

## **BUREAU OF FIRE PREVENTION**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**August 10, 2009**

Chief Citarella called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The following were in attendance: Bureau Chief Efrem Citarella, Fire Deputies Al Vigliotti and George Wahlers, Fire Inspector Bill Premuroso and Somers Fire Chief Ed Byrnes.

#### **MINUTES**

Mr. Wahlers made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 13, 2009 meeting as submitted. Mr. Citarella seconded the motion. All were in favor.

#### **SUBMISSIONS**

There were no submissions this month.

#### **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

**Somers Fire Chief Ed Byrnes reported on the following:**

**Lincoln Hall** - At last month's meeting, a bulletin was recently received from the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control indicating that section F401.3.2 requires that the fire department be immediately notified upon receipt of a fire alarm signal. Since fire alarm calls had not been received from Lincoln Hall, IBM and Pepsi, Mrs. Schirmer sent them a letter, with a copy of the bulletin to reinforce the requirement.

As a result of that letter, the Fire Department has had to respond to numerous fire alarm calls at Lincoln Hall over the past month. In many instances, the students were pulling the alarm. The staff at Lincoln Hall treated their pull boxes with photo luminescent powder, in an effort to catch those engaging in these acts. Last evening, an alarm was responded to and a student was arrested for pulling the alarm, as there was evidence of the powder on his hand. Hopefully this new practice will deter the students from causing these false alarms. It was reported that there have been no fire alarm calls at IBM or Pepsi over the past month.

**Dry Hydrants** - A discussion has been ongoing about the dry hydrants in Town in terms of their maintenance and testing. The Somers Fire District is willing to take over ownership and maintenance of them after they have been tested. They are also willing to test them. Mr. Byrnes had hoped to set up a schedule for the month of August to test all the dry hydrants in question, but they have been super busy. He will have it done in September and report back to the Bureau regarding

the status of each at the October meeting.

**Knox Box** - Recently, there was a fire alarm call at the Stop and Shop in the Somers Commons. Upon arrival, the Fire Department determined that there was no key for the store in the Knox box. If a key is not provided, the Fire Department might be forced to knock down a door to access the building. They really don't want to have to do so unnecessarily. Mr. Premuroso will speak to Stop and Shop about this situation.

## **DEPUTIES REPORT**

### **Deputy Al Vigliotti reported on the following:**

**Fire Hydrant in the Business Historic Preservation District** - Dialogue between the Bureau of Fire Prevention and the Town Board has been ongoing regarding the need for a hydrant in the Business Historic Preservation District. A Town Board resolution was received on June 16, 2009, indicating that the Town Board supports the idea, but recommends that the Bureau research grant funding, as it is presently fiscally unattainable by the Town. The Bureau took objection to this suggestion. They felt as though it is the Town's responsibility to research such funding, not a volunteer Bureau appointed by the Town. Mrs. Schirmer shared with them a copy of a memo that she received from the Town Supervisor to the Town Engineer requesting that he apply to the EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to ascertain if the Town would be eligible to fund this type of project with them. A website ([www.nycofounding.org](http://www.nycofounding.org)) was also referenced in the memo, as a source for funding hydrants in the Business Historic Preservation District.

### **Deputy George Wahlers reported on the following:**

**Wooded Acres** - Roads have been cut and paved, and street signs installed (Mayflower Lane, Ferdinand Drive East and North) in this subdivision, between Pinesbridge Road and South Lane. An inquiry was made as to whether or not the street signs were approved by the Town. A memo will be sent to the Town Board.

**School Parking** - There has been an ongoing concern about the parking situation at the schools during dismissal time. In January, a memo was sent to the Town Board regarding legislation for fire zone enforcement. A memo was received back in February indicating that the draft of the legislation was forwarded to the school district administration for input. Mrs. Schirmer sent a memo in April to the School Superintendent requesting an update, and there was no response. Last month, Mrs. Schirmer was directed to call the School Superintendent's office. A request was made to forward a copy of the correspondence, which was done. Dr. Marien called the Building Department, not Mrs. Schirmer's home as requested, to discuss the situation. Since then,

they have not been able to connect. Mrs. Schirmer will continue to call Dr. Marien's office until they are able to have a conversation.

**Warning Tickets** - Mr. Wahlers is in need of additional warning tickets. Mr. Premuroso will obtain some for him.

**Lupi's Bikeway Plaza** - Cars are parking on both sides of the entrance, therefore not leaving enough room for emergency vehicle access. In addition, there is a backdoor sign that reads "Raceway Entrance". This door leads to the basement of the building and they were told they could not race in the basement, as it is against Town Code. The hobby shop was told however, that they could race upstairs, and the sign was to be removed. Mr. Citarella will take care of this situation.

**Tennis Academy** - There has been concern over parking at the Tennis Academy on Orchard Hill Road. When Mr. Citarella met with the owner, he found the parking area to be very organized and clearly marked. Mr. Wahlers would like to visit the site, and he would like Mr. Citarella and Mr. Premuroso to join him. Arrangements will be made to conduct this site visit by the end of the week.

