

TOWN OF WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT
Special Meeting Notice



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AGENCY: Health & Safety Committee

DATE: May 11, 2020

TIME: 6:30 PM

PLACE: Virtual Meeting

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. *Update on COVID 19 related topics
4. *Information regarding Community Health Services organization
5. *Update on Police Department Professional Development program
6. *Update on Police Department's mental health clinician services
7. Update on Windsor Volunteer Ambulance
8. Staff Reports
9. Approval of Minutes
 - a) December 12, 2019
10. Adjournment

*Backup materials


Public Act 75-312 requires notice of Special Meetings to be posted in the Town Clerk's Office not less than 24 hours prior to the time of such meeting. No other business shall be considered at this meeting than that listed on this Agenda.

Agenda Item Summary

Date: May 11, 2020

To: Members of the Health and Safety Committee

Prepared By: Dr. Michael A. Pepe, Director of Health

Reviewed By: Peter Souza, Town Manager 

Subject: COVID-19 Related Issues with Nursing Homes

Background

In Windsor there are several licensed skilled nursing facilities or so-called nursing homes. One is Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center, which is a 24-hour skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility. This facility *is licensed by the* Connecticut Department of Public Health Facility Licensing and Investigation Section to have 108 beds. Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center provides care for a wide array of medical conditions, and as such, has a medically diverse population.

Discussion/Analysis

As many long-term care facilities throughout Connecticut and the United States have a number of residents with COVID-19 positive residents, Windsor Health and Rehabilitation is among those affected. The Windsor Health Department has had regular contact with the Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center and other State licensed facilities as they provide information on a daily basis related to resident names, symptoms, test results, etc.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center has restricted all visitors, cancelled all communal meals and gatherings and has implemented precautions as needed in providing patient care. During the pandemic, the CT Department of Public Health Facility Licensing and Investigation Section (FLIS) has been the group investigating care and services for all facilities that they license. They conduct unannounced visits to review infection control practices, implementation of CDC guidelines, staffing, medical records and evaluate the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE).

The Windsor Health Department has also worked with each of the nursing facilities. We have reached out to the Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) to help with staffing at Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center. Volunteers have been assisting the facility by doing various medical and non-medical jobs. CT DPH has been made aware of our ongoing contact with the nursing facilities.

If and when complaints are received in the Health Department, staff contact FLIS to report the complaint and determine the next steps. Often times, next steps include the Windsor Health Department contacting the facility administrators and filing an on-line complaint form with FLIS.

The Windsor Health Department continues to work with the Windsor Health and Rehabilitation Center and the other nursing facilities to connect them with available resources as best as possible.

Financial Impact

None

Other Board Action

None

Recommendations

None

Attachments


None

Agenda Item Summary

Date: May 11, 2020

To: Members of the Health and Safety Committee

Prepared By: Dr. Michael A. Pepe, Director of Health

Reviewed By: Peter Souza, Town Manager 

Subject: Information on Community Health Services, Inc.

Background

Community Health Services, Inc. is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) which means they are certified by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Some of the requirements to be designated a FQHC include serving as a designated Medically Underserved Area or Medically Underserved Population, providing comprehensive services and having an ongoing quality assurance program, and offering a sliding fee scale to persons with incomes below the 200 percent Federal poverty guidelines.

The main branch of Community Health Services (CHS) is located in Hartford and a satellite branch was opened in Windsor in 2013. The services offered at the Windsor branch of CHS include urgent care and medical and mental health services for patients 3 years of age and older.

Discussion/Analysis

When Community Health Services, Inc., opened, the Windsor location and several town departments including the Health Department and Human / Social Services were provided information and asked to make referrals as needed. Currently, when residents and non-residents request medical services (vaccinations, urgent care needs) that cannot be provided by the Health Department, the individual is referred to the Windsor Avenue branch of CHS. Staff at the Health Department will help the individual make contact with CHS to facilitate a resolution of the issue. On an as needed basis, Social Services caseworkers provide information and referrals to CHS.

The Health Department has not had a formal relationship with CHS, Inc., beyond providing information and referral services for a resident or non-resident.

Financial Impact

None

Other Board Action

None

Recommendations

None

Attachments


None

Agenda Item Summary

Date: May 11, 2020

To: Members of the Health & Safety Committee

Prepared By: Chief Melanson, Chief of Police

Reviewed By: Peter Souza, Town Manager 

Subject: Police Department Professional Development / Training

Background

Police training oversight in Connecticut is overseen by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST-C). POST-C establishes the required curriculum for basic entry level police training which must be completed to obtain certification as a police officer in CT. Currently, all new police recruits must complete 871 hours in a multitude of areas to become certified. Required areas included in this training are topics such as Human Behavior / Interpersonal Relations, Stress Management, Dealing with Juveniles, Victims / Witness Advocacy, Citizens with Special Needs, Conflict Management, Cultural Awareness and Diversity, and Fair and Impartial Policing.

