

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 11, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Nuchette Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. with Councilor James Dobler and Councilor James Govoni present. Town Manager Peter Souza, Police Chief Don Melanson; Dr. Michael Pepe, Director of Health Services; and Jennifer Waldo, Public Health Nurse were also present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lawrence Jaggon, 8 Massow Lane, is a registered nurse. He has serious concerns regarding the town and the COVID 19 response. He stated that we have Kimberly Hall north and south and Windsor rehab in the town. We've had a number of deaths. He is concerned that the town has not done any contact tracing and that they are not doing any testing. He would like the town to get more involved.

Town Manager Souza asked that items 5 & 6 be moved up on the agenda.

MOVED by Councilor Black-Burke, seconded by Councilor Dobler to amend the agenda and move items 5 and 6 to appear after item 2 public comment.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

3. UPDATE ON POLICE DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (originally Item 5 on agenda)

Town Manager Souza stated that staff has provided, in the agenda packet, an overview of a variety of items related to professional development and training within the Police Department. He is looking to answer questions that the committee and others might have tonight.

Councilor Dobler asked Chief Melanson about the Police Department's professional development/training. His question is in regards to the coronavirus. Has that hampered anything? Is it moving forward? How are we dealing with getting all these hours in? Is it being done virtually? Chief Melanson stated that in order for officers to receive training credits--which applies to their certification---they have to take online training classes which have been approved by the Post-C council.

Councilor Dobler asked about the state cutting down on funds. He is curious how that is effecting the budget both in the previous month and moving forward. Chief Melanson stated they have taken that into account in their training budget. They have been able to find training classes and on many occasions are teaming up with other local agencies within the region that are hosting classes.

Councilor Black Burke asked about the professional development that was executed with the department in 2018-2019 that relates to sensitivity, diversity, and inclusion. Was that a one time effort? Town Manager Souza stated that in 2019 there was a variety of town-wide training regarding unconscious bias and inclusion training. We had both sworn officers and civilians (dispatchers, etc.) attend the programs. We continued that program into the beginning of the year by having the management staff work with a variety of different tools around emotional intelligence and how to provide inclusive teams. In the early part of this fiscal year, all department supervisors and personnel attended a class called "Inclusive Leader Training."

Councilor Black Burke asked if we have any data regarding satisfaction and engagement in the Police Department, such as exit interviews or a survey that was completed in 2018-2019 when we were training officers. Town Manager Souza said that in the courses that were done in the past, each participant gave a self-evaluation on how they felt the course went and their feedback was then shared with the outside instructors. In terms of the overall employee satisfaction, we have engaged a third party organization to do an employee engagement survey.

Councilor Black Burke asked if the Town Manager can come up with some employee evaluation materials and if he could bring them forward to the committee in the near future. Town Manager Souza said that our hope is to do an employee survey on an every other year basis. Councilor Black Burke said she understands it won't be done with any immediacy, but perhaps that is something we can come back to. Town Manager Souza stated that yes, it could be done.

4. UPDATE ON POLICE DEPARTMENT'S MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN SERVICES (originally item 6 on the agenda)

Councilor Dobler asked if Chief Melanson could comment on the high volume of calls regarding emotionally disturbed/suicidal individuals that were received in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Were officers injured during the calls? Chief Melanson says that no officers have been seriously injured. On a couple of calls, officers have received treatment either on that day or the day after for some type of injury. He can only remember one or two cases. Officers are better educated and trained for these types of situations these days. It's very rare that force is used for these types of calls.

Councilor Dobler asked about the increase in calls year to date for 2020 and can the increase be attributed to COVID-19 or has it been normal type calls? Chief Melanson said it was mostly normal calls and that the coronavirus has not had a specific impact on the numbers.

Councilor Govoni asked about the clinician position in the Police Department. Is that a part time position? Town Manager Souza responded that at the current time, we have a contract out with Community Health Resources for 20-24 hours per week for clinician services.

Councilor Black Burke asked about Crisis Intervention Team training that the officers had in 2005. Does that include all officers? Chief Melanson said he does not have the actual percentage, but we usually send a few officers to the class, maybe 2 or 3 at a time.

