



**TOWN OF WINDSOR
HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 8, 2023
HYBRID MEETING**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Chair of the Health & Safety Committee, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Councilor Lenworth Walker present.

Staff Present: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Scott W. Colby, Jr., Assistant Town Manager; Donald Melanson, Police Chief; Paul Goldberg, Fire Administrator; Frank Angelillo, IT Director; Dan Moylan, WVA; Paul Norris, Reaction & Leisure Services Director.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

3. UPDATE ON EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STUDY

The Windsor Volunteer Ambulance Association is a private not-for-profit entity that provides emergency medical response and transportation to the Windsor community. There are over 4,000 calls for emergency medical service (EMS) per year in the town. The ambulance association, along with the Police Department, responds to these calls. If the association does not have personnel available, an outside EMS agency is requested to respond.

The Council's Health and Safety Committee met on March 1, 2023 to discuss the overall delivery system of emergency medical services. The committee asked staff to provide information on the system and possible paths forward to the full Town Council on March 20th.

The Holdsworth Group, an EMS consulting firm has been contracted to help gather and analyze additional data relative to topics such as staffing levels, peak call times, response times, hours of utilization, as well as identifying staff coverage options and projected expenditure and revenue estimates to meet desired service levels.

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a brief update on the status of the study.

As outlined in the attached memorandum from The Holdsworth Group, the study team has been undertaking a number of task concurrently. They include:

- collecting 3 years' worth of dispatch data from both the Town's dispatch center as well as the North Central CMED center. They are currently analyzing both databases.
- analyzing Windsor EMS patient care records database (HIPAA protections are in place) which will be compared against the two above databases. Any variances will help us quantify how many calls are going to mutual aid and which days and hours need additional resources.
- preliminary analysis indicate that of the calls that Windsor EMS responds to, their response times are averaging below the eight-minute American Heart Association's guideline for ambulance response times
- reviews of internal budget documents, the by-laws and operations policies of Windsor EMS, are underway
- review of capital equipment and vehicle needs has been initiated to complete a useful life span inventory and present recommendations for a multi-year capital program

The consulting team plans to have a preliminary report prepared in late July.

In regards to staffing, Windsor EMS has been conducting recruitment and selection processes for EMTs and Paramedics. Two EMTs have been hired (1 FT and 1 per diem). There are currently no full-time EMT vacancies. Recruiting for per-diem EMTs continue so to have staffing resources available to cover vacant shifts and potential promotion to any future full-time openings. Currently one full-time paramedic position is vacant. Four paramedic candidate interviews are scheduled to be completed in coming days.

Salary and wage adjustments have been made for new hires and existing staff members on April 30th as well as the first week of June to become more competitive in both recruitment and retention efforts.

We have collected 3 years' worth of dispatch data from both the Town's dispatch center as well as the North Central CMED center. There are approximately 18,000 records in each database. We are currently analyzing both databases to make sure that we account for all EMS responses within the Town as well as identifying the mutual aid agencies.

No EMS agency will ever be able to staff to handle every 911 request that is received but if we can reduce mutual aid requests by 60% or greater, the funds derived from those calls will go back into the system and stabilize subsidy needs.

What we have concluded thus far is that of the calls that Windsor EMS does respond to, their response times are averaging below the eight-minute American Heart Association's Chain of Survival guideline for ambulance response times.

A draft of the study will be provided within 120 days as expected.

Councilor Walker thanked Mr. Bob Holdsworth (Holdsworth Group Representative) for the work that has been completed. He asked Mr. Holdsworth whether he received the call response times from the Police Department or from CMED. Mr. Holdsworth clarified that he received the information from the Police Department as CMED is not always immediately contacted at the beginning of the response process. Mr. Holdsworth indicated that the data available from town dispatch will be more accurate for call response time from CMED. Having paramedics on the ambulance during many of the responses means that emergencies are being attended to sooner than the America Heart Association recommendation of a medic on scene within twelve minutes. Mr. Holdsworth is also receiving the police response time to create a holistic outlook of emergency response.