Once Basic Training is completed, new officers must complete an additional 400 hours of field training with an officer trained as a Field Training Officer (FTO). The FTO program is set up in such a way that the new officer has 3 different training officers throughout the program. This provides the new officer with different perspectives on different officers handling different types of situations within the purview and guidelines of department policy.

A police officer certification is valid for 3 years. In order to recertify, an officer must complete a minimum of 60 hours of training in various areas. Twenty-eight hours of this training is specific to various mandated training topics, such as Firearms, Rape Crisis, Domestic Violence, Human Relations, and Bigotry and Bias Crimes. The remaining 32 hours are considered “elective” training hours that enhance an officer’s skills in various law enforcement areas. Some of these areas include Crime Scene Procedures, Photography, Computer Crimes, and a host of other topic areas.

Discussion/Analysis

The law enforcement training landscape in Connecticut is in the midst of change. In years past, POST-C would offer a variety of training courses throughout the year for no or very little cost. Over the past several years, due to state budget constraints and reductions in personnel at POST-C, there has been a steady decline in the number of course offerings for police officers. As such, municipalities are now bringing in private training companies to provide advanced training for officers. These courses vary in topics, but overall, tend to be costly.

The Police Department is part of a regional training group that provides officers with the 40 of the 60 hours of training required for recertification. This training ensures that officers receive all the mandatory subject training hours outlined above. In addition, officers train quarterly in house on firearms, use of force, and scenario based training.

In 2018 and 2019, Police Department staff and other town employees participated in an organization-wide set of training sessions that included unconscious bias and inclusion training. These sessions were held with outside trainers and designed to raise awareness and teach employees to recognize unconscious biases. Police department supervisors and managers attended additional sessions that focused on learning about how unconscious bias can impact management and leadership decisions and behaviors.

As with all of society, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a detrimental effect on the ability to train officers. Officers scheduled to attend their recertification training have been delayed as our provider develops the ability to provide POST-C approved online / virtual training. In order to provide additional officer training, the Police Department has teamed up with the Daigle Law Group to provide every officer an on-line training account where they can attend on-line training that is approved by POST-C.

Financial Impact

None at this time

Other Board Action

None

Recommendations

At this time there is no specific action requested of the committee.

Attachments


None

Agenda Item Summary

Date: May 11, 2020

To: Members of the Health & Safety Committee

Prepared By: Donald Melanson, Chief of Police

Reviewed By: Peter Souza, Town Manager 

Subject: Crisis Intervention Team Clinician

Background

For well over a decade the Police Department has worked diligently to enhance police response to persons experiencing mental health emergencies. Starting in 2005, officers were trained in the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) model and in 2008 a collaborative approach with the local behavioral health agency, Community Health Resources (CHR) was developed.

In late 2015, the Police Department received a grant through the US Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to improve the response to mental health crises. Funds were used to provide additional Crisis Intervention Team training for officers and an embedded mental health clinician through CHR. The goal of the embedded mental health clinician has been to assist in follow up to crisis calls, focusing on diversion from the criminal justice system as well as linkage to needed services.

Recent operating budgets have included funding to continue utilization of an embedded Mental Health Clinician with the Police Department. The Police Department has a contractual arrangement with Community Health Resources in which they provide a mental health clinician and associated supervision.

Discussion/Analysis

In FY18 the department responded to 332 calls with persons experiencing mental health emergencies or calls categorized as involving an emotionally disturbed or suicidal person. In FY19, the department responded to 356 such calls for service. To date in FY20, there have been 345 calls for service.

The Police Department (WPD) has a contract with CHR to provide an embedded clinician for 20 hours per week. The clinician reviews case reports from officers who respond to mental health crisis calls for review and follow up. The clinician also provides follow-up visits with high risk individuals and those who have had repeated police contacts. These follow up visits provide an avenue of support for these individuals.

Earlier this calendar year the contract position became vacant. CHR had been actively recruiting to fill this role, however, because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, recruiting efforts have been slow. In late April 2020, CHR provided an update that they have restarted their recruitment for the mental health clinician for the Windsor Police Department and hope to fill this position in the near future.

Officers may also utilize a process known as a Police Emergency Examination Requests or PEER. The PEER process involves transporting individuals to a local hospital when a person in crisis presents themselves as a danger to themselves or others and are in need of immediate care and treatment. With the vacancy in the mental health clinician position, officers continue utilizing PEER to refer residents to medical personnel for evaluation. For the more difficult mental crisis calls where residents are not a danger to themselves or others, officers are utilizing CHR's Mobile Crisis Response Team or involve Windsor's Social Services Department as a resource.

Financial Impact

The FY21 budget includes \$45,000 to fund the Mental Health Clinician program.

Other Board Action

None

Recommendations

At this time there is no specific action requested of the committee.

Attachments

None

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 12, 2019
TOWN HALL – LUDLOW ROOM**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Nuchette Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with Councilor James Dabler and Councilor James Govoni present. Town Manager Peter Souza, Police Chief Don Melanson and Fire Chief, Bill Lewis were also present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated he was in favor of increasing the value tax abatement for volunteer firefighters and emergency as he wants to recognize and encourage our volunteer service.

3. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL INCREASE TO PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT VALUE FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS

Town Manager gave an overview of the item stating the State Legislature recently adopted changes to the local option enabling legislation which allows municipalities to increase the exemption benefit amount. This item is presented to the committee to allow initial discussion of possible amendments to the current ordinance to allow a greater dollar benefit as well as to alter the benefit schedule.

Currently, the \$1,000 abatement offered to Volunteer Fire and Ambulance personnel results in a total of \$61,026 in foregone revenue. If the benefit was increased to \$1,500, it is estimated the foregone revenue would be approximately \$90,700. At a maximum abatement value of \$2,000, foregone revenue would total approximately \$119,500. The current budget has conservatively estimated a revenue reduction of \$118,500.

An eligible volunteer can earn up to the \$1,000 tax abatement value based on meeting various standards related to categories such as length of service, training hours, and percent of responses to calls.

In addition to adjusting the annual maximum benefit, there has been discussions about updating or refining the benefit schedule from what was adopted in 2000. A possible adjustment would be to require firefighters to attend at least 24 hours of drills per 6 month period versus the current level of 12 hours per 6 month period.

Also, the State enabling legislation allows the tax abatement benefit to be provided to a retired volunteer firefighter or emergency medical technician that has completed at least twenty-five years of service in the municipality. The fire department administration would like the Town Council to consider adopting such a provision as part of amending the current ordinance.

Committee members asked several questions and wanted to make sure the changes to the benefit schedule was not burdensome to volunteers. Chief Lewis stated the possible changes to the schedule would not be an extra burden as they are in line with the current department policies.

Committee members expressed their support for all the work and dedication of the volunteers and were supportive of bringing forth the amendments to the full Town Council.

4. DISCUSSION OF FY 19 TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT DATA

Donald Melanson, Chief of Police, gave an overview of the item which relates to the statewide report entitled *Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings for 2017*.

The Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings for 2017 did not indicate statistically significant racial and/or ethnic disparities Windsor's traffic stop data. Below are a few highlights from overall traffic stop information for the July 1, through December 9, 2019 period:

- A total of 6,590 traffic stops were made between July 1, 2019 and December 30, 2019. This is 56.0% greater than the 3,705 stops made during the same period in FY 18.
- Windsor residents accounted for 33.5% of the 6,590 traffic stops made, which is consistent with the previous fiscal year.
- Officers searched 91 vehicles, or 1.4% of the total number of stops.
- 82.4% of traffic stops were for violations such as red light, speeding, cell phone, and seat belt. 17.5% of stops were for equipment violations such as failure to display registration plates or defective lights. These percentages are within 2% to 3% of those for the same period in FY 19.

Windsor was identified as having one of the highest rates of traffic stops for municipalities in the state (ranked 5th). This is in concert with our efforts to reduce speed and improve traffic safety throughout town.

Committee members discussed the report highlights and asked several questions of Chief Melanson. Members noted that while the report did not indicate statistically significant racial and/or ethnic disparities in the reporting period, it is important that we all be aware of public perceptions.

There was no action requested of the committee as this report was for informational purposes.

5. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO PARKING ORDINANCES

Chief Melanson gave an overview of the item as follows:

Currently, Windsor police officers are limited to the types of enforcement they can take when dealing with parking violations in town. The Town of Windsor's *Code of Ordinances* Chapter 16, Article III Parking, provides only limited actions when dealing with parking violations.

In order to enforce parking violations not listed in the *Code of Ordinances*, officers need to utilize the *Connecticut General Statutes* to take enforcement action.

Utilizing state statutes to enforce parking violations requires an officer to issue an infraction to the operator of the vehicle, which can be time consuming and cumbersome. The current fine of the violation using a state infraction is \$92. Under local ordinances, vehicle drivers / operators do not need to be present to receive a citation. Most communities in the greater Hartford area have adopted town ordinances that mirror state statutes, giving police an additional tool to deal with parking violations in their community.

Staff is considering proposing a number of amendments to the *Code of Ordinances* to include the violations under *CT General Statutes* 14-251 and 14-252. This item is being present for informational purposes. Staff would work on drafting possible amendments over the winter months for committee and council review after the completion of the annual budget process.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Town Manager Souza reported the construction of the new police station was on schedule as was the design effort for renovations of the existing Safety Complex on Bloomfield Avenue. He stated that the new Public Safety Radio System project was on schedule with the goal of having it be completed in early to mid-summer.

An informational meeting on the Railroad Quiet Zone was scheduled for December 19th. Representatives from the Federal Rail Administration and CT Department of Transportation will make a presentation and answer questions residents may have.

The Town Manager stated that he and staff were looking into the possibility of petitioning the CT DOT to consider establishing a 'no truck route' on several residential streets in the Rainbow area of town as large tractor trailer trucks continue to use the local roads versus Route 20 to enter and leave the industrial area.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) August 21, 2019

MOVED by Councilor Black-Burke, seconded by Councilor Dobler to approve the unapproved minutes of the August 21, 2019 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Govoni, to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

Respectfully submitted by,

Peter Souza
Town Manager