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should actually be 6/23/50

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In accordance with Section 202 of the Charter, a special meeting of the Board of Representatives was held at the Burdick Junior High School Library, June 26, 1950.

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 p.m. by President Samuel F. Pierson, who read the call to meeting, which was as follows:

There will be a special meeting of the Board of Representatives on Monday, June 26, 1950, at 8:00 p.m. in the Library of Burdick Junior High School to consider waiving the requirement of a high school education from the qualifications for appointees to the Supernumerary Fire Force.

Samuel F. Pierson, President
Board of Representatives.

Mr. Pierson explained that the call was issued at the request of more than ten members of the Board.

Roll call was taken with 33 present and 7 absent.

The President stated the purpose of the special meeting was to discuss whether or not the Board would waive that section of the requirements previously passed by this Board for appointees to the Supernumerary Fire Force, which reads as follows:

"2. Appointees shall be graduated from a standard four year high school or possess a certificate of equivalency (State High School Diploma) or of the J. M. Wright Technical School."

The requirement, the President went on, is in the original qualifications as set forth by the Personnel Commission, and that portion was approved by the Board on the recommendation of the Health and Safety Committee. The Board, he said, was called to decide whether there shall be a variation of the requirements for a high school education or its equivalent.

The President then read a resolution proposed by Stephen Kelly of the 12th District:

"BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES of Stamford, Connecticut that the clause of paragraphs requiring candidates for the positions of supernumerary fireman and/or positions of regular fireman to have a high school diploma or equivalent be waived or eliminated as one of the requirements of the examination to be taken for qualification."

James Harrington, 9th District, MOVED for the adoption of the resolution, seconded by George Connors, 10th District.

Hunt Sutherland, 17th District, asked for a definition of "equivalent".

Helen Bromley, 20th District, MOVED that we hear from Mr. Weathers, seconded and CARRIED.

Mr. Weathers, the Personnel Director, explained that an equivalent high school diploma was issued by the State Department of Education and could be obtained either by going to the Adult School here in Stamford, or by applying to the State Department of Education in Hartford to make an appointment to take a state high school equivalent examination.

James Mulreed: "What type of examination do you intend to give to the persons able to supply a certificate? Will it be along technical lines which would require the knowledge obtained in trade school, or will it be along classical lines?"

Mr. Weathers: "Our examination for this particular position consists of a practical written test covering mechanical aptitude, mental ability and ability to understand oral and written examinations.

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Patrick Hogan, 10th District, said he thought a definition of "equivalent" would mean the ability to pass the written test, and secondly, knowledge gained through experience. He suggested the high school diploma be omitted altogether from the requirements.

Walter Seely, 6th District, said he felt the high school diploma was not necessary, and that anyone who could pass the examination should be eligible, since their education for the job really starts after their appointment is made. He spoke of volunteer firemen who have never had a high school education that are well qualified to be good firemen.

James Mulreed, 4th District, said he felt that the written examination which will be given to each applicant, is sufficient in itself to determine the background of the applicant. He said he did not see the purpose, for example, of a knowledge of classics to become a good fireman. There are many people in Stamford, he said, who have not had a high school education, but have the knowledge which is really essential in making a good fireman.

Hilda Clarke, 17th District, MOVED we hear from a member of the Board of Public Safety, seconded and CARRIED.

Mr. Osterby, of the Board of Public Safety, said that in most cases a high school education was required in other cities for such positions. The main reason for the requirement was to have the ability to follow orders and carry out instructions. He said that while men without a high school education in a volunteer fire department undoubtedly do a good job, it was reasonable to assume that a man who had a high school education might do better. The situation now becomes a matter of time, pointing out that the 56 hour week was scheduled to go into effect on July 1st, less than a week away, and there are no men to put in the Department. If the requirement is waived, it will mean a complete new call--a complete new list of applicants--a complete new examination of all applicants--which cannot be done by the end of the week. He also favors the clause because it is recommended by the Association of International Fire Chiefs.

Helen Bromley, 20th District, spoke in favor of the resolution, stating that if the tests were comprehensive enough, it would be sufficient for a good fireman. She said she thought it best to readvertise and get a larger list of applicants if it would effect boys who quit school to join the services and while in the service received valuable training in service schools which would make them good firemen, but under the present regulations would not be qualified.

Mr. Pierson: How long would it take you to frame a new examination were this requirement waived?

Mr. Weathers: Approximately one month. The notice has to be out 10 days. You then have to wait a few days for the mails to go through to notify the applicants. Then the examination is given, which must be corrected, the oral examination must be scored, and marks combined to pick out those passing.

Mr. Pierson: Is the ten days required by statute?

Mr. Weathers: Yes.

Mr. Pierson: How many firemen are needed to bring the Fire Department up to 56 hours per week?

Mr. Osterby: 22.

Mr. Pierson: What does the supernumerary force now consist of?

Mr. Osterby: 8.

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Patrick Scarella, 3rd District, speaking as a member of the Health and Safety Committee, said that when the point of an "equivalent" of a high school education was discussed at our previous meeting, he asked if a person who had a high school diploma or its equivalent had to take an examination. The answer he received was "No". He said he still felt that anybody who passed the examination should be on the fire or police departments.

Mr. Connors: Does New York City require a high school diploma for their firemen?

Mr. Weathers: No.

Mr. Connors: If a large city does not require it, why does a city the size of Stamford need it?

William Adriance, 18th District, suggested an AMENDMENT to cover the veterans of World War II--that they be given an opportunity to compete for this examination even if they did not qualify as to a high school diploma, seconded by Hunt Sutherland, 17th District.

Babette Ransohoff, 15th District, spoke against the amendment. She didn't think it fair to penalize a boy who had to leave high school because of economic circumstances any more than a veteran.

John Cameron, 20th District, said he felt the same way. He said he was not against the veterans getting a chance to take the examination, but he thought it should be broadened.

Stephen Kelly, 12th District, said that when he called the various representatives to call for this meeting, it was his intention to have any candidate who applied for the position be made entitled to take the examination. He also pointed out that New Haven, one of the larger cities of Connecticut does not require a high school education.

Mr. Weathers said he did not check the cities who made the requirement but got the information through the Association of Fire Chiefs. He pointed out that Hartford and Greenwich both require high school and that Bridgeport does not.

James Mulreed, 4th District, said he would like to point out (1) that the amendment to Mr. Kelly's resolution would not lessen the time requirement pointed out by Mr. Weathers and (2) that, while he is sorry the adoption of the resolution would detail a big job to be done in a short time, he pointed out that this Board was asked to approve a Budget amounting to several million dollars in a very short time. He felt therefore that the Board of Public Safety and the Personnel Director might be justly asked to do this job even though it requires a lot of effort in a limited time.

Sewell Corkran, 18th District, asked if the fire department had special courses of instructions for these men after they were examined.

Mr. Osterby said they would have the best training. It was felt the men should be qualified to take advantage of this training. The fire department is constantly training their men and are well equipped for that.

Sewell Corkran, 18th District, asked if a man had enough mentality to pass an oral examination, would he not have enough mentality to pass the course he would get after he becomes a member of the Fire Department?

Mr. Osterby, in explaining his personal contacts with testing for positions, said it was found that in many cases a person that hadn't had a high school education had a good natural intelligence, and in many cases ^{when} it is a straight

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intelligence test, shows a very strong natural ability, but he also found in many of those cases, although a man had the actual ability, he did not have the other requirements to use those abilities--such as not following orders as well as he might, which might be the reason he left school. He went on to say there are several other characteristics that are brought out.

Helen Bromley, 20th District, speaking against the amendment said she thought it should be a broad scope.

William Adriance, 18th District, withdrew his amendment.

