

Minutes
Local Emergency Coordinating Committee Meeting
May 5, 2022
Town Hall Conference Room B

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM by Town Council Chairwoman Lisa Thomas. Present: Lisa Thomas, Town Council; John Elsesser, Town Manager; Bill Watkins, Public Works; Ray Oliver, Coventry Fire Police; Ray Eldridge, Coventry Fire; Ted Opdenbrouw, Coventry Public Schools; Jonathan Hand, Town Council; Jim McLoughlin, Fire/EMS/EMD; Bud Meyers, Coventry Fire; Jeff Spadjinske, Coventry Police; Laura Stone, Town Manager's office.

2. **Coming Events:**
CoventryFest. Item 5, was moved up on the agenda to accommodate guests – Al Landry, Jr. and Kristen Bilotta of Coventry Cares, LLC. Kristen said that Coventry Cares hasn't been doing much due to the pandemic, but is ready to move forward with the CoventryFest 2022 event. Everything is all set and elements will be in the same locations as in the past. There will be no bounce houses this year. A live band will be at the band shell. Ackert is handling the electrical needs. The porta-potties have been situated. In the past the parking lot area by the house was used by fire. Bud Meyers said we can just park in the parking lot where we usually do. Kristen said we could use the space where the old house was for extra parking for staff. John Elsesser said he wouldn't recommend allowing the public to park there, but staff would be ok.

Kristen said that volunteerism is down as a whole. So are donations. We are seeking volunteers to manage parking. The whole first area will be handicapped parking. We will also have the buses, they will come first from GHR. Overflow is at the middle school lot. John asked if they had gotten permission from the schools. Al Landry said he gave them the date. Kristen said we'll double check with the schools to confirm.

Kristen said the timing of the event is the same. It starts at 4 PM. People will arrive as early as noon to set up. Between 4-6 PM attendance is light but it really picks up after that. Between 8-9 PM is when it gets really full. Fireworks normally take place after 9 PM. Exiting the park is an issue. There is a residential homeowner that lives across the street who makes money by allowing people to park at their property. Every year we try not to have this happen, because all the people from the park are trying to get out with the buses, but the cars across the street are routed toward GHR. It really backs up when those cars are trying to come out. We think it would be better to have them loop around to High/Flanders. John said the problem is that walkers are walking down Monument Hill. Kristen said we get complaints every year because buses get stuck in that traffic. Ray Oliver said we've had everyone out in 35 minutes so he is a little baffled by the complaint. Eliminating the private parking is not within our control. He suggests putting a cone or making it one way out of High Street. John said High Street is not as much of a problem. It's wider and there are sidewalks. Kristen said she has watched while those cars go and our buses wait. Ray said we could prioritize getting buses out. John said the buses come back from GHR. Everyone else must take a left. The buses that go to the middle school have been going all the way around the lake. Ray said as long as the bus drivers use their signal light so we know which way to go. John said you need to have a bus for each school otherwise people wait a long time. Kristen said we have three buses. Albert said that walkers are usually out of the way in 10-15 minutes. Kristen said maybe we could have the first two buses go to middle school, or see how many people are at the middle school. John suggested telling people who are offering the private parking that they will have to wait until the walkers are through. We could barricade the area. They are siphoning money from the event proceeds. Lisa suggested putting the homeowners on notice. John said to

be clear, this is not a town event. Ray said the fire police just need a clarification. John suggested that the police department and fire police discuss this matter internally and decide how they want to do it, but their private event should not take precedent over our event. The key is flow.

Kristen said that another big complaint is that we didn't have enough handicapped parking. That's why we want to use the front area by the senior center and the other road. We don't have handicapped buses so we want to give everyone the opportunity to attend.

Kristen said that sponsorships are way down. She is getting concerned. John said that firework prices are up. The Town is out \$12,500. If we don't get it back, that's the end of CoventryFest. We'll have a deficit at the start of the fiscal year. Kristen said basically this event is supported by donations and sponsorships. We get some proceeds from the food trucks. Maybe businesses are feeling the pinch from the pandemic. We are doing bucket drives at Cumberland Farms and working on getting one at Dunkin Donuts. We caught a lot of flak last year when we didn't do the event. We didn't have the money to do it. We'll see what happens this year. The date is June 25. John said there will be an on-site pre-meeting at noon the day before. Kristen said we would like to offer the deck at the Lodge to the volunteers who help park cars. John said that Cumberland Farms usually does some fundraising for community events when they open a new store – they never did one in Coventry because of COVID. It might be worth going back to remind them that now that COVID is “over”, that they never had their grand opening event here.

3. COVID Update:

John Elsesser noted that positivity rates are up over 10%.

4. Agency Updates:

Public Works – Bill Watkins:

- Road construction: We are finishing dirt road grading and should be done in a day or two. We did reclamation on Juniper and a binder course is down. We are raising the manholes and putting a final course of paving down in a couple weeks.
- We will be doing a drainage project on Woodbridge. The replacement of one large culvert will likely require a one-day road closure. Cold in place recycling will be done there in mid-June.
- Crack sealing is starting tomorrow.
- DPW met with Jeff and Lesley to finalize placement of the police boat dock, and that will go in within a couple of weeks. John said the dock will have a kayak launcher on it too.

Public Schools – Ted Opdenbrouw:

- Ted is registered for a two-hour webinar for active threats in school on the 18th. We are looking to get some updated material.
- Chief Spadjinske and Ted met last month and discussed having Ted deliver the presentation he gave school staff to the police department. That is taking place this month.

Police Department – Jeff Spadjinske:

- We just found out late yesterday that additional the section we ordered last year for the police dock will be here next week. The water is not too much deeper where we're going to put it, but it should help.

- We got permission from Dr. Petrone to do some on-site training at school sites over the summer. Our officers don't get a lot of time in the buildings unless they're there for a call.
- We are continuing to deal with staffing shortages & over time issues. We have a candidate undergoing a background investigation and it is going well so far. We are also filtering through applications for our boating officer. Some very qualified candidates applied, and were pleased with the number of applicants.
- Officer Michaud and Jeff did some recertification training. The Manchester Coon & Fox Club allows us to use their site for training.
- Two vehicles are out for service. The car that was in an accident is getting decals and we should get it back next week.
- There were 423 calls for service last month.

Fire/EMS/EMD – Jim McLoughlin:

- Would it be possible during the summer training at the schools to incorporate some of the tactical response teams from the medical side to see how to integrate? Some collective training could be beneficial. Jeff said he will find out if it's appropriate for this session. We will discuss it with the firearms officer. Bud said if it doesn't fit in with that they've already planned, maybe we can work out another date. Jeff expects to have multiple sessions given the size of our agency.
- The FD acknowledged EMT and field training officers of the year and presented lifesaving awards at the recent Town Council meeting. We are proud of their actions.
- We met with the peer support clinician who supervises the PD peer support program. We are looking to be in compliance with PA 917. The company he represents is Behavioral Health Consultants, and they provided us with a comprehensive proposal back in August. Since that time he has sold his company to a different firm. We haven't acted on that, but are still working on a policy to select peer support services. We think it's important to work with the same firm as the PD.
- We are preparing for the safety day event on 5/14, and the Memorial Day parade.
- We expect new the ET in September. There is still no information on the new ambulance.
- We are participating in leadership training for officers. The last session was on motivation.
- We are working on getting the new radios programmed.
- We had two major visits with OSHA on voluntary compliance. We hadn't heard back from their second visit in April, so Jim called to follow up. They closed everything out and were very complimentary. They said the only thing now is to keep up with it and suggested calling them back in the fall.
- Budget: from the fire department standpoint, we heard the people based on the referendum results. Jim contacted Comstar to see if there is anything we can do to give more revenue back to the Town. We are at an 88.8% collection rate which is relatively high. Some municipalities have a subscriber-based program. If you are not a subscriber you don't get the service. We are not doing that. We pay a little over \$28/hour to Vintech. We got a comparison from another company and they were higher at \$31/hour. We asked Vintech if they would consider a zero-based percentage increase based on the referendum result. We haven't gotten a response yet. We received a rate increase of 2.8% for 2023 for reimbursement. We put in for that.
- We met with the EMS instructors last night. They take care of recertification and teach other programs like CPR and Stop the Bleed. They've all recently received notification from CT DEMAHS stating that they must get nationally-registered every two years. There will be a cost to this of approximately \$300. There is some confusion about this.

Lisa Thomas asked for a bulleted list. Jim said we came up with a plan to select one of the three instructors, get their concerns, contact the State EMS coordinator and copy the director. If we do not get a response Jim will reach out. We are hoping they can get all of their concerns addressed at that level and that will be the end of it. If not, we'll put a presentation together to get support from the fire caucus at the LOB, COST, CCM, etc. to make their voices heard. John said if it's a law that's passed, they can't do anything about it. They'll have to go into special legislation to strip it. The legislature also passed a \$10 annual fee per firefighter for the cancer presumption to keep it out of workers comp. The idea to get COST and CCM involved is appropriate. Jim said that a lot of the things in the national curriculum do not apply in Connecticut.

- Jim and Bill sat in on a webinar about the crisis tracking software used by South Windsor. Pub Works does a lot of this. Bill will sit in on a demo. It will require a lot of data entry. John said there's a new version of Pub Works. He would rather make our investments there. Bill said that Pub Works is already up and running and he would rather stay with that. We will tell South Windsor we are not interested.

Coventry Fire – Bud Meyers (*see attached report*):

- There were 90 calls during the month of April.
- There were 288 volunteer hours with training and events.
- We have been having issues with the start and stop switch on ET 188. These have been addressed.
- We updated the special operations agreement with Tolland County.
- We are in the process of finalizing our member and citizens award program.

Town Council – Lisa Thomas:

- Lisa said she appreciates all the work that Coventry Fire/EMS did to educate the public prior to the town meeting about the department's needs. We can continue to do that because there is no town meeting on the horizon, but once the question is called all support must cease.
- Also, thanks to all who met with us when Congressman Courtney was here on Monday to discuss initiatives funded through the American Rescue Plan Act. They were impressed. She was told the photos that were taken are going to the White House as example of things that are being done right.

Town Manager – John Elsesser:

- Jeff Spadjinske and John are talking about United Social Services regarding social services and policing. We would like to have a presentation at the next meeting on the positive things that are coming out of that.
- The Council has to decide where they want to end up on budget in about a week.
- The alternative funding mechanism of \$10 per fire fighter vs. workers comp adopted by the legislature is actually a good compromise.
- Coventry Police will be featured at the CIRMA annual meeting. The PD is getting an award. Jeff said they sent out a production team for an interview. John said that Mark Palmer had submitted the department for the award. Lisa asked if Mark will be in attendance at the presentation. John said he will have to check.
- John will be out of the office next week at a CIRMA risk management training conference to make sure we are compliant with our fiduciary responsibilities.

5. Other Business:

- John noted that we just received information about the annual event Jackman bike tour on Saturday 6/4. It involves 75-100 cyclists that will go down Depot Rd, Old Eagleville. This annual event has never had any issues.
- Jim recognized John Elsesser's 34th anniversary of employment with the Town of Coventry.
- John also got a leadership award at the CEN conference today. Lisa asked to please put that on the next Council agenda.

6. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 PM on a motion by Jonathan Hand, seconded by Bud Meyers and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Stone



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Town of Coventry

OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF
FIRE-EMS DEPARTMENT

Bud Meyers, Fire Chief
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LECC Report

May 05, 2022

Calls:

For the month of April we responded to 90 calls consisting of: 33 BLS, 29 ALS, 3 Cardiac Arrests for a total of 65 Medical calls, 2 Structure fire, 2 Outside fires, 3 MVA's, 12 False alarms, and 6 Good intent.

Total of 288 volunteer hours with training and events.

Issues with ET 118 start/stop switch has been rectified.

We meet with a staffing company and although they would be capable of providing FF/EMT's their pricing is higher just for the EMT staffing than we currently are paying.

We update our special operations participation agreement.

Sergeant Iger gave our officers an update on a PREE article he authored and explained how CPD will protect a person that is in need of emergency care.

We have assigned officer's to work with members of their platoon with motivating members and having them more involved with department operations.

We are in the process of finalizing a Member and Citizen Awards Program that has the requirements for a Chief's Award for Lifesaving and Town of Coventry Fire & EMS Department Citizens' Commendation. Along with an EMS Provider of the Year award, the award is named in honor of Past Chief W. Dennis (Denny) Dittrich and Firefighter of the Year Award, the award is named in honor of Past Chief Arthur Vinton.

Respectfully submitted,

Bud Meyers,
Chief
Town of Coventry Fire & EMS Department

