Minutes
Local Emergency Coordinating Committee Meeting
April 7, 2016

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.
   Present: Mark Palmer, Police Chief; Andy Brodersen, Town Council; Noel Waite, Fire/EMS Administrator; Mark Kiefer, Public Works Director; Bud Meyers, NCVFD President; Ray Eldridge, NCVFD Chief; Julie Blanchard, Town Council; John Elsesser, Town Manager

2. **Audience of Citizens:** None.

3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Noel Waite moved to accept the minutes from March 3, 2016. The motion was seconded by Bud Meyers and carried on unanimous vote.

4. **Agency Updates:**

   Fire/EMS – Noel Waite:
   1) The application for PSA response for OEMS has been submitted. An email was sent to have a follow up meeting.
   2) Blasting has started on Rt. 31 – it is going well. There were weather delays so they will be back on Tuesday. Communication was done to notify about the adjustment.
   3) Vintech is doing very well. John noted that two Wednesdays ago we had to go to mutual aid when the volunteer crew was supposed to cover because didn't have a crew. This week we had to re-tone. We just put on another tech so we are up to 5.
   4) At the last Board of Fire Officers meeting we came up with a plan to break up the tasks on policy modifications and make assignments. This will help create ownership and get feedback. Bud said we are doing recruitment for the work committees. Noel said we are still alternating stations for these meetings - participation has dropped off.

   Public Works – Mark Kiefer:
   - There have been a few weather issues so we can't say winter is over. We are hopeful this is the last of it. We are doing work in between.
   - We finished Rails to Trails work and the trees are down at Miller Richardson, creating additional parking there.
   - The Laidlaw soccer field is going well. We have started screening material and the project looks to be on track for April seeding, for a field this time next year.
   - Mt. Ridge drainage/road work started yesterday and the project will be completed by the end of May, weather permitting.
   - The Village project went out to bid – we got good bids and are meeting with the low bidder and hope to start 4/18.
   - The second phase of crack sealing will start soon.

   NCVFD – Bud Meyers:
   - Reminder about the open house on Saturday.
   - Noel, Bud, Ray and Town Council member Tom Pope went to a seminar regarding volunteer workforce recruiting/retention last Friday. It was ok but not really what he was hoping for. There were some valid points. They talked about federal grants that are available. The following day he went to West Redding for a recruitment seminar that was a little more enlightening. They have some communication/outreach materials we could use. Noel said regarding the event last Friday, there were a number of departments there and when we went

into the breakout rooms the discussions and problems were all the same as ours: length of service awards, stipends, tax abatement issues, etc. All of the departments have the problem of getting people to come. Some are paying $50 a call and still can't get people. Bud said they actually find praise and recognition goes a long way, like the volunteer recognition event that was done last summer. John asked if the summer event was a good approach on a concert night. Noel and Bud will reach out to the membership for feedback.

- The plant sale went well. It was a lot of work but we cleared $1300. Next time we will advertise credit card availability. Noel suggested trying a pre-order too.
- Calls are averaging 100 per month with 361 to date.

Police Department – Mark Palmer:

- A follow up meeting on TN discussions regarding dispatch is scheduled for 4/12. They are putting a proposal together. They have some questions. Noel will be there on behalf of the fire departments.
- On-site accreditation was this week. It went very well. It was a different type of assessment – this was a gold standard process for agencies who have been accredited for a while. There was less policy review and more compliance. They did interviews with other staff. We had a public hearing that was well attended. They also did ride alongs and visited the academy to understand our recruitment, hiring and training process. We had an exit interview today and received a positive overview. They prepare a report and submit it to the Commission for a hearing in July. The Commission is the body that grants the re-accreditation. Thanks to everyone who participated in the interviews. The members of the department deserve a great deal of credit. It is not an easy undertaking. There are less than 1000 accredited departments nationwide and less than 25 departments of our size.