Leon Staples, 7th District, said that every one of the men appointed involves ultimately \$100,000.00 for Stamford. The civil service, he went on, would be our standard of selection. Through their examination they will act as barriers where the men would be screened. He went on to say that he didn't say the high School diploma means a great deal, but it does show the boy persisted and had character enough to go four years to get the diploma. He said it seemed to him that civil service will give us a high type of man in Stamford--and that is what is needed--that that man will be worth the money we are going to pay and "we will be sure we are not going to get clucks for policemen. If you open the thing wide up, you won't be any better off than you were before".

Robert Shepherd, 9th District, pointed out there seemed to be the assumption that the Board can reconsider the basis for the examination that has already been given. One of the demands of parliamentary procedure, he went on, is you can't reconsider something that has already been acted upon. If we considered to waive the requirements for the future, he said, it won't effect the action already taken.

George Wise, Corporation Counsel, was asked to give an off-hand opinion on the matter to which he said, "I would be inclined to think, as to those individuals who have already taken the test, they have required a right to be considered and the right to be eligible to the appointments if they complied or passed or whatever the method is of grading, to put them on the eligible list."

Mr. Nathan Martin of the Board of Public Safety spoke to the Board. He said his Board is trying to get the city of Stamford a fire and police department that will be equal to none. Many cities have not yet required a high school education, he said, but some of them are coming along fast. He pointed out that many of our firemen have become excellent firemen by coming up the hard way, but times are changing. The thing to keep in mind, he said, is that the Board is not trying to hurt anybody. Commissioner O'Brien of New York, speaking at a policemen's dinner said it was just a question of time in New York that it will require a college education for its new men. The FBI, he said, require a college education. The Board felt that in asking for a high school requirement maybe the boys with a little more schooling could absorb circumstances that happen faster--that is all the Board had in mind. He continued that that Board is just going along with the Charter on the merit system. He pointed out that the fire equipment today is much more complicated--our buildings, cities, stores and homes are much more beautiful. Fires are treated with acids and chemicals.

John Cameron, 20th District, said he thought the people who have taken the examination should have some rights and not be required to take it again. Whether we can add to that group, he would like the Corporation Counsel to consider. If we can't add, we still have the question of what will we do for the future. He pointed out that Mr. Osterby implied he would put on 22 supernumerary from whom he would pick firemen and then he would need 22 new supernumerary. He thought we had a right to act on the resolution.

Mr. Pierson asked Mr. Osterby--if the men now up for physical examination were

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for the purpose of appointment to the regular fire force, supernumerary fire force or both.

Mr. Osterby said that no man becomes a member of the fire department without first being a supernumerary. When we are shorthanded as now, the men are brought in as supernumerary and immediately, perhaps the next day, appointed to the regular department.

John Cameron, 20th District, asked, if in the advertisement the number of men required was specified.

Mr. Weathers said it was not.

John Cameron, 20th District, said if they did not advertise for the number of men to be hired on that examination, there would be only one man who would have the vested right to be appointed under that.

Mr. Osterby said the number of vacancies would never be advertised because it would be of no concern. They might have qualified several hundred men for it is not limited to any number. The men are retained on the eligibility list and no further advertisement will be made until the eligibility list is used up.

When Mr. Wise was asked if he could render an off-hand opinion on this particular subject, he stated that because of the importance of the problem, he begged to be excused in giving an affirmative answer without further study.

Stephen Kelly, 12th District, pointed out that candidates made application for the firemen's position when there was no high school requirement. He said he had in his possession certification from men who passed various courses in the Navy on diesel. There are also men who went through fire courses in various organizations. The primary order for any man in the service was to grasp an order and follow it through. Some men, he went on, have applications in for two years and three months, and now this stops them entirely from the examination.

James Mulreed, 4th District, said this meeting is held as a protest because certain men have been barred from taking certain examinations. "I think", he said, "We have got to decide now whether those men have wrongfully been deprived of the opportunity of taking the examination." He noted that someone suggest the members of the Stamford Firemen's Association be approached and asked if they would consider postponing the 56 hour week for a period of 30 days to allow the Personnel Director to properly come up with a list of eligible persons.