Councilor Black Burke asked what happens after the social worker speaks with individuals in the field. Is there any level of follow up? Chief Melanson stated that once the officer meets with the clients and the clinician follows up and makes a visit, they follow up on cases that are more serious. They make referrals to the town's social services as well. They identify the needs the person may have. For those that don't need services but want someone to talk to, the clinician makes follow up calls to those individuals.

5. UPDATE ON COVID 19 TOPICS

Dr. Michael Pepe, Director of Health, and Jennifer Waldo, Public Safety Nurse, gave an overview of the subject as follows:

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 Corps (MRC) to help with staffing at the 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 contacts 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.

Councilor Dobler asked if we have plateaued with the number of cases. Ms. Waldo said that there have been many mitigation efforts to help contain and reduce the transmission. We continue to see touch up from the state data. Often times, when we receive the data from the state it can be a month old. Not as much with the long-term facilities as with our residents in the Town of Windsor. It will be interesting to see if we continue to see that plateau. Dr. Pepe added that the long-term nursing facilities are in the process of trying to test all their population within their facilities. Once that gets to a certain point, there will be a slow down and the test will be only administered on an 'as needed' basis from there on.

Councilor Dobler said a few weeks ago when we were talking about the budget and how the department was doing, it was stated that they were stretched but managing. He is curious if it's at the same level, worse or better? Town Manager Souza said there are ups and downs but by and large the department is stretched.

Councilor Dobler asked about the May 20th opening. Where does Windsor stand in the amount of tests that we have and in opening up. Town Manager Souza said that it has been a state-wide regional effort. We are working to get our first responders tested. We have been working with the State of Connecticut and regional partners to do that. The Town of Windsor has not taken a lead on this due to their resources. Dr. Pepe added that when it comes to testing in long care nursing facilities, there are only so many test supplies that are available on a daily basis. Connecticut is enlisting private labs that have bigger supply chains where more tests can be done. Connecticut is doing roughly 20,000-24,000 tests per week. The goal by the Governor by May 20th is to do 40,000 per week.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked Dr. Pepe and Ms. Waldo for all their efforts. She stated the town has upwards of 300+ diagnosed cases with this virus. She asked if it would be possible to put out some type of infographic to share with constituents where these cases are in our town. Town Manager Souza said that we have, as of this afternoon, received word from the Department of Public Health stating that Windsor has 378 positive cases. Of those 213 are general population. There would be a lot of qualifiers to distributing the information as many of these individuals have recovered. Of course we also have to be careful on how we show it due to confidentiality as well and HIPPA regulations. We would have to look into this a bit further.

6. INFORMATION REGARDING COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATION

Dr. Michael Pepe, Director of Health Services, gave information regarding Community Health Services organization as follows:

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.

When Community Health Services, Inc., (CHS) 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.

Councilor Black Burke asked when this was established in 2013 was there any type of agreement between our health services and CHS. Do we report to them if we come across

any cases of communicable diseases or vice versa? Is there a formulized relationship or is it strictly referral? Dr. Pepe answered that it is strictly referrals. Town Manager Souza added that there has not been a formal relationship with them but basically it's just referrals.

7. UPDATE ON WINDSOR VOLUNTEER AMBLANCE

Mr. Terrance Greaves, of Windsor Volunteer Ambulance (WVA) gave an overview as follows:

Staffing

For staffing, we operate one ambulance 24 hours a day from 6 AM – 6 PM, another from 7 AM - 7 PM and one more ambulance from 8 AM – 12 midnight. During the week there are three ambulances on at peak time. We currently have 4 management staff, 4 full-time EMTs, 6 full-time paramedics, 19 part-time per-diem EMTs, 12 part-time paramedics and 4 of the EMTs are volunteers.

Calls for Service

Calls for service (comparing 3/19 to 3/20), there were 215 transports in 2019 and 195 in 2020. Patients that have refused care were 58 in 2019 and 48 in 2020. Calls cancelled prior to dispatch were 15 in March 2019 and 13 in April 2020. Calls that we passed (we use a number of regional partners when our ambulances are unavailable) were 35 in 2019 and 52 in 2020. Total calls for EMS were 326 for 2019 and 332 for 2020.