Councilor Black-Burke asked Mr. Holdsworth about specific times that may be receiving more calls and how this relates to possible response time outliers. Mr. Holdsworth indicated that he does not currently have this information but will answer it in the report. He will breakdown times and peak times to correlate back to where peak times should be staffed.

Councilor Black-Burke asked Mr. Holdsworth about the reduction to 60% of calls. She asked if Mr. Holdsworth would lay out innovative options beyond mutual aid. Mr. Holdsworth clarified that there will be recommendations given on what programs could be useful. He will be able to analyze the mutual aid response and police response data to investigate ways to make the system better. Councilor Black-Burke noted that problems with ambulance response times are not specific to Windsor. Mr. Holdsworth noted that it is an international issue and that Windsor is in better shape than most locations he has awareness of.

Town Manager Souza asked Mr. Moylan to touch on staffing efforts in recruiting and hiring over the past 60-90 days. Mr. Moylan indicated that it has been a slow process due to the slim pool to select from. Eight applications have come in the past 60 days. From that, five candidates were interviewed. Two were excluded for poor references and one due to non-response. Five positions were offered, one full time, four part time per diem. Two offers were accepted with one full time EMT position being filled. That individual has completed their training and is now working. The other three offers were not accepted, often due to acceptance of other job offers. Pay does not appear to be a major factor due to raises in Windsor EMS wages to more closely match market values. Two volunteers are considering moving to per diem positions.

Mr. Moylan indicated that there is one more paramedic interview to complete. There have been four applications in the past six weeks. One interview has already been completed. The other two offers for interviews have not been responded to. The goal is to offer a full time paramedic position to one of the candidates within a week. They would then be trained and accredited by the end of June and on the road by the beginning of July.

Mr. Moylan addressed wage increases. Previously, EMTs were being paid \$18 per hour with medics being paid \$29 per hour, a fair amount below market value. EMTs are not making, on average, \$22 per hour with medics averaging \$34 per hour. This is closer to the midpoint of wages for these roles, increasing possibilities for recruitment.

Town Manager Souza noted that, regarding the appropriation made by the Council in the spring, the past due invoices have been rectified. EMS/WVA is now within their typical 14 to 30 day period, helping significantly with the vendors. The additional \$15,000 provided for stocking and restocking of supplies has assisted in a more timely and efficient purchasing component. He expressed appreciation of Council funding on that front. Revenues have been coming in on time. Some of the additional funding Council provided will be carried over and not exhausted by July 1st.

Councilor Black-Burke indicated it would be prudent to share findings with the community after the report has been shared with the Council. Mr. Holdsworth asked that the Council wait until after they decide which options to improve services to pursue before presenting information to the community. Full recommendations will be included in the draft.

4. DISCUSSION OF SECURITY CAMERA INSTALLATIONS AT PARK FACILITIES

Town Manager Souza stated earlier in the fiscal year the Town Council asked staff to explore the cost of installing surveillance cameras at several park locations following a few incidents of vehicles being broken into at Welch Park and Northwest Park. On occasion over the years, there also has been cases of vandalism and other illegal activity at these locations as well as at Goslee Pool. Town staff and our vendor will provide an overview of the technology and potential scope of work.

The project scope entails installing surveillance cameras at strategic locations in each park. The overall project goal is to use the surveillance camera systems to assist in solving and deterring crimes.

There are many variables to consider in planning the project including: image quality, site lighting, access to a fiber network, future expansion and data retention. Each facility was evaluated for the number of potential cameras and mounting locations. A design goal is to provide the infrastructure and strategic camera locations to accommodate future advancements in camera quality and capabilities.

As envisioned, the cameras will send video back to the town's data storage center. The footage will be only accessible by authorized personnel. There will be a 60 day retention period of the video. The cameras will be able to be viewed remotely at the police dispatch center.

