

Minutes
Local Emergency Coordinating Committee
February 2, 2017
Town Hall Conference Room B

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.
Present: Mark Kiefer, Ray Eldridge, Andy Brodersen, Julie Blanchard, John Elsesser, Mike Dombkowski, Geoff Firth, Bill Trudelle, Mark Palmer
Absent: No Noel Waite, Rick Landry, Dennis Dittrich
2. **Audience of Citizens:** None.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes – January 5, 2017:**
Geoff Firth moved and Andy Brodersen seconded to accept the minutes of the January 5, 2017 meeting. The motion carried on unanimous vote.

4. **Agency updates:**

Coventry Public Schools – Bill Trudelle:

- We added 6 more cameras at the high school/middle school over the last 6 weeks. The Police Department has access to all cameras in the district and maps of locations. They are putting the information into the cruisers.
- We are making progress with repairs to the gym floor. The floor is installed with the first coat of poly. We will be back up on the 16th. Sprinkler guards are to be ordered that can withstand a 90 mph fast ball. John Elsesser asked if they plan to rent a lift to install them. Bill replied yes. John said other departments might want to take note for possible coordination of other projects that may require a lift.

NCVFD – Ray Eldridge:

- Rescue 1 is still waiting to get into the shop for recall work and the light tower.
- The Quint is at FiveStar. They are doing all the minor items, such as lettering, etc. It should be coming out soon and then onto DPW for an oil pan.

CVFA – Geoff Firth/Dombkowski:

- Vintech is working out well. They are doing a good job. We want to change the hours and have them start at 5 PM instead of 6. A lot of people are willing to do duty shifts but they have to finish by 5 PM. We will talk with Noel to discuss. A 5 AM -5 PM shift would be ideal but we don't know if there is money for that. People get home and 5 is the latest they can go in the morning. Right now we have a gap when they leave at 4. John Elsesser said the Council gave \$65,000 to subsidize daytime staffing with Vintech – we can't just add another 5 hours per week times two people. That would be \$300-400 per week. It starts adding up and has to be looked at financially.
- We are starting to take a look at the ambulance contract. We would like to hear what John's thoughts are. John said he has taken the old contract and sent it to the attorney for review. We don't have an update from DPH yet. We have asked the attorney to look at the relationship for ambulance based on that language. John cannot touch it this month as he is tied up with budget work. Once the Council gets his budget then he may have more time. Last month we tried to talk about getting standard operating procedures done. He suggested starting with whoever has best ones. NCVFD is more recent and we got a copy

from Rick Landry. Maybe we can start with these as common procedures rather than starting from scratch. NCVFD has been working on theirs for several years and they are in tighter shape.

Police Department – Mark Palmer:

- Mark was at a meeting at the State Capitol today.
- Our application period for police officers ended with 163 applicants. We did an initial screening to go to the next stage which is an oral interview. 25 candidates were selected for the next step. We will do that the week of the 13th or the week after. We are coordinating schedules with the interview panel and hope to have Gail McDonnell and David Petrone participate.
- A car was stolen on Monday night from Pine Lake Shores. It was recovered the next day in Newington. There are some suspects in the case and we are actively working on it.
- Officers Flanagan and Vail made an arrest during a burglary in progress at a home on Rt. 44. The homeowner was driving by – the home is under construction and he saw a car that he didn't recognize. We did a search warrant on the car and recovered a number of stolen items from other burglaries. Otherwise crime has been fairly low lately.
- Julie Blanchard asked whether the “Warrant Wednesdays” feature is still being done on Facebook. Chief Palmer said yes and noted that almost everyone who has been featured has turned themselves in.

Public Works – Mark Kiefer:

- We are geared up for winter storms. There haven't been any big ones yet, but we have been out quite a bit with ice treatment. We've used quite a bit of material and have 800 tons left – which would cover approximately 5 storms with 200 tons encumbered. Barring any severe storms we can make it through. We are in better shape now than a month ago.
- We are actively trimming brush and doing roadside mowing, sign work, pothole patching. We are also making repairs to the wash bay - magnesium chloride is causing rusting of hardware and i-beams. We are stripping and painting the bay with a salt-resistant surface. Magnesium chloride is very effective but it is three times more corrosive. It covers a wider temperature range. Car manufacturers are beginning to design differently to help prevent corrosion.
- We are working on the lake gate – the project is making good progress. Footings are in place and walls will go in next week. Once they are back filled we will be 75% complete. Then the sluiceway will be converted to pipe. We think we can meet the mid-March deadline to begin raising the lake for summer. The weather is cooperating. They are covering the concrete at night.
- We took delivery of the one ton dump truck – it is working very well.

Town Manager – John Elsesser:

- We will start following up on the ambulance contract next week.
- Phones were cut over to VOIP on Friday at the Town Hall. Beth will be coordinating training.
- We had a surprise on the Main St. project - Red Technologies started up again working on the culvert. The plan is over the next week or so to dig out the whole culvert, install pre-cast walls via crane and build a floor. It is a complex pouring process. The contractor estimates 4-6 weeks to finish. Getting utilities under the road to tie into Tracy Shoddy Mill is part of next steps. Once the asphalt plants open they will do the work across to the Bidwell Tavern and that is when we will begin to see traffic impacts again. They can't do that work until hot mix is available - approximately April 1. Then they will begin work

on the Bidwell Tavern side. After that they will pave the hill going down and cut out the high-level curve area and lower that section. Road work from the culvert to church will bring the hump down – that will go fairly fast. Sub-surface work is done. Then the sidewalk work and lights, etc. can be completed. We are trying to get a wrap-up date. We'd like to hear July but they have until October. Business impact will be rough for the next month. Meet Me on Main restaurant is closed during the week right now but if you want to support that business, show up on weekends when they are open.

