

**EMERGENCY SERVICES EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE
TOWN OF WILLINGTON
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
REGULAR MEETING
September 12, 2023**

Members present: Peter Tanaka; Chairman and Board of Finance, From Willington Fire Department #1 (WFD#1): Alex Moore; Chief, Stuart Cobb; Captain/Treasurer, From Willington Hill Fire Department (WHFD): Tom Snyder; Chief, Bobby Knight; 2nd Assistant Chief, Mike Makuch; Lieutenant/Selectman.

1. Call to Order.

The meeting of the Emergency Services Efficiency Committee was called to order at 6:40 p.m. on September 12, 2023 by Chairman Peter Tanaka.

2. Seating of Alternates.

There were no alternates to seat.

3. Present to Speak.

No one was present to speak.

4. Approval of Minutes.

Selectman Makuch moved to accept the minutes from the June 13, 2023 meeting, seconded by Chief Moore.

Vote: All yes.

The minutes from the July 11, 2023 meeting will be voted on at the next meeting as they were not disseminated in time for this meeting.

5. Old Business.

a. Capital Equipment Status

1. Building Updates (Next Steps and Challenges Station 13)

Chief Moore stated that they did the walk through with the BOS and he thanked everyone that came out to it. He stated that they found out there were some questions regarding the funding. There is about \$10,000 left from what the BOF originally approved for the mold problem and the money has been moved to Fund 3 and is available, but they do have to go to the BOF at their next meeting to let them know what the money will be used for. Chief Moore stated that the plumber came out and the goal is to have the heat on in two weeks costing about \$1,000. They are getting quotes on the insulation and hope to have it all done by the end of October or beginning of November. They found out where the downspouts on the building pour out and next week DPW is going to do some digging to see where it may be plugged to where it empties out. The building must be waterproof first before other repairs can be made.

Chief Moore stated that they must find a sleeping place for the second person working at the station. The accommodations (sleeping in the kitchen) that they have now for the second person cannot stay that way per the Fire Marshal. They are working on other options (campers which would be stationed at Station 13).

2. Vehicle Updates (Station 49 Rescue and Service)

Chairman Tanaka stated that he noticed that Rescue 149 has some rot on it. Chief Snyder mentioned that about 10 years ago they did a mild refurb on it, but there is some cab rot on it now. Chief Snyder stated that it is on the CIP plan in year 5 to replace the vehicle. The vehicle is 27 years old now. A discussion was had on grants for apparatus and equipment.

b. CIP Discussion/Coordination

Captain Cobb mentioned that he believes the request forms have not come out from CIP yet for the departments to fill out. Chairman Tanaka asked if both departments were going to start talking about their needs to integrate with each other. Chief Moore stated that they have already been discussing the 5, 10-, 15- and 20-year plans and that this year is going to be a tough year because of the buildings. Chairman Tanaka asked if WHFD has started

anything as far as a new building for their apparatus. Chief Snyder stated that they have just started making a list of necessities that the department needs and are researching who they can send a request out to for bids for a new building. Further discussion was had on WHFD's status regarding a new building. Selectman Makuch stated that with what has happened with Station 13 there is an accelerated need to look at that building. The BOS have discussed at their meeting if WFD#1 is to go ahead with their addition, what are they adding it on to (the present building or does that need to be replaced). Selectman Makuch thinks it is time to have a station location study. He stated that there is a federal standard for it. He feels if they are going to be building or adding on to WFD#1 and building at WHFD, there should be some data to back it up for the taxpayers, especially after what happened with the SBC. He then explained what would be in a station location study. Discussion was had on the study.

Selectman Makuch moved to send a request to the BOS to ask the BOF for \$30,000 for a station location study, seconded by Chief Moore. Discussion was had on the motion including other studies that have been done previously, the study itself, other departments that have had this study done, etc.

Vote: All yes.

c. Town of Union Discussions

Nothing to report on the Town of Union discussions.

A discussion was held on mutual aid ambulance calls to both Tolland and Stafford. Chief Moore stated that with Stafford they usually go when there is a second or third call in their town, but in Tolland it seems to be on their first call on nights and weekends. A discussion was had on the mutual aid ambulance calls to Tolland. After further discussion, the consensus was for the Willington Town leaders to speak with the Tolland Town leaders regarding this problem.

d. New Fiscal Year Starting/Issues?

