Local Emergency Coordinating Committee Meeting
Minutes Regular Meeting Minutes
January 2, 2020
Town Hall Conference Room B

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Julie Blanchard at 5:04 pm. Present were: Julie Blanchard Council Chair, John Elsesser Town Manager, Mark Kiefer Public Works Director, James McLoughlin EMS Director, Police Chief Mark Palmer, Ken Boutin CVFA Chief, Bud Meyers Fire Marshall and NCFD Chief, and Lenny Brandon BOE Representative.

2. **Audience of Citizens:** None

3. **Acceptance of minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes from December 5, 2019 was made by Chief Palmer, seconded by Bud Meyers. James McLoughlin noted the following changes:
   - Page 1, 4th bullet under NCVFD – Cook should be replaced with Rich.
   - Page 4, Make a Wish Road Race – The first sentence should be removed as it has to do with Christmas in the Village, St should be replaced with Sgt and Sgt.
   - Opdenbrouw’s name is spelled incorrectly.

   Motion to approve the minutes with the changes identified passes unanimously.

4. **Events:**
   4.1 **Debrief: Christmas in the Village 12/8/19:** John Elsesser noted that it was non-eventful Christmas in the Village. Traffic control seemed better and he noted they used new lights between the cones that were very effective. He did not hear of any issues from citizens. He noted that perhaps the tree lighting and parade could be done on a different day - there are so many events that day that the night events end up with less attendance. Jimmy mentioned perhaps we can do it earlier in the same day since it gets dark so early this time of year. John noted with early events - people go home and do not come back out in the evening. John noted it is up to fire services as it is their volunteer time - he would like the Fire Chiefs to discuss it with their respective departments to see if that would be possible. James asked if they can review the flyer prior to publications next year. John noted there was some chaos with the communication this year - next year he would like to have a pre-event meeting to make sure all parties are on the same page. John noted recreation staff have already been told to start getting more involved for next year.

   4.2 **Debrief: Wreaths Across America 12/14/19:** John noted that he thought the event went very well. There was some issue with the speaker system - specifically when reading names. John told the Cemetery Commission to reach out to Mr. Brown for assistance next year with the sound system, which the Commission has already done. Julie inquired about attendance. John estimated 70 people including the High School band. He noted the band and anthem signers were great and that we had enough wreaths this year. John thanked the Fire Departments for the fire truck with the flag was greatly appreciated. Amanda noted a request has been made for a program next year so that people could know the order of events, which the Commission will incorporate into next year. Jimmy noted that
the departments received a thank you note from Commission member Claudine for the services provided.

4.3 Family Ice Fishing Practice 2/8/20 12:30p-3p: John notes DEEP runs this event. It used to be a tournament, but has been scaled back to how to fish. The event is questionable based on ice levels. Bud noted that in January they are doing combined training relating to the ice rescue and related equipment.

5. Agency Updates:

Town Manager: John noted we are deep into budget season and waiting on a few final departments. We have begun going through Capital requests. Staff have asked about Council Goals for their budget and John has informed them they should be available Tuesday. Staff can submit an addition to their budget to align with Council Goals if they deem necessary. John noted we need to move forward with the radio install for Public Works and perhaps Mark Kiefer can coordinate with Chief Palmer. John mentioned a few other projects: They are looking into a dry hydrant on Folley Lane for construction this summer; On Monday there is a meeting with State Traffic Authority relating the road realignment of Swamp Road - once the project moves forward the house can be used for training purposes for fire; We turned the heat on at the Babcock Hill house at 50 degrees; South street project for sidewalks is stuck with DOT but John is hoping for late construction this summer; the next big thing will be the Council will be deciding is priorities for the next CDBG grant in April; and STEAP grants have been announced but the scoring system has not yet been released.

Police: Officer Greener was on patrol at Christmas in the Village. Sgt. Spadjinske is leaving Sunday for the FBI National Academy. We have received notification of $30,000 grant award from the Department of Justice for PREA Targeted Implementation Planning and Support program. This was a very competitive grant process. He noted that he will explain in detail to the Town Council at their meeting of January 21st. There is on-going transition training for new handgun and sights. Chief noted the has submitted capital and operating budget for Town Manager's review. They will meet next month to discuss. He has been busy conducting year-end reviews and analysis on the following

- Use of Force analysis
- Pursuit analysis
- Internal affairs and personnel complaint analysis
- Analysis of grievances
- Traffic stop statistics pursuant to racial profiling laws
- Recruitment plan review
- Review of Personnel Early Warning System
- Review of Criminal Intelligence process
- Sick time usage (four employees with no sick time used).