Each location of this project involves the installation of poles, underground conduit for electricity and fiber, cameras, license plate readers, and networking equipment. Welch Park and Stroh Park will also require a data circuit to send video back to the town's centralized data center. Due to the limited lighting in parks, it is recommended the cameras have enhanced infrared functionality.

Mr. Angelillo introduced Mr. David LeCours and Mr. Mike Bates from Three-Way Communication. Three-Way Communication has been Windsor's surveillance video vendor for seven or eight years as well as the vendor for the Board of Education before that. Mr. Angelillo clarified that the goal is to expand the existing video network utilizing the same software to ensure that the Police Department can use the same software and product to keep things simple and accessible. The project has been divided into two pieces. The first is infrastructure, what the cameras will be moving data on. There is currently no infrastructure in these locations along with obstacles such as trees and vegetation.

Town Manager Souza clarified that the data will be transferred back to the data center and can also be watched in real time when an event occurs.

Northwest Park

Mr. LeCours reviewed some conceptual drawings based on discussions with the Police Department. A centralized server will contain all data under one umbrella. There could be infrared implemented, not visible to the eye, due to the parks not having evening lighting. Some of the center lines in the cameras are smaller due to the tree lines. There are also two license plate cameras on each end. Mr. LeCours showed a demo of a camera in the park at night. The enhanced infrared enhances the range of content seen at night. They do come at an increased cost of approximately \$5,000 each. The infrared illumination has an expected 20 year lifespan and warranty from the manufacturer.

Mr. LeCours showed images of part two of the Northwest Park project. This will provide additional coverage around the building, Archives and Tobacco Museum specifically. There is currently a license plate camera on the Sugar Shack. Infrastructure has already been built out on a good portion of that location. The goal was to cover the playground and gazebo using 270 degree horizontal field of view image capture. In the front lot of the nature building, a 180 degree camera would be installed as there is nothing there currently.

Councilor Black-Burke asked if the license plate roundabout camera will capture the whole roundabout area. Mr. LeCours stated that the coverage will be weak from the center island but capture will continue to the main entrance. The hope in the build out is to provide the option of future expansion. Any poles can have additional cameras added as the infrastructure will be there for the future. License plate cameras use infrared to bounce off the luminescence in the plate to capture it at any time of the day.

Welch Pool

A 360 degree camera will be used in the back parking lot but may require tree trimming to expand capture. Another 360 degree camera will be in the concession area with a 270 degree camera in the main parking lot. Three license plate cameras would be installed. A fixed camera would cover the main pool area with two fixed cameras covering the rest.

Goslee Pool

There would be a 360 degree camera to cover the court area and playground. A license plate camera would be mounted to the same pole. Five other fixed cameras with integrated infrared would be mounted across the rest of the park.

Overall Functionality

All of the proposed cameras are the same product being used by the Police Department and Board of Education. Everything is going to reside on a new town server. The storage capacity would retain 60 days of camera footage with expanded storage available. If communication between the parks and Town Hall fails, the failover recording would occur at the park itself and would fall back over to Town Hall when connection is restored.

Town Manager Souza indicated that the price was higher than he expected. He noted that these three parks have had incidents in the past. He asked to get a sense from the Committee on how they would like to move forward.

Councilor Walker indicted that regardless of the backbone used more than one submittal should be accessed to find the best price. He asked if WIFI was used to connect the cameras to the network. Mr. LeCours said they would use Power over Ethernet which would be a switch point inside the building with copper feed. Even with wireless, such as would be used at Welch Park, if a pole is set there still needs to be power for the wireless device and camera. They would like to get demarked points within the facility to feed a CAT5 to the pole so the camera would be powered over the CAT5. If the infrared is used then they will need additional power beyond the Power over Ethernet. Everything put in the ground will be low voltage with copper cable for the infrared illumination. They'd like to bring it back to a building to have a control power point.

Councilor Walker spoke about concerns regarding the numbers of vehicles that were vandalized. The Committee was tasked to address that to improve town image and safety for visitors and residents. He asked about blue light boxes and the possibility of installing those in the parks. Mr. LeCours indicated that this would be very doable. This possibility was brought to the Councilor by a town resident.

Councilor Black-Burke added that the lighting and camera pieces go together and should not be overlooked. She asked what would happen to the infrared cameras if lighting was added to the park. Mr. LeCours clarified that the need for infrared would be eliminated. Using lighting would also bring the option for color image capture which would help to gain more information during incidents. The Councilor also mentioned other parks not included in this project. Town Manager Souza stated that there are town ordinances that say parks close at dark although not everyone adheres to that. There are complexities to all the components involved. Councilor Black-Burke would like see full cost for the project including lighting and cameras.

Councilor Walker asked if there were cameras in LP Wilson and Washington Parks. Town Manager Souza replied there is some coverage at LP Wilson on the buildings themselves, although it is limited. The focus of this project was on the busiest facilities. A camera will be installed at the park away from the building through money appropriated for the pickle ball and tennis court. Mr. Norris added that the tennis courts are lit at LP Wilson so people can play tennis there until 9:30 p.m. - 9:45 p.m. The parking lot is lit so those using the recreation center can safely get to their cars. However, once the parking lot becomes lit, there are questions about lighting on amenities in the park depending on what people are using.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that lighting in a parking lot can be a deterrent to unlawful activities. On the other hand, she understands that lighting the parking lot could escalate to more parking across the parks. Ultimately, the Councilor believes that lighting the parking lots can provide a higher level of safety, even if it is only cognitive.

Councilor Walker has also heard argument that leaving parking lights on might encourage using facilities after dark. However, he also has found that lighting can be a major deterrent. It can also get dark in the winter while events are still going on which would make lighting necessary during those times. Town Manager Souza said that the Committee can look at strategic lighting options based on town zoning regulations. It would be simple to put a few large floodlights up at Welch after considering the neighbors and impacts to them. Impacts to cameras and overall costs can be investigated as well.

Councilor Black-Burke asked about costs associated with footage being held longer than 60 days. Mr. LeCours clarified that the driving factor is storage space. If the decision is to move to 90 days, that could be accommodated at this point. Initially, there would be plenty of capacity, but down the road it would be less open.

Councilor Black-Burke said she would like to keep a focus on lighting possibilities at other parks as well. Councilor Walker also supported including all parking areas at all parks in the project instead of doing a few parks at a time. Town Manager Souza added that some parks have more existing infrastructure than others to accommodate projects like these. Town Manager Souza asked about camera coverage at 330 Windsor Avenue Community Center. Mr. Angelillo clarified that there is a camera at Sharshon Park with limited coverage. Councilor Black-Burke asked for a presentation on a project like this to be holistic to investigate options across all parks.

The goal is to have a package to show by the end of the summer.

5. DISCUSSION OF TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Police Chief Melanson stated in 2014, the Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), in conjunction with the State Office of Policy and Management (OPM), began issuing yearly reports entitled “Traffic Stop Data Analysis and Findings.”

Upon release of the second report in May 2016 covering the 2014-2015 period, CCSU staff selected Windsor for a more in-depth analysis of its traffic stop data. The Windsor Police Department (WPD) and town staff met with CCSU staff on several occasions to review the traffic stop data in an attempt to identify and explain any disparities in Windsor’s traffic stop data. Items taken into consideration were WPD calls for service, motor vehicle accident data, officer deployment, officer assignments, and population density. The police department has continued to monitor motor vehicle stop data to identify if there are any potential patterns of racial profiling or bias from police officers.

In addition to monitoring demographic data related to MV stops, the department began looking at traffic stop data to address resident concerns regarding speeding and aggressive driving. Using this data, along with accident locations and speed data collected by the town’s Engineering Department, the department has deployed officers to specific locations where speeding occurs and other motor vehicle complaints are received.

During and shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic, traffic enforcement levels dropped substantially on a national basis, which coincided with traffic volume. As society emerged from the pandemic, there has been a visible increase in speeds and the level of aggressiveness on the roadways.

Chief Melanson reviewed data from July through September of 2022 where traffic stops were relatively high. As colder weather came in, traffic stops slowed down. Mid-May 2023 data shows that traffic stops are picking up in the spring. Stops through May 30th show that speeding is 48% of stops with overall moving violations comprising 73% of stops. Unregistered cars make up 8% of stops.

6. DISCUSSION OF SECONDARY MOTOR VEHICLE VIOLATIONS (e.g., tinted windows, loud mufflers)

Chief Melanson stated in Connecticut, motor vehicle laws allow officers to conduct vehicle stops for a plethora of reasons related to moving violations, equipment violations, and registration and licensing violations. The CT General Assembly is currently discussing a raised bill titled “An Act Establishing Secondary Traffic Violations.” This bill designates certain equipment-related and administrative motor vehicle violations as secondary violations, prohibiting law enforcement officers from stopping a motor vehicle to enforce one of these violations without another primary violation. The violations deemed secondary are generally designated as infractions and include, among others: (1) window tint violations, (2) failure to have two working headlights, (3) failing to illuminate the rear license plate, (4) failure to renew a registration or driver’s license, and (5) failure to carry a driver’s license when driving.

The bill also modifies the violation for obscuring license plates, which is a primary violation. Current law requires that license plates be entirely unobscured and prohibits placing anything on a vehicle or license plates that obscures any information on the plate. The proposed legislation instead requires that plates be substantially unobscured and prohibits placing anything that obscures the plate’s numbers and letters.

In addition to these potential changes, there has been a marked increase in modifications made to vehicle muffler / exhaust systems that impact quality of life in Windsor and other communities. Loud exhaust and mufflers that “Pop”, sounding like gunfire, are becoming more common.

Currently, officers have the ability to stop vehicles for tinted windows, and vehicle equipment violations, such as only having one headlight. There is debate at the state legislature to make these violations secondary, meaning officers can only enforce these violations if they stop a vehicle for another “primary” violation, such as speeding or other moving violations.

The current law on vehicle tints is CGS 14-99g; Tinted or Reflectorized Windows. This statute prohibits having tints on the vehicle’s windshield, and limits the level of tint on the front driver and passenger doors. Tints on these front doors must allow 35% of light into the vehicle, called visible light transmission (VLT). Vehicles can have tint that blocks out 65% of the light. There is a +/- 3% variance, so technically the tint can block out up to 68% of light, only allowing in 32% VLT. If an officer has suspicion that a vehicle with tinted windows does not meet compliance with the law, they have the authority to stop the vehicle and test the tint level using a device called a “tint meter.” This device sends light through the tint and glass and measures the VLT level.

The purpose for enforcing tint laws is two-fold. First, dark tints reduce a driver’s ability to see out the vehicle’s windows to see side traffic at intersections and in other situations

where a driver must look out their side windows, such as changing lanes on a highway. The effects of tinted windows is much more dramatic at night, where it is already dark out. A second reason for enforcing is officer safety. Every year, across the country, several officers are killed while conducting traffic stops. They can be extremely dangerous, as an officer rarely knows who they are dealing with in the vehicle. Officers are trained to be extremely observant as they approach a vehicle, especially to monitor all vehicle occupants' hands. With darker tints, officers are unable to see what is inside the vehicle, raising the level of anxiety and potential danger for the officer and driver alike.

FY23 year to date, police officers in Windsor have stopped 58 vehicles for tinted windows, accounting for approximately 1% of motor vehicle stops. If the officer tests the vehicle's tint levels and finds them to be illegal, the officer can require the operator to remove the tints within 60 days and have the vehicle inspected to show compliance.

In regards to loud mufflers, officers can use CGS 14-80(a) Mechanical equipment, which states each motor vehicle and the devices on such vehicle shall be operated, equipped, constructed and adjusted to prevent unnecessary or unusual noise. They can also use subsection (b) of this statute, which states that each motor vehicle operated by an internal combustion engine shall be equipped with a muffler or mufflers designed to prevent excessive, unusual or unnecessary exhaust noise.

