

FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD



WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886

**Oswegatchie Fire Station Building Committee
Special Meeting**

January 8, 2026

Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 6:36pm

Members Present:

Robert Tuneski, Rocco Bracciale, Wayne Gilpin, Paul Rafuse, Ted Olynciw, Richard Muckle
Members Absent: Jennifer Bracciale, Matthew Blankenship, Timothy Sullivan

Guests:

Steve Smith, Eric Cantar, Will Walter & Steve Ulman (Benesch representatives), Shea Davy, David Stein

Public Comment:

None

Opening Remarks:

R. Tuneski – Holding this as a Special Meeting because the schedule of 2026 meetings had not be officially voted upon. This meeting will cover a Downes schedule review, invoice payment approvals and 2026 meeting schedule for Oswegatchie Fire Station Building Committee.

Approval of Invoices:

MOTION by R. Muckle, second T. Olynciw to approve the payment of Downes invoice #010 for \$4,456.00.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION by R. Muckle, second W. Gilpin to approve the payment of Downes invoice #009 for \$4,456.00.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION by T. Olynciw, second P. Rafuse to approve the payment of SPA invoice #25-2986 for \$8,800.00. (Attachment 3)

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION by R. Muckle, second P. Rafuse to approve the payment of The Day invoice Order Number d01109735 for \$474.03.00.

VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION by R. Muckle, second T. Olynciw to approve the payment of Mystic Air Quality Consultants, Inc. invoice #66801 for \$1,495.00.

T. Olynciw asked if S. Smith knew to what “RCRA8 TCLP” referred. S. Smith believes it references their proposal. S. Smith will follow up with Mystic Air.

VOTE: Unanimous

Current Business:

a. Schedule Review:

S. Smith reported Shea got the bid package out this week. There has been a very favorable response. Questions are already coming in from the bidders. S. Smith and E. Cantar will be working with S. Davy to answer these questions. A pre-bid conference, located at the firehouse, is scheduled for January 15, 2026 at 10am. Bids are due February 10, 2026. On Downes’ master schedule there is a scope review period and RTM approval and award if required. The Notice to Proceed begins the 13 month construction period (396 days) to turn the building over for occupancy which takes us to roughly March 2027.

b. Approve 2026 Meeting Schedule:

The preliminary meeting schedule was reviewed.

R. Tuneski proposed moving the February 5th meeting to February 12th due to the bids coming in on February 10, 2026.

R. Tuneski will be unavailable for the meeting scheduled for April 2nd and requested moving this meeting to either April 1st or April 9th. The committee agreed on April 1, 2026.

P. Rafuse pointed out he will be out of town for the July 2nd meeting and suggested eliminating this meeting time altogether. The committee agreed and the decision was made to delete the July 2, 2026 meeting.

MOTION by R. Muckle, second W. Gilpin to approve the meeting schedule as amended for calendar year 2026.

VOTE: Unanimous

Old Business:

T. Olynciw asked if the attached emails were to be addressed at this meeting. R. Tuneski explained that correspondence with the committee will not automatically be included in meeting minutes. Correspondence will be included as back-up information on the website. If the correspondence is taken up and addressed by the committee it will be part of the minutes.

W. Gilpin, as a point of information, mentioned that one of the boilers at Oswegatchie is unrepairable and there was no heat on Saturday, 1/3/26. R. Bracciale said heat was restored Saturday afternoon. R. Muckle asked if it would be prudent to look at some form of temporary heating in the event the boiler fails since the heating system will need to finish out this winter and perform the following winter.

As a follow-up action from the previous meeting, a number of traffic alerting options other than an overhead light were presented by S. Ulman (Benesch Traffic Engineer). He reviewed several alternatives including the following three:

1. Advanced warning signage could be installed, two on each East-West approach sides. Two would be approximately 425' on each approach to the fire station and then another set approximately 75-100' from the driveway. These would be static signs. Signage can be 36"x36" and/or 48"x48".
2. Another option is to put yellow beacons on the side of the signs that would wig-wag. Normal power would be run via conduit from the station to the signs, about 1,000', through bituminous pavement, driveways, etc. The signs would be activated manually by a switch upon departure from the station.
3. Another power option is solar power with a remote control button. A button could be installed in the station or in each truck. There are also signs with LED around the border which would flash yellow when activated. The conduit option is the lower maintenance option but more costly. Solar (wireless) is a less expensive installation cost and gives the flexibility to assign timers more easily. Either approach would require approval from DOT for an encroachment permit as this is a state road. R. Tuneski asked S. Ulman to provide a package of the plan presentation to include cost, pros and cons, and any other graphics by the next meeting for further action. W. Walters stated they would send copies to E. Cantar in the next couple of weeks.

