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TOWN CLERK

Fire Services Review Special Committee

Minutes—Special Meeting March 6, 2025

Members Present: Robert Tuneski (BoF); Susan Driscoll (RTM); Richard Muckle (BoS); Matthew Keatley (RTM); Tim Condon (RTM Public Protection & Safety Committee); Mike Howley (Interim Director, Fire Services); Steven Sinagra (Director, Emergency Management); Todd Patton (Chief, Goshen Fire Co.)

Members Absent: Tom Martin (Captain, WFS); Mark Greczkowski (WAS Director of Operations)

1. **Call to order:** Chair Tuneski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Public comment:** In-person, none. Online submission from Bryan Sayles (attached)
3. **Previous Minutes:** Motion by Driscoll, second by Condon, to table consideration of June 25, 2024, minutes until the next meeting. Voice vote: Unanimous
4. **Consideration of FSRSC's charge from the RTM (6/7/21):**
 - a. **Remaining/additional information needed:** Members reviewed list on agenda and Deliverables list last updated Jan. 2023. All previously submitted data/plans will be updated (the bulk of it by Howley, with some assistance from the Planning Director). Two requests from the last meeting are in progress: Sinagra and Martin will work on response time data that includes responding station and district of incident; Howley will expand volunteer incentive report to show qualifying hours, types of incidents, and certification status of each volunteer (but not by name).
 - b. **Discuss report format/content:** Chair presented his draft outline, explained Bottom Line Up Front acronym, and asked for input on the focus, order, whether any items needed to be added or amended. Condon used a North Star analogy to explain that the outline would be our map as we pull together the report, starting with where we are now, then find our best and acceptable aims for immediate and farther future, and move on to showing how to get there. Discussion of specific items followed, with members requesting that we add structural issues to facility descriptions, present the Grand List to underscore value of Fire Services to preserve what we have; note trends in response types/frequencies; include statutes and agreements with volunteer companies and WAS in Item 6; add volunteer tax abatements and recruitment/retention of career firefighters in Item 7(c); add Action Items, Timeline, Dollars to Item 7(i).

Motion by Condon, second by Keatley, to approve the outline as amended. Voice vote: Unanimous.

Chair predicted that after a couple of more meetings, he should have the starter draft of the report ready. Condon suggested that with a variety of updated data coming through, and the possibility of new info triggering a new area or question, the preliminary focus should be on the background info first so we can get consensus on that content and before moving forward.

Motion by Keatley, second by Condon, to have Chair present draft reports in phases, with the first to go no further than Item 4 of the outline. Voice vote: Unanimous.

5. Consider retaining outside expertise: Chair noted that FSRSC was not given funds to hire an outside consultant to write the report/recommendation. But the members can apply critical thinking as we review and consolidate the information and data being provided by our in-house expert members and put together the "final" report. He asked members for their thoughts on potentially asking a outside expert to review the report—not to edit it, but to suggest issues or points missed, or that need clarification or additional backup to add a level of credibility. Condon noted that we've had an outside consultants write reports in the past, but they all tend to get ignored or forgotten as elected/appointed personnel change. So he and Driscoll designed the FSRSC specifically to include all the parties involved at the table so they could work together to determine what we have, what we need, what we need to improve. The result, he said would get the needed community lift and weigh-in so that the final report would be easy to point to in the future as a reference and guideline. He added that he can reach out to some regional experts who have done similar reviews for other towns and gauge their interest.

Motion by Muckle, second by Condon, to seek outside authority to review report. Yes-4 Abstain-1 (Driscoll)

6. Next meeting: Motion by Keatley, second by Condon, to schedule next meeting for March 27 at 6:00 p.m. Voice vote: Unanimous. Consensus to meet at Jordan station, and schedule future meetings at the other stations.

7. Adjournment: Motion by Condon; second by Keatley to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. Voice vote: Unanimous.

Submitted by
Susan Driscoll, FSRSC Secretary

encl: Sayles public comment
Tuneski draft outline

March 6, 2025

Fire Services Review Special Committee
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385

Dear Committee Members,

After reading years of meeting minutes from various Boards and Committees plus, pouring over the pages of the FY2026 Fire Services Budget Proposal, there seems to be no agreement about the actual number of full-time and volunteer firefighters serving Waterford. As a faithful taxpayer and resident of District #2, Quaker Hill, isn't it reasonable for me to expect to find an exact accounting of who those full-time and volunteer firefighters are?

Furthermore, when visiting the town website not only was it difficult to navigate but when I finally found the Fire Services directory it appeared to be incomplete.

<https://www.waterfordct.org/Directory.aspx?did=15>

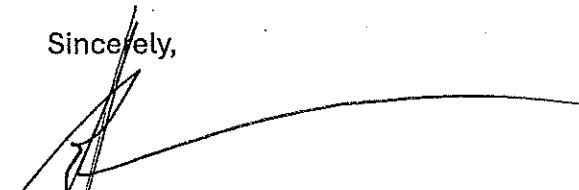
It's time to end the ambiguity surrounding the issue of staffing therefore, I strongly suggest that the town produce a *Fire Services Organizational Chart*. The benefits of doing so are as follows:

1. To clearly list the human resources assigned that effectively deliver comprehensive fire services throughout the town of Waterford.
2. To understand who is in charge, who the administrators are, the names of the firefighters and their qualifications/certifications.

The proposed organizational chart is not a schedule, nor does it assign resources to a specific district. It should only list names and titles including qualifications/certifications and be publicly posted on the town's Fire Services page. (Directory?)

Finally, it should be relatively easy to periodically update an organizational chart following a new hire's probationary schedule. At the very least it can be one document, in one place, which provides an exact accounting of Fire Services staff. Something that I have found hard to do.

Sincerely,



Bryan Sayles
54 Wintergreen Drive
Quaker Hill, CT 06375

Report Outline

1. Executive Summary / BLUF
2. Introduction
 - a. Charge
 - b. Committee Composition
 - c. Source Material
 - i. Previous reports
 - d. Review Process
 - e. Committee Timeline
 - f. Initial report
3. History
 - a. Fire Services Evolution
 - i. Pre-Fire Commission
 - ii. Fire Commission
 - iii. Fire Services Director
 - b. Volunteers
 - c. Hybrid
 - d. Current Configuration
 - e. Locations and Facility Descriptions
4. Demographic Data
 - a. Population and Trends
 - b. New Construction
 - c. Development Areas
 - d. Grand List
5. Findings
 - a. Response Types and Frequencies
 - b. Capital Plan
 - c. Staffing
 - d. Fleet Plan
 - e. Communications
6. Legal Requirements
7. Strategic Plan / Recommendations
 - a. General Observations
 - i. Mutual Aide Considerations
 - ii. Future Considerations
 - b. Number of Fire Stations
 - i. Justification

- ii. Roles and Responsibilities
- iii. Chain of command
- c. Staffing
 - i. Volunteer officers, volunteer fire fighters, volunteer fire police, part time fire fighters, marine division, full time fire fighters
 - ii. Retention of volunteers, stipend
 - iii. Mandatory training
 - iv. Additional training
- d. Infrastructure / Capital Plan
- e. Fleet Plan
- f. Communications
 - i. Radio
- g. Policies and Procedures
- h. Inter Organizational Relationships
- i.