

## **Board of Selectmen Meeting**

**August 21, 2023**

**7:30 pm (in-person only)**

**Town Hall Hearing Room**

**100 Hill Rd, Redding CT**

**Present:** First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton, Selectwoman Peg O'Donnell, Selectman Michael Thompson. Also present: Janet August Recording Secretary, members of the public including fire district leaders from the West Redding Fire Dept. (Fire District 2), Redding Fire Dept. (Fire District 1), and Georgetown Fire Dept. (Fire District 3).

### **1. Call to Order**

First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton called the meeting to order at 7: 35pm.

### **2. Approval of BOS Meeting Minutes from July 17, 2023**

**MOTION:** Ms. O'Donnell moved to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Thompson and the motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Public Safety Discussion**

Ms. Pemberton started the discussion by stating that the Board wanted to have a high-level discussion of EMS services for the future. As background, Ms. Pemberton stated that the Town entered into a regional contract, along with Bethel, for regional paramedic services for the town, except for the Georgetown area. Nuvance provides EMS services. Costs for these services to both Redding and Bethel have increased significantly this year. Our costs are based on our call volume. Ms. Pemberton stated she reviewed the contract which outlined accounting items and periodic reports that we were not receiving from the provider. Along with the need to submit the EMS Plan (due every five years) to the state this fall, the Board would like to discuss future plans for EMS services with the Town's three fire departments/fire districts.

Ms. Pemberton stated that understanding the needs and thoughts of the districts is helpful in determining how the Town could support the districts. Nina Steitzel and Stephanie Wade asked about options for EMS. The Board and attendees discussed options, such as, 1) no changes, continue as they have; 2) merge the EMSs and ask the Town to take them over; 3) other options that may be identified. Ms. Pemberton stated that the starting point would be discussions with the three FDs, and she wanted them to support the discussions.

All three members of the BOS stated that they are not suggesting a merger of the fire departments (FD), but rather an open discussion with the three FDs regarding how our EMS services will look in

the future, and to develop plans for the Town to support each FD. The discussion included the options available, efforts in other small towns, and reports available on this topic.

Large capital expenditures were discussed in terms of how that expenditure impacts a specific fire district and fire taxpayers in that district, yet all residents benefit from that expenditure with the mutual aid provided to and by other fire districts/departments in town. It was noted that one or more of the Redding FDs may respond to a call (fire or EMS) with their equipment, and how each FD supports the others. Ms. Pemberton asked what equipment the FDs have or need, and how can the Town support them.

She noted that an example of the Town assisting them was the Town-built radio-tower which impacts all FDs. Ms. O'Donnell asked if we need an independent consultant to evaluate our FD structure and the issue with EMS services. She noted that the Town is not trying to take over the FDs but to plan and see how the Town can support them. Outside independent vendor or consultants were discussed. Ms. Pemberton stated that an expert could evaluate EMS and address the cost of sharing equipment and capital expenditures. The question of whether the study would be on the FDs or Fire Districts was asked. Not clear at this point.

Ms. Pemberton referred to studies and reports she has on this topic and will send them to all three FD/Fire District leadership. Jeff Dilenschneider stated that the goal should be to improve services. Ms. Pemberton agreed, and to support the FDs and assist them in getting the equipment they need. Ms. Pemberton stated they would like to meet with the Chiefs, EMS Supervisors, and a Commissioner from each FD to discuss further. No action will be taken tonight except for agreeing to meet to discuss soon.

Although the Georgetown FD has a structure different from the others, Georgetown should of course be involved in these discussions. Bob Napoleon discussed the structure of Georgetown, geographic area covered, call volumes, volunteer recruiting efforts, and training issues.

The Police CAD was discussed along with the software used by each FD and the related costs. Concerns regarding the end-of-life (EOL) for some packages were discussed as well as software package capabilities needed for police, EMS, and fire.

Ms. Pemberton stated that she will send out the reports and studies she mentioned in this meeting to all FDs. All FDs agreed to meet with Ms. Pemberton in a month to begin discussions. The Board thanked all who attended and shared their thoughts.

#### **4. Discussion and Possible Action – Lonetown Marsh Fire Hydrant:**

Ms. Pemberton discussed the quotes the Town received for the Lonetown Marsh Dry Fire Hydrant. Ben Pardee shared particulars of the design and the coffer dams required. The quotes received appear to have designs different than the design plan, scope, and expected costs. Ms. Pemberton suggested that Frangione review the quotes and plans, and also suggested that we hire a project planner for this project since the Town has no one on staff with the expertise to oversee it. Discussed other potential areas for a dry fire hydrant.

## **5. Discussion and Possible Action – Line-Item Transfers, Jim Sanders**

Jim Sanders from the Finance Department discussed closing the books at the end of the month for the fiscal year 2022-2023. He noted that the interest rate environment is favorable to investment and tax collections are very good. Discussed revenues and expenses, retirement funds and legal costs. He believes we are well positioned from a revenue and expenditures perspective. Mr. Sander stated that we need to make line-item transfers to close out the fiscal year and described all and dollar amounts.

**MOTION:** Mr. Thompson moved to make the line-item transfers as outlined by Mr. Sanders. The motion was seconded by Ms. O'Donnell and passed unanimously.

## **6. Committee Updates**

*Wire Mill Advisory Committees:*

Amy Atamian, Chair of the Gilbert and Bennett Wire Mill Advisory Committee, updated the Board on progress. Last week, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz held a press conference at the mill site announcing the \$200,000 grant from the state for the site. The UCONN TAB is preparing a report on the summer activities they performed. The TAB will continue working with us through the spring semester. The Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW) workshop is visiting on September 8<sup>th</sup>, and the BOS is invited to join the meeting. Ms. Atamian described the experience and value they could provide us. Ms. Atamian stated that we should hire a planner to coordinate improvements and plans for both the mill and the Georgetown area.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) offers a \$20,000 matching grant that would help with stabilizing the buildings. Discussed the need for grants for roof and window repairs at the mill. Ms. Pemberton noted that engineers Tighe & Bond (T&B) are willing, at no cost, to devise a plan for the North Main Street area. Discussed grants submitted and a potential multi-purpose grant. Ms. Atamian stated that her committee will provide a full report to the BOS at the October BOS meeting.

Ms. O'Donnell inquired about the walking path around the community center. The RFP is being completed. Final details and requirements are being verified.

## **7. Executive Session - *Redding Life Care – pending claims***

**MOTION:** Mr. Thompson moved to table this item until the next BOS meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. O'Donnell and the motion passed unanimously.

## **8. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. O'Donnell. Unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

Submitted by  
Janet August