Mr. Pierson said he questioned whether or not we wouldn't submit the City to a series of law suits from those who have already qualified, and therefore suggested that the resolution be reworded somewhat along the line that it is the desire to eliminate this instruction that a high school education be required and that if, in the opinion of the Corporation Counsel it is legal to hold a new examination for those jobs which are now being considered that those men be given an opportunity of getting an examination. If not, that in the future those be the rules.

Robert Shepherd, 9th District, repeated his question of parliamentary procedure. In the case of examinations, these people have the contract with the city by taking the examination--they are in the nature of having received a contract from the City in regard to appointment to the supernumerary fire force, and we do not have any right to erase what has been done according to our previous action.

John Cameron, 20th District, agreed with Mr. Shepherd. The one question is whether these people acquire a right at the time they take the examination or whether they acquire the right at the time they are appointed. His point was there was no number of positions when it was advertised.

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George Lockwood, 14th District, said it was brought out there were 8 supernumerary on the present list and it was the plan, as a result of this examination, to bring that list up to 30, make appointments, and then go back and appoint more supernumeraries. Does that mean the present supernumeraries will be by-passed, he asked Mr. Osterby.

Mr. Osterby said that nobody can be appointed to the regular force unless they are among the three top men from the first examination, and so on down the line. He said they would be given a roster of 25 men from the Personnel Commission the 22 to be appointed, plus three. The 22 men will be appointed from that list. Once this list is filled up, there will be no more examinations for the department for a period of two years, and then if a vacancy appears another examination will be held.

James Harrington, 9th District, asked if any of the eight served in the fire department prior to consolidation.

Mr. Osterby said not as far as he knew.

James Harrington, 9th District, said he understood some of the supernumeraries have been on for six, eight, or ten years. It was supposed to come right from the top man.

Mr. Osterby said, as he stated before, there were no vacancies in the fire department when they took office and they felt that under the new consolidated charter it would be better to have civil service examinations. They appointed some men to the police department and were criticized because they didn't wait for civil service.

James Mulreed, 4th District, said "I would like to point out that this is a golden opportunity to express our resentment for the manner in which the appointments were made in the police department."

Mr. Pierson reminded Mr. Mulreed that that subject was not a part of this meeting

James Mulreed, 4th District, said by our resenting the action taken by this Board previously and by holding out in abeyance, it might force the Safety Commission to consider the supernumeraries who are now on their lists.

Michael Wofsey, 1st District, speaking on the subject said he wanted to be sure the resolution referred only to the Fire Department, and that whatever he may say would refer strictly to the Fire Department. It ought to be made clear, he went on, the merit system became a part of the charter as a result of a great deal of work by a great many people over a great many years. When the Personnel Commission was appointed, it was required under the terms of the Charter and merit system chapter, to set down standards by which people could be selected. The purpose was to carry out the spirit of the merit system as in the charter and to make it clear that people would be appointed on what they know rather than whom they know. Predicated on that premises, the Personnel Commission laid down certain rules. Those rules came before the Board of Representatives for acquiescence and such changes it saw fit to make. If we decide that perhaps we were too stringent in our rules, that is well for the future, but I warn you, there isn't the slightest question that the people who took the examination have vested rights in the position now open and those are the 22 openings on the supernumerary force. I urge that you cannot--legally or morally--violate the contract you made with the people who took the examination. What you do for the future is another point."

Mr. Wofsey MOVED the Chair declare a short recess and that during that recess some committee which the Chair may appoint with the approval of the members of the

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Board, confer with the Corporation Counsel to frame a type of resolution to which the Board agrees, and then reconvene and discuss the resolution, seconded by Patrick Scarella, 3rd District, and CARRIED.

The President appointed to the committee:

Michael Wofsey
Leon Staples
Stephen Kelly
George Connors

and asked Mr. Wise to sit with them.

John Canavan, 11th District, MOVED the committee be approved, seconded by Sewell Corkran, 18th District, and CARRIED.

The meeting was recessed at 10 p.m., and reconvened at 10:25.

The President read the following Resolution which has been prepared by the Committee. If agreeable, he said, it can be put forth instead of the original resolution.