Town Manager – John Elsesser:

- The Town Council finished their proposed budget this week and it is ready to go to Town Meeting on 4/23. There were no changes in capital that affected the fire departments. There were modest adjustments to provide an admin vehicle and carpeting for the police department. The Town budget bottom line was not reduced. They were able to get to a zero increase in taxes, predicated on State revenue. A Budget in Brief is available online and the whole document should be available tomorrow. The legal ad is in. We are hoping the Town newsletter will be out before the meeting. It is a tight timeframe.
- North Coventry solar is still on the list. They have spent a lot of money on an engineer so we have to believe they will do it.
- Crumbling foundations issue: there is a regional meeting with Mansfield, Tolland and Willington 5/11/16 at 6:30 PM at E.O. Smith. We sent a letter to people whose houses were constructed during the period of 1983-2003 and there are over 1500. That is 20 percent of our grand list. We are hoping people who really have the issue will sign up with the Dept. of Consumer Protection because if we don't have enough numbers it will be difficult to get aid.
- CNG – proposal to extend natural gas to Coventry: we have to decide by the end of the month whether we want to try to pursue this project. We are going to the next Board of Education meeting to discuss it. Mark Kiefer noted that the energy committee is behind it. John said we will try to get something in writing for them to submit to the Council. The building efficiency committee will also be involved and we will reach out to homeowners along the route with a method for feedback. It is a major decision in a short amount of time. Conversions for Town facilities would be very simple. In some cases it may make sense to upgrade old boilers. There are myriad financing options. The Town would have to make payments of $90,000 over seven years interest free, and that is about the break-even point with savings from the fuel differential, lower maintenance costs and replacement of tanks. Plus CNG would pay

property taxes of about $15,000 per year. After seven years there could be ongoing savings depending on the price differential compared to oil.

- The sidewalk from First Church to the library will be at 30% design next week. The State wants us to spend the money by 9/5/16 so we may split the project into two construction zones. They will have two construction teams. The culvert will be precast so that will accelerate the time for installation. Installation is anticipated in July. The equipment to the left of Ackert Hall is to filter groundwater contamination.
- The LOTCIP Lake/Cross Street project is still waiting to go out to bid for the start of the sewer project. Hopefully it will be in a week or two. We will start construction in July once school is out.
- The sidewalk project here awaits encroachment permits from the State.

5. **2016 CT Emergency Management Symposium:**
   This is an opportunity for members. It is a busy time but it is a good program. John has attended. Mark has also attended a couple times.

6. **Coming Events:**
   1) Memorial Day Parade: Julie asked if the route will be good with the construction projects that are planned. John replied yes it should be. The highway permit has been requested, a military flyover is approved and grave marker flags were ordered.
   2) Tour de Mansfield: John said this event has come through town without issue in the past. We have received a letter from resident at Antrim and Brigham expressing concern about the number of bikes. Noel noticed that the 28.4 to 30.3 mile location on their route map is not identified as Coventry but it is Coventry. Andy asked if we provide security. Mark Palmer said no - we only sign the permit. Typically the number of bikers thin out the longer the route is. Noel said a lot of them stop at the 20 mile mark. Mark Palmer asked if the letter we got from the concerned citizen would alter their route. Mark Kiefer said he doesn’t think we can stop them. John said because it is an organized event it requires a permit. We could say no. The only time we had concern was a 2000 motorcycle event and we worked out an alternative route. Mark Kiefer noted that Brigham Tavern is a tough road to navigate and he would agree with the citizen that sightlines are not good. A separate meeting of the Traffic Authority will be set up for next week to discuss this matter further.
   3) CoventryFest: John said this is the second year of a 3-year contract with the fireworks shooter. We haven't gotten the permit yet. We typically invite the organizers to a meeting so that will be next month. The fire departments should starting talking about whether there are any issues. Ray said we will probably do everything the same. John said there is more outside lighting at the park now that should help with crowd exiting issues.
   4) The Steeplechase event will also be put on the Traffic Authority agenda.

7. **Other Business:**
   Noel said there is a new Knox box on First Congregational Church. Next Monday we will start pumping out the school sprinkler storage tank for maintenance – it will be refilled next week. School is out for vacation so it is a good week to do it. John said a sprinkler head was knocked off and caused a flood at the middle school in the area where the old floors were.

8. **Adjournment:**
   Bud Meyers moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 PM. The motion was seconded by Noel Waite and carried on unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone