Broderick Sawyer,

The Norwalk Fire Marshal's Office in our continuous efforts to protect lives and property in our community from the danger of fire and I want to reiterate the following fire safety and prevention guidelines:

**Immediately call 911 and do not try to extinguish any fire on your own. Eliminating ignition sources in close proximity to combustible materials, as well as following manufacturer's instructions for use of any appliance or heat producing item in your home will help to prevent unintended fires.**

Install and regularly test smoke detectors\* and carbon monoxide detectors in your homes. Ensure they are installed per manufacturer's instructions. Disposal of old Ionization smoke alarms, which have an amount of radioactive material, may be sent back to the manufacturer. Check with them directly, they may have a recycling program.

When these devices activate initiate your escape plan and leave the home, have a meeting place outside the home and verify everyone is safe. **DO NOT** go back inside until it has been confirmed there is no danger to your family or visitors.

Carbon Monoxide poisoning can come from malfunctioning fuel fired appliances or a vehicle unintentionally left running in your attached garage. A plug in with battery backup Carbon Monoxide alarm is recommended. When in doubt call 911.

Dispose of and extinguish ALL smoking materials properly. It is advised to use a sand or dirt filled metal container with a lid. This container must be kept a minimum 10 feet distance from your home and all combustible materials.

Keep all matches, lighters, or other sources of ignition in a safe storage space where children cannot access them. Use care when using candles or incense, maintain 3 feet clearance from combustible materials when in use. Do not leave them unattended in your home or on exterior porches. Other sources of ignition include, but are not limited to:

- Unattended cooking, including leaving combustible materials on stovetops. When cooking have the proper sized pot/pan lid, oven mitts and a Portable Fire Extinguisher\*\* and know how to use it. If there is a fire on your stovetop turn off the burner and cover the pan or pot with the proper sized lid. If there is a fire inside your oven turn off the oven and keep the oven door closed.
- Improper disposal of any old batteries. Follow manufacturer's instructions for disposal.
- Your homes Electrical System. Improperly used or overloaded extension cords and power strips, including Christmas Lights left on home exteriors year round. Follow manufacturer's instructions for proper use of extension cords, adapters and power strips.
- Furnace/Boiler
- Kitchen and other home appliances; such as toaster ovens, microwaves and space heaters Follow manufacturer's instructions for proper use.
- Fireplaces Recommended professional cleaning annually.
- Fire pits/Chimney. Follow manufacturer's instructions for use.

- Leftover piles of sawdust from woodworking projects. Maintaining good housekeeping in your workshop will help to eliminate ignition sources.
- Incandescent light bulbs turned on while in close proximity to combustible materials.
- Linseed or other oil soaked rags left in piles and not in a metal can with a properly fitting lid.

Having checked for all of the above. Have an escape plan and always have two ways of escape out of your home. Be sure to practice the plan with all members in your household.

In the event of a fire in your home, be sure to close interior bedroom doors to slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire into a room. Taking this simple action of closing the door can give you time. Be sure to inform any visiting family or friends of your family's escape plan to ensure their safety as well.

If you are having any issues with electricity in your home, such as flickering lights or circuit breakers tripping, contact a licensed professional electrician to ensure your home is safe from electrical fires.

Be sure to follow manufacturer's instructions for using your homes clothes dryer, such as regularly cleaning the lint exhaust vent from end to end. If your clothes dryer is not venting properly this can lead to a fire.

More information on fire prevention and fire life safety can be found at [norwalkct.org/fire](http://norwalkct.org/fire) department-links for everyone-fire prevention education-fire safety information for residents. There are approximately 25 informational sources from 9-Volt Battery use, Hoarding and Pet Safety Tips here.

The Fire Marshal's Office has developed a free to Norwalk residents, in single and two family homes a smoke alarm installation program. We have installed approximately 250 smoke alarms in single and two family dwellings at no cost to residents.

Contact Secretary Paulette Saddler at 203-854-0244, Fire Marshal Broderick Sawyer at 203-854-0248 or Deputy Fire Marshal Kirk McDonald at 203-854-0249 to request an install (we do not install hardwired devices).

Installations are done Monday through Thursdays from 4-7pm. We have limited supplies and installations are on a first come first serve basis while supplies last. We also offer a free in home fire safety inspection upon request. Contact any of the aforementioned Fire Marshal's Office personnel with any questions.

The Fire Marshal and Fire Administration are working on a similar smoke alarm installation program similar to Bridgeport's successful program, where our department's line personnel (firefighters) assist the Fire Marshal's Office in these installations twice a year for the overall safety of our community.

\* Disposal of old Ionization smoke alarms, having an amount of radioactive material, may be sent back to the manufacturer. Check with the manufacturer directly, they may have a recycling program.

\*\* Follow manufacturer's instructions for use of a Portable Fire Extinguisher. The fire department does not accept old or unused Portable Fire Extinguishers. Once the extinguisher is empty, including any pressure gauge on the extinguisher showing empty, the cylinder is then recycling material.

Contact the Fire Marshal's Office directly if you have questions on any of the aforementioned fire safety recommendations, and disposal of portable fire extinguishers, old smoke alarms or old batteries.