**Opengate** - Last month, Mr. Byrnes expressed his ongoing concern with the amount of fire alarms being responded to at Opengate. Residents were regularly pulling the fire alarm box handle. He would like them to use a key system, which would eliminate the problem. Opengate does not want to issue keys to their employees. A record of the number of alarms responded to over the last few months was obtained by Mr. Premuroso. Mr. Byrnes decided he wanted to file a formal complaint.

In the meantime, Mr. Premuroso met with the Assistant Executive Director Randi Rios-Castro. She is still contending that issuing keys to 25 employees would be a logistical problem. They believe that one resident has been responsible for pulling the alarm. The staff at Opengate has been working with that resident, and to date there has not been a call in quite some time. Mr. Premuroso invited Ms. Rios-Castro to attend this evening's meeting, but she did not show. A conversation also took place with Dennis Coker of the Standards Compliance Analyst Division of Quality Management of the State of NY Office of Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities regarding this situation. Since Opengate is making an attempt to rectify the problem, Mr. Byrnes is willing to retract the complaint at this time.

**Fire Drills** - Mr. Wahlers asked if fire drills have been conducted at IBM and Pepsi. They have, and Mike Cyrulik, the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief for the Somers Volunteer Fire Department, has been attending them.

**Open Burn** - There was an open burn at 53 Pinesbridge Road. The owner was issued a warning notice.

**Properties with Multi Dwellings** - There are a few properties in Town with multi dwellings. There has been past concern over numbering and signage on these properties, as it relates to a fire or ambulance call. Mr. Premuroso will be in touch with the owners of the following: Stuart's Farm, Schwartz's Horse Farm, Tri Star Group (Mahopac Avenue), Tennis Academy (Orchard Hill Road) and Amawalk Farm (Wood Street) to resolve this issue.

**Residence on Mekeel Street** - There is a home on Mekeel Street that has an in the ground pool that is not fenced in, and they are using a shed as an illegal apartment. Mr. Citarella will follow up.

**Water Treatment Plant** - The Water Treatment Plant is willing to allow the Fire Department to install a hydrant on the property outside of the gated area, in the interior of the property, but want to know who would pay for it. A memo will be sent to Steve Pilla, Chairman of the Somers Fire District.

**Fire Alarm Permit Stickers** - Mr. Premuroso received samples of Fire Alarm Permit stickers. Once the stickers are ordered and received, they will be sent to all permit holders. Unfortunately a freeze on spending has been put forth by the Town Board. The stickers cannot be purchased until the freeze is rescinded.

**Truss Construction Identification** - This item is a work in progress, as all commercial buildings with truss construction in Town have to be identified.

## **FIRE INSPECTOR'S REPORT**

**Mr. Premuroso reported on the following:**

**Pepsi** - Mr. Premuroso wanted the Fire Department to be aware that an event is being held at Pepsi on August 11. Seven tent permits have been issued. They expect about 1,000 people to attend.

**Somers Central School District Bus Garage** - A request has been made to have the Fire Department tour and conduct a drill in the new Somers Central School District bus garage on the Somers High School grounds. Mr. Premuroso will contact Robert Klick, Assistant Supervisor of Building and Grounds to make the arrangements.

**Parking in Front of Hydrants** - There has been an ongoing problem with residents of The Willows and Heritage Hills parking in designated parking spots that are next to a fire hydrant. The wording in the Vehicle and Traffic section of the Town Code is unclear. Mr. Premuroso will speak with the Town Court office about this situation.

**Astoria Bank** - Mr. Premuroso wanted the Fire Department to be aware of the

fact that the Astoria Bank has two fire alarm systems, one inside and one outside, but only the one outside, is connected to and registered with a fire alarm company.

**Anytime Fitness** - Mr. Premuroso gave Mr. Vigliotti their key for the shopping center knox box.

**Fire Alarm Permits** - Mr. Premuroso gave Mr. Vigliotti copies of new Fire Alarm Permits issued for the Fire Department's files. He also gave him business emergency contact information.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Town Code** – In 2007, Chapters 4, 26, 62, 98 and 116 of the Town Code were reviewed and changes made, and noted. Chapter 158 still has to be reviewed. Since the Town committee created to review the Town Code in its entirety has not met in quite some time, this item is not urgent. The Bureau will review Chapter 158 in the near future, and at that time, will address the following: fire lanes at commercial sites in Town, and deciding which chapter should include the topic of dry hydrants and fire hydrants, to include color coding of all fire hydrants. Once completed, all changes will be forwarded to the Town Board.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business this evening.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 5, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in the Building Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary  
Bureau of Fire Prevention

cc: Bureau of Fire Prevention  
Town Board  
Town Clerk  
Planning & Engineering Department  
Somers Fire District