Financials

In regards to financials, revenues for March 2020 were \$148,000 with total expenses being \$133,000, with a net revenue of \$15,000. April revenues were \$166,000 and total expenses were \$133,000, with a net revenue of \$33,000. Year to date, \$1.37 million has come in with total expenses being in the area of \$1.38 million. The total loss is currently about \$5,900.

Councilor Dobler asked if receiving payments is the big challenge. Mr. Greaves responded that it is 100% the issue. It goes back to those individuals that have insurance through an employer that have a high deductible plan. We have a substantial amount of the population that are on Medicare/Medicaid which are fixed income plans. With Medicare, there is no cross over payment with Connecticut any longer. People have Medicare gap insurance. What we've done with those individuals that have private insurance is that we are hiring a part-time person who will review and follow up on those claims and go after them in partnership with the WVA's billing company.

Councilor Dobler asked how the Windsor Volunteer Ambulance gets into a better fiscal position. He added that it doesn't look good when you come before the Council and say "we are short in revenue again." He'd love to see any outside the box ideas that Windsor Volunteer Ambulance might have.

Town Manager Souza stated that he and Terrance have spoken and will be getting together shortly to look at the FY 20 year end projection. At this point, the WVA has only used \$36,000 of the \$130,000 that the Council set aside in additional appropriations for them. Clearly the fact that we have a large part of the population that is on Medicare/Medicaid is an issue. Also, state and federal governments are only allowing a certain amount to be paid. In

example, if it is \$1,200 for a paramedic call, of that we are only getting \$750-\$900 (made up number, not the actual number) for that call. That certainly is a challenge that will always exist. Some of it is the demographics of our payer mix. Town Manager Souza said his goal is as we look to the first six months of new fiscal year is to bring on a different set of eyes to analyze that so Council has information prior to the FY 22 budget process to make some decisions both monetarily and policy wise.

Councilor Black Burke asked if the person they are thinking of bringing in to review the budget is for FY 21 or is that for FY 22. Mr. Greaves said it is for this current year.

8. STAFF REPORTS

Town Manager Souza said that the renovation of 110 Addison Road for the Police Department is on schedule and the building should be turned over to the town by mid to late June. They are having a couple of issues. One is related to supply chain issues for locker room equipment. We are not sure if that is because of COVID or if it's because of trade issues between countries. There are also a few smaller items that their lead times have been extended.

Town Manager Souza stated the bid for 340 Bloomfield Avenue has been advertised. The Public Building Commission (PBC) expects to have those bids reviewed in five weeks from now. In the later part of June, the PBC will be reviewing the bids and will hopefully by the end of July award the contract so construction can begin before Labor Day.

Town Manager Souza added we are internally working on business plans for reopening the town. We have a unified command meeting tomorrow. These meetings are focused on how we respond to the pandemic, but we are now switching to how we ramp up to reopen.

Councilor Govoni commented that tax collections will be a problem. Town Manager Souza said that they will be deferring payments until the end of September.

Councilor Dobler asked about putting up Plexiglas shields. Are we still pursuing that? Town Manager Souza stated we do have about 12 Plexiglas shields on order and should get them by the end of this week. All customer service counters will be retrofitted to have a Plexiglas separation.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that whenever possible could it be arranged for the Health & Safety Committee to do a walk through prior to the open house of the new Police Department? Town Manager Souza said absolutely. He said it's a very spacious location compared to where they had been.

Councilor Black-Burke is concerned about the town's summer recreation programs. She'd like them to be successful this summer but health needs be first. Town Manager Souza stated as a town we are trying to find that balance and certain programs are easier to produce more social distancing than others. He stated that he and Paul Norris, Director of Recreation Services, have spoken about the programs and that clearly health & safety are the first priority.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) December 12, 2019

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Govoni to approve the unapproved minutes of the December 12, 2019 meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

10. ADJOURMENT

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Govoni, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Motion Passed 3-0-0

Respectfully submitted by,

Peter Souza
Town Manager