Chairman Tanaka asked both departments if they have any new fiscal year starting issues or any problems they can foresee with this new budget season. Both departments agreed that it is too early in the fiscal year to know. Further discussion was had on this.

e. Tax Abatement/Accounting Issues

f. Pre Plans

Captain Cobb stated that WHFD has shared with him their Google drive of what they had online for some documents. He is hoping to get those published electronically next week. He stated that there are probably some firefighters in both departments that have gone to Firefighter II class that have done pre plans for specific structures in town which are not in that online folder and WFD#1 is missing some as well. Both departments will need to check with their firefighters to see if those pre plans still exist.

A discussion was had on IAR (I am responding) and what calls the departments respond to and which departments/apparatus respond.

Chief Moore would like this committee to come up with a better way to approach the BOF and the BOS about increasing the pay for the on-duty people so that it is more in line with some of the other departments around here. He stated that they are the lowest paid department around. They are in the process of hiring now as an employee just left, and they only received 4 applications and only interviewed 3. Their requirements are a minimum of Firefighter I, EMT and they must have experience because they can't then wait 2 months for the person to go through a recruit class. He stated that Willington only pays \$23.50 an hour in comparison to Hebron (a town population, size and call volume about on par with Willington) who starts their employees at \$29 an hour. Chief Moore stated that it is a big struggle when you are trying to hire people and you are competing with wages like that. A discussion was had on this. Chief Moore stated that they will be going into negotiations for pay increases hopefully in November and they are going to invite a member of the BOF to be a part of the negotiation team.

g. SOP's/SOG's/A&O's/Accreditation

Chief Moore stated that he and Chief Snyder are supposed to meet about the juniors and the SOP's/SOG's/A&O's/Accreditation but haven't had time yet. Chairman Tanaka wants to make sure this item stays on the list.

6. New Business.

a. Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (FEMA IS-247.B) Initiators

Chairman Tanaka stated that FEMA has a standard to initiate public warnings through IPAWS (integrated public alert & warning system). He stated that this sounds like it has federal money attached to it to send people to go to training. He thinks that it should be fire personnel that get the training and make decisions as they serve much longer in public safety than a town person would serve on whatever board or committee they were on. Selectman Makuch stated that when the BOS rolls out the emergency system that they are working on, there will be places in it where the messaging is driven from the Fire Chiefs, the Emergency Management Director or the Fire Marshal. Chairman Tanaka stated that the police side should be covered also for better communication with Troop C.

b. Budget Issues

c. Any Concerns That Have Arisen Since Last Meeting

Chief Moore stated that Station 13 is their only concern, and it is a daily concern. 2nd Assistant Chief Knight asked what is needed for WFD@#1 to comply for both employees to sleep at one station. Chief Moore stated that they need two separated bunk rooms, a shower and a kitchen. Chairman Tanaka asked if the plumbing is only taking care of the heating at this point. Chief Moore stated that the hope is that it will get the heat back to the front of the bay. He stated that the bathrooms do not meet code, which leads them into the renovation/restoration problem. Before they can do anything in there, it must be determined if it is a repair or renovation. A discussion was had on different ways to configure the station to get the employees back at Station 13 or any renovation they could do at Station 213 for temporary housing for the employees without spending too much money. Their situation is a work in progress.

d. Next Steps/Agenda Items

Chairman Tanaka stated that they will catch up with WFD#1 at the next meeting to see where they are regarding their situation.

Chairman Tanaka stated discussion will be had about pay raises for the employees.

Chief Moore stated that they will be at BOF next week because of their CIP request for a Hurst tool that will then be compatible with WHFD.

7. Correspondence.

None.

8. Good and Welfare.

Chief Moore stated that they lost Sean Marquardt as a full-time employee as he went to work at TN full time.

9. Adjournment.

Selectman Makuch moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by 2nd Assistant Chief Knight.

Vote: All yes.

This meeting was adjourned at 7:35p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Smith

Eileen Smith
Recording Secretary

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TOWN CLERK