

A Special Meeting of the City Council was held Friday, January 7, 2011 at 7:10 PM in the Council Chamber in City Hall, 111 Outwater Lane, Garfield, NJ 07026.

Mayor Frank J. Calandriello presided. City Clerk Andrew J. Pavlica announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice was provided by mail and fax to the official City newspapers and to other interested parties and by posting the meeting notice on the bulletin boards in City Hall.

Councilmembers Present: Tana M. Raymond, Joseph Delaney, Stanley J. Moskal and Frank J. Calandriello
Councilmember Absent: Louis G. Aloia
Also Present: City Manager Thomas J. Duch and City Clerk Andrew J. Pavlica

City Clerk Pavlica introduced City Manager Thomas J. Duch, who acted as the Master of Ceremonies. He welcomed everyone to this evening's meeting and called on Nicholas Kovacs, who led the meeting in the flag salute.

City Manager Duch introduced Father Edward Szpiech, the Pastor of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Roman Catholic Church and the Chaplain of the Garfield Volunteer Fire Department, who offered a Special Invocation.

City Manager Duch called upon Outgoing Fire Chief Michael Latona to conclude Unfinished Business for the Firematic Year 2010:

Garfield Fire Department
Fire Calls 2010
Total Calls: 634

Structure Fires	16
Vehicle Fires	7
Brush, grass or mulch fires	6
Rubbish Fires	15
All other Fires	58
Extrication	9
Search for person land and water	3
Confided space rescue	1
Severe Weather standby	4
Good Intent calls	53
False Alarms Unintentional and Malicious	190
Service Calls	99
Mutual Aid Given	39
Hazardous Condition calls	<u>134</u>
Total Incident Count:	634

Resolution No. 11-8

WHEREAS, Michael Latona, has served as Fire Chief of the Garfield Volunteer Fire Department for the year 2010, and

WHEREAS, the services rendered to the citizens and taxpayers of the City of Garfield have been such as to be above and beyond the ordinary call of duty, and

WHEREAS, under the jurisdiction of Michael Latona the Garfield Volunteer Fire Department maintained its high standard of service and devotion to duty with respect to protection of life and property of the citizens and taxpayers of the City of Garfield, all of this be in keeping with the highest traditions of the standards set for fire service, and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Garfield desires to express its appreciation to Fire Chief Michael Latona for his singular devotion and dedication to the fire service of the City of Garfield,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Garfield, Bergen County, New Jersey, that Fire Chief Michael Latona be and is hereby commended for the excellent service he has rendered to the citizens and taxpayers

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of the City of Garfield during his tenure as Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the City of Garfield and that a certified copy of this approved resolution also be included in the personnel jacket of Fire Chief Michael Latona.

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 - Councilmember Aloia

(Sgd) Frank J. Calandriello
Stanley J. Moskal

At this time, Mayor Frank J. Calandriello presented outgoing Fire Chief Michael Latona with a framed copy of Resolution No. 11-8 and Thomas J. Duch presented and pinned the Ex-Chief Badge on outgoing Fire Chief Michael Latona.

Outgoing Fire Chief Latona gave the following Farewell Address:

“I’d like to start off by thanking all of you for giving me the opportunity and honor to serve this community as Fire Chief for the year 2010. The experience of being Fire Chief is one that I will cherish forever. There is a long list of people I need to thank. Without the help of others, it would be impossible to sustain a successful administration.

To the assistant chiefs, officers and members of the department, your contribution to the community goes beyond commitment and dedication. You should all be commended for an outstanding job and I thank you all for your assistance throughout the year.

I’d like to thank Mr. Duch, Mayor Calandriello and all of the Council for their continual support of the Fire Department as well as many other City Hall Employees whose expertise in their fields has made my administration unproblematic and straight forward.

Five years ago, I stood before you giving the same type of speech and along with everyone else, I thanked my friends at Fire Company One. During my remarks of 5 years ago, I called them my second family. Well, things have changed. The men and women of Fire Company #1 have become part of my family, my one family. We laughed, and we laughed hard together, we argued more than we agreed at times. We broke bread together often. We are at each others homes and family parties. I thank you for trusting me to lead you for the past ten years, but with all my heart, I thank you for being there whenever I needed you the most. You are my brothers and one little sister for life.