P. Rafuse mentioned at the previous meeting himself, T. Sullivan and R. Bracciale were charged with reporting with the thoughts and sentiments of the career, part-time and volunteers on the traffic light. R. Tuneski's understanding was that the volunteers, Union and Director Haley were going to get together to determine what they collectively thought the right thing to do was. As part of that position, Director Haley would relay this to the Director of Traffic and make sure we had endorsement or, at least, acknowledgement before we proceed. The Union wants some kind of traffic signaling out there. They prefer an overhead light that would stop traffic completely. R. Tuneski requested P. Rafuse submit, to the Recording Secretary, a copy of the Union meeting minutes as evidence of the OQE for the recommendation from the Union. An email

correspondence from T. Sullivan was submitted indicating the part-time staff's recommendation. R. Bracciale confirmed this position. The recommendation of the volunteers needs to be confirmed, perhaps by Chief Pafias. R. Tuneski asked if P. Rafuse had met with Director Haley. He indicated that he had not. R. Tuneski indicated that there needs to be a consensus from the groups as a whole, i.e., Union, Part-Time, Volunteers, and Director Haley, and that the recommendation for an alternative alerting system must be socialized with Chief Balestracci to insure that it does not conflict with his previous position on an overhead light. P. Rafuse stated he would meet with R. Bracciale and prepare the recommendations of their respective groups to submit to the committee. R. Tuneski stated Chief Balestracci indicated in November 2024 that an overhead signal light is not required. Because of that, the committee started to entertain other options to provide some level of alerting. According to R. Tuneski, Director Haley has the obligation to go to the Director of Traffic to discuss and reconcile the committee's desire to have an alternate form of alerting to insure that it does not conflict with the Director's previous decision about an overhead light. T. Olynciw expressed concern over what he should report to the RTM. R. Tuneski stated there has been no action taken on this issue officially so T. Olynciw is welcome to share that information, but his understanding is that it was going to be independent of the bid. In a post-meeting discussion with S. Smith (who was inadvertently deleted from zoom call and could not re-engage), the light was intentionally not in the bid package as there is no design. It had been discussed at the previous meeting that an alternative alerting system (signs and/or lights) would be included as either an addendum to the contract or put out separately for bid. W. Gilpin stated he was confused by the report from the Police Chief, and noted that just because he says it is not required does not mean we cannot have it. W. Gilpin's point is there is a difference between "it is not required" and "you can't have it". Rather it is not required but it would be a good idea. R. Tuneski reiterated that is why Director Haley needs to meet with Director of Traffic Balestracci to insure that the position of desiring an alternate form of alerting such as a lit road sign is not in contradiction with the Director of Traffic's determination. The question of a bid allowance for lights was raised. D. Stein indicated there are no allowances for a traffic light in the bid document. R. Muckle indicated that in the Downes estimate there is a \$300,000-\$500,000 for a traffic light. At the last meeting, S. Smith said we did not need to put it in the bid, we would do it separately. In addition, before going out for bid, an option must be selected and designed.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 12, 2026.

MOTION to adjourn W. Gilpin, second R. Muckle
VOTE: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned 7:45pm

Respectfully submitted by:
Linda Finnegan, Recording Secretary



OSWEGATCHIE FIRE STATION BUILDING COMMITTEE

Meetings are held at 6:30pm at Public Safety Building

204 Boston Post Road
Waterford, CT 06385

January through December
2026
Meeting Schedule*

February 12, 2026

March 5, 2026

March 19, 2026

April 1, 2026

April 16, 2026

May 7, 2026

May 21, 2026

June 4, 2026

June 18, 2026

July 16, 2026

August 6, 2026

August 20, 2026

September 3, 2026

September 17, 2026

October 1, 2026

October 15, 2026

November 5, 2026

November 19, 2026

December 3, 2026

December 17, 2026

*Meeting schedule subject to change