

# COMMENDATION

**WHEREAS** on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, at approximately 1:23am, Box 1401, Level 2 was transmitted for smoke in the building, at 81 West Main Street, High Bridge. Upon arrival this writer upgraded this alarm to a Level 3 for the working structure fire.

**WHEREAS** the following Units arrived and began firefighting operations, Ladder 14, Engine 14, Tower Ladder 45, Engine 46-1, Rescue 91, RIC 44, Engine 19, and Ladder 18. While the crews operated they encountered heavy heat and smoke. The following Command Staff were assigned, Chief Walter Dorf, Operations, Chief Bradley Patkochis, Division A, Chief David Lunger, Division D.

**WHEREAS** approximately 54 minutes into firefighting operations, at 2:16am, Ex-Chief William Crampton and Firefighter Kenneth Doyle observed a change in the smoke from grey to a rich black. Indicating the changing of the fire conditions. Ex-Chief Crampton immediately reported this observation to Chief's Patkochis and Lunger who also reported observing same.

**WHEREAS** immediately both Division Leaders, as well as Ex-Chief Crampton ordered the immediate evacuation of the structure. Noting, that at 2:18am, a flashover occurred on the first floor occupied by the PeKing Wok and the second floor produced a smoke explosion. At approximately 2:20am the second floor collapsed into the first floor. Concerned for personnel, all crews were required to report in immediately and all crews were accounted for. All firefighting operations then reverted to defensive tactics.

**WHEREAS** These observations and quick decisive actions made by these men certainly changed the outcome, as the catastrophic collapse that occurred at 2:20am, would have cost firefighters operating within the structure their lives.

**WHEREAS** Chiefs Walter Dorf, Bradley Patkochis, David Lunger, Ex-Chief William Crampton, and Firefighter Kenneth Doyle have been recommended to receive Distinguished Service Awards for performing an action which encompasses unusual ability, initiative, and courage above and beyond the call of duty, which preserved life and was performed during adverse conditions.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of High Bridge on behalf of all its residents commend High Bridge Volunteer Fire Company, and all the Mutual Aid supporting units they showed exceptional ability, initiative and courage above and beyond the call of duty in an attempt to preserve property

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, we have hereunto set our hands and caused the seal of the Borough of High Bridge to be affixed this 12th day of March, 2015.

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Mark Desire, Mayor

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Lynn Hughes, Council President

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Adam Young, Deputy Clerk