The Police Sergeants are currently working on Performance appraisals which are due by end of February. The Department continues to prepare for final annual review of GALEA standards which will take place week of February 23rd. The on-site visit will take place from April 6 through 9. Lastly, Michael Cote has been assigned to worked on radio project with Fire Department.
**BOE:** Lenny noted that various projects wrapping up for energy efficiency improvements which were previously approved.

**Public Works:** Mark Kiefer noted the Town has had 4 snow events in December, which is indicative of a long winter. They are monitoring salt and OT for the rest of the year. He noted the snows with rain/ice/snow burn up a lot of material and require more staff time. Mark noted that the other big issue is trees. There are no leaves currently so it is not as important with the public - but once the leaves come in he anticipates problems with the public. He noted the budget is not in good shape in regards to the tree. Mark mentioned Asplundh has a been doing trees for EverSource and the Town is trying to coordinate efforts for that. Mark estimates they have taken down approximately $20k worth of tree removal. He anticipates that by April he will need to ask the Council for additional funds for tree removal. Mark noted we purchased a new road side mower. When his crews have time they are going to clear back some of the right of ways to increase productivity going forward. John noted we got a mower different than the boom mowers we historically used and it should be faster and more productive. Mark noted we are also hoping to wrap up the following: water tank installment at Miller Richardson, test pits at Laidlaw to install the portable bathrooms, Northfields waterline with the hopes of doing the reclamation in May/June and complete the project. Mark noted he is wrapping up the operating budget and also upgrading the pump at the gas station. John estimates the previous one was installed 15 years ago and is ready for upgrade.

**CVFA:** Ken noted the departments are closing out the year and working on the points allocation for year-end stipend and the LOSAP benefit. Ken elaborated that EMS stipends are monthly and the fire stipends are annual. John mentioned EMS is per call and fire is a budgeted total for the year that gets allocated. Ken noted they had 108 calls in December and approximately 1,200+ calls cumulative for the year. He notes the department is working with Chris Bellatone on the radio reprogramming which is scheduled to go online February 1. Sunday evening/Monday morning they had the structure fire at 821 Main St. It was originally a fire alarm call - but when they got there, there was an active fire. One person was located outside and the other was found within the home and determined to be DOA. He noted the remaining fire was extinguished quickly. Ken specifically noted the support of mutual aid, the Town Manager and Jim McLoughlin.

**NCFD:** Bud noted that in the month of December NCFD responded to 36 calls since our last meeting consisting of: 3 Building fires, 1 Chimney fire, 2 Hazardous conditions, 3 CO related, 9 MVA's, 7 False alarms, 4 wires down, 3 good intent and 4 medicals.

Bud noted the following equipment updates:
- ET 311 was leaking water and needed pump packing to be adjusted to stop leak
- R 211 had diesel leak and needed gaskets changed and out of service
- Chief Beecher has been working with FF Kane and they have determined we have 51 Scott bottles due for replacement by 2023
- Mark Smith cleared as a driver for R11
- Jim Galey cleared to driver ET211
Bud stated that there are too many to name and I want to thank all that participated in the toy drive with CPD and CVFA which was a big success. The Christmas in the Village where all had a fun time and Wreaths Across America. There are two individuals that stand out by making a difference, in how our departments are perceived with the community. Chief Figiela is a longtime resident and citizens feel comfortable with reaching out and asking for our department's assistance through him. The latest being he spent Christmas Eve day with personnel and a fire truck to escort Christmas gifts for kids in need. Also, Captain Oliver was instrumental with coordinating Christmas in the Village and Wreaths Across America with the fire departments and event leaders. Receiving accolades for his time, effort and enthusiasm by said event representatives.

In the year 2019, Town of Coventry Fire Departments responded to 1230 calls of which NFCD/CVFA responded to 76 motor vehicle accidents, 67 false alarms, 107 hazardous conditions, 53 service, 58 good intent and 28 fires, 13 of which involved building fires, with a total fire loss of $214,800.00 for the year.

**Fire Marshall:** Bud noted that during the months of October 2019 - December 2019 we have had 68 incidents that required reporting, they have been categorized as follows:

**Incidents:**
- Building fires 4
- Chimney fires 1
- Brush fires 1
- Electrical wiring/equipment problems 3
- Fuel burner/boiler malfunctions 1
- Authorized/Unauthorized burning 2
- Electrical wiring/equipment problem 3
- Carbon monoxide 3
- Gas leak 4
- Hazardous condition 31
- Fire alarms 15

**Inspections:**
- Businesses 3
- Apartments 1
- Group homes 2
- Assembly/Daycare 2
- Municipal 1
- Schools 5
- Plan reviews:
  - Tenant fit out 2
  - Commercial 1
- Investigative reports:
  - Fire 2
  - School safety 1

Fire losses amounted to $40,000.00 for this reporting quarter.

Bud wants to commend the courageous efforts of the first responders, that responded to 821 Main St. fire on December 29, 2019.

Our office participated in the school tabletop exercise.

**Citizens' issues:**
- Nuisance smoke complaints 2
- Insurance firehouse/water source information request 1
- Pre-construction meeting 2
**Fire/EMS:** Jimmy noted the lighting projects in the fire stations have been completed. The fire police continue to do a great job at special event and emergency calls - they have been able to quickly take control of traffic issues allowing quicker release of police. The Board of Fire Officers meet monthly and address policy development by reviewing a few policies each month to eventually be used for one unified department. The report for follow up on the CO exposure - the firefighter is doing fine. We have identified that three of the four houses do not have monitoring systems. This will be addressed in the upcoming budget request - and portable monitors have been installed until then. Jimmy noted that Station 208 has been used more frequently which is a good thing. Bud noted that Rescue 211 got out 82 times this year - which is impressive as R111 only got out 116. Jimmy noticed this is significantly higher than in the past. Jimmy noted both capital and operational budgets have been submitted. Tolland Dispatch wants to discuss merging the State police radio with the UFF system that the fire department is currently using - additional details and meeting will be needed. Jimmy was curious if it would be possible to get a few additional radios for EMS leader and the EOC, etc to connect to the Police Radio system. Jimmy noted about two months ago we went live with a TOC Fire/EMS facebook page and they are looking to gain following. Jimmy noted Monday night we talked about different available resources available to the fire departments after the structure fire. They departments met Monday night to discuss their needs in terms of EAP or CISD or peer support teams, etc. As of now, Jimmy has not received requests for services. Julie asked if Jimmy has experience with that and he said yes he has had several experiences with these sort of teams/groups from his previous employment. He noted leadership has been asked to monitor their departments to make sure everyone seemed to be doing ok. Jimmy noted on the EMS side of things the Town had applied for a long form rate increase and we received an increase of $60 per call. Based on an estimated 900 calls, this could generate an additional $54,000 in revenue. Jimmy noted we are going to be evaluating personnel protective equipment needs with both departments, along with the SCBA equipment and radio needs of the departments. One item that came about as a result of the fire on Main St. was preparing a unified message with the media so that the same message from all departments is given to all reporters. Jimmy noted he will meet with both chiefs in regards to giving out commendations to the first responders involved in the fire on Main Street.

6. **Radio Communications with Police & Fire and Future Public Works:** Julie noted we have touched on this through the agency report and asked if there was more. Chief notes more to report in February after everyone meets.

7. **Fire Transition Study Committee: Progress Report:** Jimmy notes the chairman of the Committee would like to make a presentation to the Council to report on the end of stage one - possibly at the Council meeting on January 21. Julie asked if the Council could get information out prior to and Jimmy said yes. Julie asked if there is progress being made. Jimmy noted the Committee has a mission statement, a vision statement, an organizational chart, job descriptions for the positions, and a plan to fill the positions interim and long-term. The policy manual has been deferred to the Board of Fire Officers to create and then approve by the Fire Transition Study Committee. Jimmy noted the incentive discussions are primarily being reviewed by the Fire Transition Team. John asked about the other incentives such as LOSAP, etc. Jimmy noted everyone has been
discussing that - both increasing the LOSAP benefit as well as a possible tax abatement for firefighters. There are still questions on both issues, as well as point system and EMS reimbursements. Jimmy noted it is a large benefit package and needs to be reviewed in total not item by item and that recruitment and retention are key issues of concern.

8. **Other Business:** Jimmy noted he is working with J&S on a refurb package to complete the refurb on Engine.

9. **Adjournment:** Bud made a motion at 6:16 to adjourn, seconded by Chief Palmer and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda L. Backhaus
Finance Director