Although more difficult to enforce, officers can use CGS 14-80a Maximum noise levels. This statute requires officers to use a sound meter to capture the decibel level of the vehicle. Acceptable levels for most vehicles is between 72dB and 81 dB, depending on the vehicle surface and the speed of the vehicle. Although the police department has sound meters, it is not something that is kept in patrol vehicles. To use the sound meter to test vehicles would be difficult, as the officer would have to have the driver of the vehicle recreate the conditions that caused the officer to suspect the vehicle was out of compliance.

In FY 23, officers have used the first two statutes (14-80(a) and 14-80(b)) to conduct 6 motor vehicle stops. As with tinted windows, officers can require the vehicle to be inspected by the Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure compliance.

Councilor Walker stated that he talked at the Town Council meeting about windshield tinting and shops which do tinting and sell mufflers that violate noise ordinances. He finds this to be an issue as it is not possible to see both into and out of cars with heavy tinting, especially in the front section. He was glad to hear information about tinting and the loud mufflers.

Councilor Black-Burke added that this sort of bill is nuanced but worth bringing back during the next legislative session. She also asked how to communicate information about mufflers and window tinting to Windsor citizens. Chief Melanson replied it could be posted

on the website, put on flyers, and on social media. He also noted that even though these are violations, they are not enforced very often. There have been only six stops for loud mufflers and 28 for the tinted window, which are small percentages of the overall stops. Councilor Black-Burke asked how this information could be included in driver's education courses at the high schools to know what is and isn't allowed. Education is a key first step to avoid equity issues. Councilor Walker concurred that education will be important as there are shops out there that will do the work regardless of the outcomes for drivers.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to look into the areas where there have been complaints about speeding. She is interested in how speed tables could be used in places where speed infractions are happening frequently. She would like to discuss this further in the next meeting. Town Manager Souza stated that there is a lot of data collected over the years that can be utilized to find hotspots and that this conversation can be prepared over the summer.

Councilor Black-Burke broached the topic of speeding on Palisado Avenue and Poquonock Avenue which are state roads but still need to be addressed. Town Manager Souza stated that the General Assembly has passed House Bill 5917 which will allow municipalities with the approval of CT DOT to do speed enforcement using camera technology. There are a lot of parameters around where these can be put in and the CT DOT will have until January 2024 to codify regulations.

Councilor Walker expressed that this option would be useful in decreased interactions between citizens and police officers as well as increasing safety in the center of town.

7. STAFF REPORTS

Chief Melanson stated that they've hired two dispatchers in the past few months and are testing to hire a few more as they were approved for one new additional spot for the upcoming budget. There are some part time employees filling in to help out with scheduling. Two candidates did not make it through the police department hiring process, leaving six open spots. A number of officers have completed field training with others scheduled for the future. One officer started the academy three weeks ago and another will be graduating in July. Six promotions have been made with four new sergeants and two new lieutenants.

Town Manager Souza said the Health Department is continuing to pursue grant funding opportunities that the CT DPH has put out. One is for immunization, all ages, community-wide.

Social media is being monitored for commercial pop-up parties. Councilor Black-Burke asked if the Windsor book "*There's a lot to do in Windsor*" has gone out for the summer.

She asked what other options there are to communicate to the community that pop-up parties are not allowed.

In the FY 2023 budget, Council had approved replacement of a Fire Department brush truck. The chassis has been manufactured and is in town. That will be sent to the manufacturer of the body soon.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) March 1, 2023 Special Meeting – public listening session

MOVED by Councilor Walker, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to approve the unapproved minutes of the March 1, 2023 Special public listening session as presented.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor Naeem absent)

- b) March 1, 2023 Special Meeting

MOVED by Councilor Walker, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to approve the unapproved minutes of the March 1, 2023 Special meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor Naeem absent)

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Walker, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke, to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Motion Passed 2-0-0 (Councilor Naeem absent)

Respectfully submitted by,

Scott Colby
Assistant Town Manager