- The capital budget will be out within a couple weeks. We expect to do a preview to the Town Council at the second meeting in January. The operating budget needs to be out a week earlier this year. The first significant budget meeting for the Council is March 6. Next Wednesday the Governor announces his budget and we are expecting significant municipal aid cuts. The State has a \$1.5 billion deficit. We are expecting reductions in education aid and reduction in MBR for education. You can't cut millions from a budget and have it all come out of the towns. The Council will have their work cut out for them and it will not be easy. We have to start thinking survival vs. the status quo. He personally doesn't think the Governor's budget will be the one that gets adopted. He doesn't think the legislature will be willing to vote for it. The pension vote yesterday went straight down party lines and the Lt. Governor had to break the tie. We are in unknown political territory. Moody's bond rate for the State would have plummeted. The plan stretched out payments but didn't get union concessions. They can still go back and get concessions but the State can take this step without talking to the unions.
- Beth Bauer's retirement date is 3/17. If you have unfinished financial business don't wait too long because as it gets closer it will be harder to get onto her schedule.
- Natural gas is flowing from the CNG gas extension project. Gas is in the pipeline. We will discuss a training program for firefighters. The first building that will go live will be the Town Hall Annex. It could be next week. We are hoping to do the Town Hall two weeks later – and are hoping not to have to top off the propane tank. The School Admin building will follow. CT Mechanical is coordinating with Bill Trudelle. We are waiting until April to do the police and fire conversions. Prep work will be done in March. We want to use as much oil as we can. Geoff Firth asked if the generator will be converted. John said no, it is not cost effective. We are not going to rush to pull the old oil tanks out – we must use what oil we have committed to. We are expecting that the three tanks up at the high school/middle school will be full and we will pump them out and use the oil at Robertson & Coventry Grammar School next year. Town Hall and Police oil can go to Public Works and the substation. This will be a complicated budget analysis. We are excited the gas is available and that we are moving forward. The generator at the Annex will not be changed either as it would require a new line. We will leave the propane tank there for that. Long term we will have to get the oil tanks out but we must resolve the fuel issues first. We are working with CNG to determine energy credits for the equipment.

5. Road closure communications:

Mark Kiefer said last week we had an interesting storm with a couple inches of sleet. During the storm a half dozen trees came down into electric wires. An issue came to the forefront because the new person in charge of the bus company wasn't sure of the protocol for notification. The bus company sent a bus down a road that wasn't clear and they had to turn around. When Mark worked at the Town of Mansfield there was a big winter storm. As a result they created an interactive document to enter downed trees, clear trees, etc. The South Windsor IT Department has that technology in place and we are contacting them to pursue doing something similar. We could use it not only when the Emergency Operations Center is open but for smaller events too. The technology is there so he thinks it would be worthwhile. John Elsesser said as we move forward we will seek input from this group. The document can be viewed on the South Windsor

website – and is accessible by the entire community. We will have to determine who will enter the data when a tree is down and how monitoring will be done. Mark noted our IT people already do a lot. John said we will have to ask for more hours this year. We do already have a road alert system but the entry logistics are similar so we tend to use it sparingly. Mark will talk with Scott Roberts from South Windsor IT.

6. **911 Communication:**

Mark Palmer said for the last several years we have been concerned about getting automatic information. When most calls come in TN gets the name and cell phone number. Coventry PD doesn't get that information. For Fire they dispatch. If it is a possible crime they transfer the call to us and we have to collect the information. In meetings with TN we talked about the possibility of them dispatching for police. That is not viable. They do not have police dispatch training and there are equipment requirements. We came up with a plan to have a connection between TN and PD where we will get the information via a CAD system. It is in process. It involves a number of different companies but we hope to complete it in the next couple of months. They also submitted an application to the 911 Commission to have an intercom between the two dispatch centers. TN said they would pick up the cost. We are looking forward to these improvements.

7. **Other Business:**

John Elsesser reported that the Board of Fire Officers voted and sent a memo that they are choosing not to work toward consolidation of the fire departments. This is different than what was discussed at this table a month ago. Noel Waite is away this week so we will probably discuss this more at the next meeting. Ray Eldridge said we were told to come back to this committee to determine what would be the best route – having a fire chief or fire administrator. Because of the Town umbrella - people are now saying why merge. Some are in favor and some are not, it switches every meeting. Ray doesn't think it will be done unless the Town does it. He said we discussed either putting in a full time administrator or a part time administrator with an assistant. We probably won't get a chief to come in for the small amount of money it would pay with the large amount of responsibility required. The current system with the part-time administrator has been working but we feel he is getting overwhelmed. John Elsesser said he is a full-time administrator. Ray replied we feel he wears too many hats. He is the Fire Marshal, backup Building Inspector etc. John said that some of the things that tied up his time, like truck purchasing and changing the ambulance license will be done. What was asked for by both departments was that they do the policies. They didn't want someone to tell them what to do. The stories change every week and we are going around in circles. Ray said he believes nothing is going to be done unless it is done at the Town level. You will not get a straight answer from either department. Geoff Firth agreed, saying he can't get a straight answer either. Fighting fires is not a problem. The administrative side is the problem.

8. **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 PM on a motion by Geoff Firth, seconded by Mark Kiefer and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone