

FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD
WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886



PHONE: 860-442-0553
www.waterfordct.org

**FIRE SERVICES REVIEW SPECIAL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA**

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025 6:00 P.M. JORDAN FIRE STATION (2ND FLOOR MEETING ROOM)

1. Establishment of quorum; Call to order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of minutes for meetings held on June 25, 2024, and March 6, 2025.
4. Consideration and possible action on the RTM's charge to the committee (RTC 6/7/21):
Review issues including performance, policies, and staffing and present their findings/recommendations on any changes needed to enhance public safety, creating a steering document and strategic plan.
 - a. Review of provided information
 - b. Initial feedback on first half of the report
 - c. Identification of independent report reviewer
5. Establishment of next meeting date
6. Adjournment

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ATTEST: *R. J. K.*
TOWN CLERK

encl: Report Outline Draft 2
FSRSC Minutes March 6, 2025
FSRSC Minutes June 25, 2024

Report Outline

1. Executive Summary / BLUF
2. Introduction
 - a. Charge
 - b. Committee Composition
 - c. Source Material
 - i. Previous reports
 - d. Review Process
 - e. Committee Timeline
 - f. Initial report
3. History
 - a. Fire Services Evolution
 - i. Pre-Fire Commission
 - ii. Fire Commission
 - iii. Fire Services Director
 - b. Volunteers
 - c. Hybrid
 - d. Current Configuration
 - e. Locations and Facility Descriptions
4. Demographic Data
 - a. Population and Trends
 - b. New Construction
 - c. Development Areas
 - d. Grand List
5. Findings
 - a. Response Types and Frequencies
 - b. Capital Plan
 - c. Staffing
 - d. Fleet Plan
 - e. Communications
 - f. *Waterford Ambulance*
6. Legal Requirements
7. Strategic Plan / Recommendations
 - a. General Observations
 - i. Mutual Aide Considerations
 - ii. Future Considerations
 - b. Number of Fire Stations
 - i. Justification
 - ii. Roles and responsibilities
 - iii. Chain of command

- c. Staffing
 - i. Volunteer officers, volunteer fire fighters, volunteer fire police, part time fire fighters, marine division, full time fire fighters
 - ii. Retention of volunteers, stipend
 - iii. Mandatory training
 - iv. Additional training
- d. Infrastructure / Capital Plan
- e. Fleet Plan
- f. Communications
 - i. Radio
- g. Policies and Procedures
- h. Inter Organizational Relationships
- i. *Action Items*



Fire Services Review Special Committee

Minutes—Special Meeting March 6, 2025

Members Present: Robert Tuneski (BoF); Susan Driscoll (RTM); Richard Muckle (BoS); Matthew Keatley (RTM); Tim Condon (RTM Public Protection & Safety Committee); Mike Howley (Interim Director, Fire Services); Steven Sinagra (Director, Emergency Management); Todd Patton (Chief, Goshen Fire Co.)

Members Absent: Tom Martin (Captain, WFS); Mark Greczkowski (WAS Director of Operations)

1. **Call to order:** Chair Tuneski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Public comment:** In-person, none. Online submission from Bryan Sayles (attached)
3. **Previous Minutes:** Motion by Driscoll, second by Condon, to table consideration of June 25, 2024, minutes until the next meeting. Voice vote: Unanimous
4. **Consideration of FSRSC's charge from the RTM (6/7/21):**
 - a. **Remaining/additional information needed:** Members reviewed list on agenda and Deliverables list last updated Jan. 2023. All previously submitted data/plans will be updated (the bulk of it by Howley, with some assistance from the Planning Director). Two requests from the last meeting are in progress: Sinagra and Martin will work on response time data that includes responding station and district of incident; Howley will expand volunteer incentive report to show qualifying hours, types of incidents, and certification status of each volunteer (but not by name).
 - b. **Discuss report format/content:** Chair presented his draft outline, explained Bottom Line Up Front acronym, and asked for input on the focus, order, whether any items needed to be added or amended. Condon used a North Star analogy to explain that the outline would be our map as we pull together the report, starting with where we are now, then find our best and acceptable aims for immediate and farther future, and move on to showing how to get there. Discussion of specific items followed, with members requesting that we add structural issues to facility descriptions, present the Grand List to underscore value of Fire Services to preserve what we have; note trends in response types/frequencies; include statutes and agreements with volunteer companies and WAS in Item 6; add volunteer tax abatements and recruitment/retention of career firefighters in Item 7(c); add Action Items, Timeline, Dollars to Item 7(i).

Motion by Condon, second by Keatley, to approve the outline as amended. Voice vote: Unanimous.

Chair predicted that after a couple of more meetings, he should have the starter draft of the report ready. Condon suggested that with a variety of updated data coming through, and the possibility of new info triggering a new area or question, the preliminary focus should be on the background info first so we can get consensus on that content and before moving forward.

Motion by Keatley, second by Condon, to have Chair present draft reports in phases, with the first to go no further than Item 4 of the outline. Voice vote: Unanimous.

5. Consider retaining outside expertise: Chair noted that FSRSC was not given funds to hire an outside consultant to write the report/recommendation. But the members can apply critical thinking as we review and consolidate the information and data being provided by our in-house expert members and put together the “final” report. He asked members for their thoughts on potentially asking a outside expert to review the report—not to edit it, but to suggest issues or points missed, or that need clarification or additional backup to add a level of credibility. Condon noted that we’ve had an outside consultants write reports in the past, but they all tend to get ignored or forgotten as elected/appointed personnel change. So he and Driscoll designed the FSRSC specifically to include all the parties involved at the table so they could work together to determine what we have, what we need, what we need to improve. The result, he said would get the needed community lift and weigh-in so that the final report would be easy to point to in the future as a reference and guideline. He added that he can reach out to some regional experts who have done similar reviews for other towns and gauge their interest.

Motion by Muckle, second by Condon, to seek outside authority to review report. Yes-4 Abstain-1 (Driscoll)

6. Next meeting: Motion by Keatley, second by Condon, to schedule next meeting for March 27 at 6:00 p.m. Voice vote: Unanimous. Consensus to meet at Jordan station, and schedule future meetings at the other stations.

7. Adjournment: Motion by Condon; second by Keatley to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. Voice vote: Unanimous.

Submitted by
Susan Driscoll, FSRSC Secretary

encl: Sayles public comment
Tuneski draft outline

March 6, 2025

Fire Services Review Special Committee
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385

Dear Committee Members,

After reading years of meeting minutes from various Boards and Committees plus, pouring over the pages of the FY2026 Fire Services Budget Proposal, there seems to be no agreement about the actual number of full-time and volunteer firefighters serving Waterford. As a faithful taxpayer and resident of District #2, Quaker Hill, isn't it reasonable for me to expect to find an exact accounting of who those full-time and volunteer firefighters are?

Furthermore, when visiting the town website not only was it difficult to navigate but when I finally found the Fire Services directory it appeared to be incomplete.

<https://www.waterfordct.org/Directory.aspx?did=15>

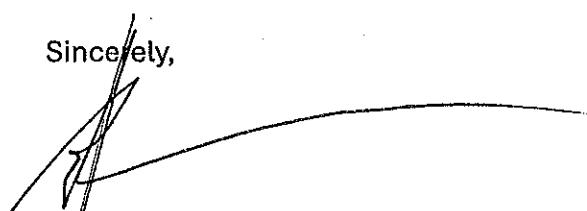
It's time to end the ambiguity surrounding the issue of staffing therefore, I strongly suggest that the town produce a *Fire Services Organizational Chart*. The benefits of doing so are as follows:

1. To clearly list the human resources assigned that effectively deliver comprehensive fire services throughout the town of Waterford.
2. To understand who is in charge, who the administrators are, the names of the firefighters and their qualifications/certifications.

The proposed organizational chart is not a schedule, nor does it assign resources to a specific district. It should only list names and titles including qualifications/certifications and be publicly posted on the town's Fire Services page. (Directory?)

Finally, it should be relatively easy to periodically update an organizational chart following a new hire's probationary schedule. At the very least it can be one document, in one place, which provides an exact accounting of Fire Services staff. Something that I have found hard to do.

Sincerely,



Bryan Sayles
54 Wintergreen Drive
Quaker Hill, CT 06375

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Fire Services Review Special Committee

Minutes—Special Meeting June 25, 2024

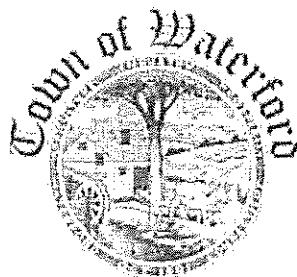
Members Present: Robert Tuneski (BoF); Susan Driscoll (RTM); Richard Muckle (BoS); Mike Howley (Director, Fire Services); Tom Martin (Captain, WFS); Todd Patton (Chief, Goshen Fire Co.); Steven Sinagra (Director, Emergency Management)

Members Absent: Matthew Keatley (RTM); Mark Greczkowski (WAS Director of Operations); [RTM Public Protection & Safety Committee appointment tbd]

1. **Call to order:** Chair Tuneski called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Public comment:** None.
3. **Previous Minutes:** Motion by Muckle, second by Driscoll, to approve May 29, 2024, minutes as presented.
Voice vote: Unanimous Motion passed.
4. **Consideration of FSRSC's charge from the RTM (6/7/21):**
 - a. 2022 Call volume update: Brief discussion on volume, medical versus fire/accident, and mutual aid. Martin noted that historical response times don't accurately reflect current response times, due not just to reduced staffing but also due to increased traffic over the years from development and traffic pattern changes. Sinagra offered to assist Martin in pulling data from new software program that can provide details, including reporting the responding station and the incident's district, to answer committee's concerns and public questions about impact of new staffing and WAS arrangement.
 - b. Active volunteer participation/trends: Howley noted that active participation declining, except in fire police and shared the latest quarterly volunteer incentive program report that showed quarterly payments to all qualifying volunteers by name. He agreed to provide an updated version that will include number/types of incidents and certification status for each responder, but would like to submit it with coded entries, rather than names, to protect volunteers' privacy.
 - c. Vehicle rating update: Tuneski asked Howley to prepare a vehicle rating update, extrapolating information from the latest fleet management plan to highlight apparatus inventory, ages, condition, replacement plans.
 - d. Remaining areas of discussion: Request for those representing specific groups (i.e., paid and volunteer firefighters, emergency management, WAS) and elected officials to reach out to colleagues for suggestions, concerns to address.
5. **Next meeting:** Consensus to tentatively schedule next meeting for July 23 at 5:30p.m.
6. **Adjournment:** Motion by Muckle; second by Driscoll, to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. Voice vote: Unanimous.

Submitted by
Susan Driscoll, FSRSC Secretary

encl: Sinagra/Radio System



Steven Sinagra
Emergency Management Director
204 Boston Post Road
Waterford, CT 06385

June 25, 2024

Fire Services Review Special Committee Members,

The Town of Waterford needs to replace its existing public safety radio system due to age. The typical life of a radio system today is approximately 7-10 years. Waterford's radio system is end-of-life and can no longer receive important software updates. Replacement parts are also no longer manufactured. The Town of Waterford Emergency Management Department and Finance Department are seeking funding aid through various State of Connecticut and Federal sources.

The Town of Waterford has two basic choices in considering its replacement options. One is to build another stand-alone system that only has capabilities within the borders of Waterford and has no interoperability with surrounding town, state or federal agencies. The second option is to build a system that is capable of connecting to the State of Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network (CLMRN). This option will give Waterford public safety the ability to communicate with partner agencies that are on the system, as well as statewide communication. Preliminary cost estimates show that building a stand-alone system will cost more than building a system that will connect to the CLMRN.

The Town of Waterford has partnered with the State of Connecticut Telecommunications System (CTS) Unit on this project which will provide regional benefits well beyond the Town of Waterford. CTS is comprised of several subsystems that are integrated into a statewide communications network. The CTS Unit operates under DESPP's Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications (DSET) and provides land mobile radio as well as other interoperable communications for the Connecticut State Police. CTS manages over 65 sites across Connecticut to support equipment in the subsystems. Waterford has five antenna tower sites that would greatly enhance the State of Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network (CLMRN) in Southeastern Connecticut. The towns of East Lyme, Groton City, Groton Town, Ledyard, Montville, New London, Norwich, Lawrence & Memorial Hospital Paramedics, Connecticut State Police, and other State of Connecticut departments will benefit from the expansion of the system. The Town of Waterford schools will also use this system to communicate during any potential school emergency.

There is a large amount of defense and industrial infrastructure as well as transportation in the region that will benefit from the interoperability that this system will bring to public safety. The Millstone Nuclear Power Station in the Town of Waterford as well as the U.S. Navy Base, General Dynamic's Electric Boat, Pfizer, Interstate 95, Interstate 395, Amtrak and the Providence & Worcester Railroad are just a few. The Town of Waterford's public safety services respond outside of town for mutual aid to several surrounding communities. The installation of this system will provide communications interoperability between Waterford and other agencies in our region that does not currently exist during emergencies and major events/disasters.

There is no question that the current system must be replaced. There is a great deal of redundancy with the CLMRN and the aforementioned benefits that make the CLMRN the best option for the Town of Waterford. The Emergency Management Department is moving forward with the goal of building a new radio system that will integrate with the CLMRN.