Resolution #86

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES that the mental and physical requirements for appointees to the Supernumerary Fire Force are amended by striking out paragraph 2 thereof. Should the Corporation Counsel rule that this resolution may be made retroactive to the date of the adoption of the original rules, May 18, 1950, then this resolution shall be effective as of that date. Should he rule otherwise, this resolution shall be effective after July 1, 1950.

Paragraph 2 of the mental and physical requirements approved by the Board on May 18, 1950, is as follows:

"2. Appointees shall be graduated from a standard four year high school or possess a certificate of equivalency (State High School Diploma), or of the J. M. Wright Technical School."

James Harrington, 9th District, withdrew his original motion that the original resolution on this subject be approved. This was agreed to by George Connors, 10th District, who seconded the original motion.

The President pointed out that this resolution only affects the second paragraph of the mental and physical requirements for supernumeraries to the Fire Force, and that the other requirements are still in effect.

Robert Shepherd, 9th District, spoke against removing the high school education from the requirements. He said it seemed that if the International Association of Fire Chiefs, who know from past experience, had decided against the requirement, they would not have recommended it, and that should have some value on a decision or a vote. He said he got the impression that the original purpose of the change of the requirements was due to making it possible for veterans who were unfortunate enough not to be able to complete their requirements to take the examination, and that they were unfavorably discriminated against by the requirement. Of the 60 men who are on the list now, he continued, 51 are veterans. As far as high school is concerned, he went on, the high school students were encouraged to finish high school.

Michael Wofsey, 1st District, MOVED the adoption of the substitute resolution, seconded by Walter Seely, 6th District,. Upon standing vote, the resolution was CARRIED 25 in favor, 6 opposed.

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Patrick Scarella, 3rd District MOVED the meeting be adjourned, seconded and CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
BABETTE S. RANSOHOFF, Clerk

JUNE 26, 1950

A special meeting of the Board of Representatives was held at the Burdick Junior High School Library on Monday, June 26, 1950. The President, Samuel F. Pierson, read the Call which was as follows:

"In accordance with Section 202 of the Charter, a special meeting of the Board of Representatives will be held at the Library of Burdick Junior High School, Forest Street, Stamford, Conn., on Monday, June 26, 1950, at 8:15 P.M., for the purpose of acting on an emergency appropriation for an acting mayor.

Babette S. Ransohoff, Clerk,
Board of Representatives"

This meeting, the President said, was called at the instigation of ten members of the Board. Because he was affected, he asked that a temporary chairman be appointed, and that he be excused.

Helen Bromley, 20th District, MOVED that Daniel Miller be appointed temporary chairman, seconded and CARRIED.

Samuel Pierson left the room.

Daniel Miller, temporary Chairman, read the roll call, the result of which 31 present, 9 absent.

The minutes of the Board of Finance meeting of June 23, 1950, was read to the Board as follows:

"On motion of Mr. Randall it was voted the appropriation of \$2000 to be used as a fund from which to compensate any acting Mayor for services rendered in that capacity, be approved. Carried Unanimously."

That portion of Resolution #73 passed on February 8, 1950 by the Board of Representatives was read to the Board. The entire resolution, found on page 154 of the minutes, is quoted below:

"RESOLUTION No. 73 - BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor request of the Board of Finance an appropriation in the amount of \$2,000, to be used as a fund from which to compensate any acting Mayor for services rendered in that capacity. Such person to be compensated after three (3) days continuous service retroactive to the first day of service at the rate of Twenty (\$20.00) dollars per day and such sums as may be due shall be paid by the Commissioner of Finance upon requisition of the Mayor, retroactive to July 1, 1949."

Michael Wofsey, 1st District, MOVED the readoption of the resolution previously adopted, seconded and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

George Connors, 10th District, MOVED the emergency appropriation of \$2000 as recommended by the Board of Finance be approved, seconded and upon standing vote was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

William Adriance, 18th District, MOVED the meeting be adjourned, seconded and CARRIED. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
BABETTE RANSOHOFF, Clerk.