And then there is Rosann. More than my girlfriend but not quite my wife, definitely my soul mate. Not only did she learn, very quickly I might add, what its like to live with a volunteer firefighter, but she became part of the firehouse. She has become a big sister to some of the guys at company 1 and a friend to all of them. She has opened up our home to them, she cooks for them, she has even comforted them when they needed a true friend.” At this time, Chief Latona spoke on how he lost his Father this past year. He continued, “Roseanne, you are my backbone and have helped me through the most difficult year of my life. You have shown me the never ending love that you have for me. Now that my term is over and the phone has been silenced, I am all yours. Thank you for putting up with me for the past year. I Love You.

This year was filled with ups and downs. We lost dear friends throughout the year, John Adametz, an icon for the Garfield Fire Department, Lenny Shmegelski, a legend in the eyes of volunteers around the area and most recently, the tragic loss of our friend Kenny Adamo, the epitome of what a volunteer firefighter should be. Each loss takes its toll but we, as brothers and sisters in the Garfield Fire Department, always pull together and we always will. I take great pride in calling myself a firefighter in the City of Garfield.

In closing, I’d like to wish only the best for Chief Kovacs, his assistants and all the officers and members of the Fire Department in the year 2011 and many years to come. I have no doubt that they will continue in the same traditions that have made the Garfield Fire Department great.”

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City Manager Duch read the following letter from Councilmember Aloia:

Louis G. Aloia
169 Harrison Avenue
Garfield, New Jersey 07026

January 7, 2011

I wish to commend all the members of our 2010 Garfield Fire Department and their families for their enthusiastic collaboration and service to the citizens of our city this past year. As always, we are a safer community because of your commitment.

I am profoundly disappointed that I cannot be with you this evening, but I must be with my family. My sister Lynn's death was not expected, but ending the many years of her debilitating illness is a blessing for her. For my other two sisters and me, the loss of my sister Lynn is still very difficult.

Tonight is a special night for the Garfield Fire Department. To our new 2011 Chiefs, and all the members of Company One, Two, Three, Four and Five, I wish and pray that you all have a safe and healthy year. You are a great and most appreciated organization permitting us all to sleep well knowing that you will respond every time called. Thank you so very much and have a great, great night.

Sincerely,
Louis G. Aloia
Councilman

City Clerk Pavlica administered the Oath of Office to the Line Officers of Fire Company No. One followed by Fire Company No.s Two, Three, Four and Five.

In accordance with an election held by the Garfield Volunteer Fire Department, City Manager Thomas J. Duch appointed the following to their respective offices for a term of one (1) year:

Michael Colon	Fourth Assistant Chief
Alan Tani	Third Assistant Chief
John Kopacz	Second Assistant Chief
Kenneth Robertson	First Assistant Chief
James E. Kovacs	Fire Chief

City Clerk Pavlica administered the Oath of Office to the four Assistant Fire Chiefs.

Bergen County Executive Kathleen Donovan administered the Oath of Office to Fire Chief James E. Kovacs, as his wife Maureen, his children Nicholas and Katarina, and step children Kayla, Brittany and Shawn, held the Bible. City Manager Thomas J. Duch then presented Chief Kovacs with the Badge of Fire Chief of the City of Garfield.

Fire Chief Kovacs made the following comments:

“Good evening, welcome to the 2011 Installation of Garfield Fire Officers. It is my great honor and privilege to stand before you as Fire Chief of the Garfield Fire Department.

Before I continue on with my remarks, please bow your heads and join me in a moment of silence as we remember Ex-Fire Chief John Adametz of Engine Co. 3, Ex-Fire Chief Leonard Shmegelski of Engine Co. 2, and Past Captain Kenneth Adamo of Engine Co. 5; sadly each of these members passed away in 2010...Thank you

I look forward to leading this department and I am confident with the help of City Manager Thomas Duch, Mayor Frank Calandriello, and the members of our City Council we will continue to improve upon and advance the Garfield Fire Department. I will do my very best

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to address the needs of each of our city's five fire companies. Like every Chief, my highest priority in 2011 will be to insure that each and every one of my firefighters returns home safely after every alarm.

To our surrounding mutual aid towns and mutual aid coordinators, the Garfield Fire Dept. will be there to assist all of you whenever you need us. Never hesitate to call for anything. Thank you for joining us this evening.

There are many people I would like to recognize and thank this evening. First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family for their support and encouragement throughout the years.

To my beautiful wife Maureen, I thank you for all of your help and support in putting together this evening's ceremony. None of this could have been possible without your hard work. Thru good times and bad, you have always been there to lend your support and stand-by me whenever I have needed you, for that I am forever grateful. I love you and thank you again!

To our five children Kayla, Brittany, Nicholas, Shawn and Katarina, it means a lot for all of you to share in this ceremony with me. I couldn't have asked for five better children. Remember to always work hard to achieve your goals and chase your dreams!

Since I was a small child, I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father and join the Garfield Fire Department. Little did I know way back when that I would end up making a career out of fire service? My parents, long ago taught me about the importance of hard work, and the values of service to one's own community. I could not have asked for better role models growing up. Thank you for everything you have done to support me and guide me throughout the years.

To the Members of Garfield Fire Co. 2, thank you for the faith and trust you showed in me when you elected me to serve as Fire Chief. I am very proud to serve in this capacity and will do my best to represent our fire company well. It is my privilege to serve as a member of Fire Company No. 2 and I am lucky to have each of you as brother firemen and friends.

I think what has always made the Garfield Fire Department so special, has always been the generations of family members, that shape our ranks and define each company. I am very proud to serve not only with my father, but also with my brother Kyle and my sister Vicky. Both of you have worked very hard to become good firefighters, I am proud of each of you.

On behalf of the Officers and Members of the Garfield Fire Department I would like to congratulate Ex-Chief Michael Latona on a job well done. Thank you for your dedicated service to this fire department. 2010 was a difficult year, this department like so many others, faced many challenges brought upon by our state's current economic crisis. Your guidance and leadership throughout the year enabled this department to overcome many of these challenges. I wish you the best of luck and much success in all your future endeavors.

To newly elected Asst. Chief Michael Colon, good luck, I know you will do a great job. Enjoy every minute of the next five years, Mike, because it goes by very quickly, so make the most of it.

To Bergen County Executive Ms. Kathleen Donovan, I would like to thank you for taking the time out of your hectic schedule to make this night a memorable one for my family and me. I am honored to have you here this evening.

To Fire Chief Trentacost and all members of the Passaic Fire Department here this evening to lend their support, I have experienced and learned much from so many of you over the years. All of you have been there to lend a hand, offer support or guidance whenever I needed it. Thank you.

I am looking forward to the opportunity of working with each of my Asst. Fire Chiefs and all of the company officers. I am very lucky to have two Asst. Chiefs, Kenny and John, who

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have previously served as Chief of The Department; I will rely heavily on your knowledge and experience to help me along.

The company officers of this department sworn in earlier this evening, no doubt will be our future leaders of tomorrow. Continue to train and educate yourselves about the many hazards this job presents itself with, work hard, and most importantly always work together in order to ensure the future of the Garfield Fire Department is a bright one. Always remember out on the street, everyone is watching you, be professional and show pride in the uniform you are wearing. Trust is a public matter with firefighters that is on display for everyone to see anytime someone calls the fire department. We walk into the homes of complete strangers and they entrust us with their most precious possessions, without question, in an emergency in the desperate hope we will make things better. Never betray that trust, never embarrass our department, our City, and never let your brother firefighters down. Remember each of you is your brother's keeper.

Thank you all for attending and enjoy the rest of the ceremony!"

Each Councilmember and City Manager Duch offered congratulatory remarks and best wishes for a successful year to Chief Kovacs.

City Manager Duch made a Special Public Recognition of Ex-Chief Harry Yakimik for his devotion and dedication to the Garfield Volunteer Fire Department for over fifty years of service and led the congregation in a standing ovation for Ex-Chief Yakimik.

City Manager Duch thanked everyone for coming to this evening's ceremony and he invited everyone to the Frank B. Calandriello Senior Center, 480 Midland Avenue, for refreshments and fellowship.

Kayla Meneghin recited "The Firemen's Prayer".

Father Edward Szpiech concluded the ceremony with a Special Benediction.

At 8:05 PM, there being no further business, Councilmember Raymond moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Delaney duly seconded the motion.

On call of roll, Ayes 4,
Absent 1 – Councilmember Aloia

Andrew J. Pavlica, CITY CLERK