

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
FIRE DEPARTMENT FUNDING SUBCOMMITTEE
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
89 BRIDGE STREET
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT**

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

1. TIME AND PLACE OF SPECIAL MEETING

First Selectman Robert Maynard called the meeting to Order at 7:03 p.m. at the Warehouse Point Fire District - Department, 89 Bridge street, East Windsor, CT.

2. ATTENDANCE

Present:

Robert Maynard, First Selectman

Andy Hoffman, Selectman

Charlie Szymanski, Selectman

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Robert Maynard amended the agenda to include accepting the minutes from the previous meeting.

MOTION made (Szymanski) and **SECONDED** (Hoffman) to accept the minutes from Tuesday, December 11, 2018 special meeting.

All in favor.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Robert Maynard stated that the public can participate during the meeting.

No public participation.

5. DISCUSSION OF EAST WINDSOR FIRE PROTECTION

Chief James Barton presented a power point presentation on the history of the town fire service (see attached packet). Chief Barton explains that if a call goes out to either department (BBFD or WHPFD), TN gets no response, no firefighter signs on for the call within 3 minutes the call aromatically gets re-toned to both departments for mutual aid. The district would be renamed to the East Windsor Fire District. The tax would be figured on the entire town grand list.

Andy Hoffman, I think that the information on the tax is wrong. We need to show that there is a decrease to the WHP side and a smaller increase for the BB side. The number presented was the total cost of fire protection, not the tax impact on the tax payers. I do

feel one fire district is the right way to go. There are some expenses on the BB side of the town for fire protection that are hidden.

Chief Arcari, I think that when WHP started taxing the town, back filled that money back and taxes did not go down.

Robert Maynard, if we did go to one fire district, then there is 400,000.00 out of the town budget, the BOF is the one determines what they do with the budget. The line item will be removed, but the money could be put in another line item like it was last time. The BOS can only guarantee that the line item will be removed. The town Attorney said that you could do an ordinance to lower the tax by that stated amount.

Kirk Montstream, we need the support of the BOS and BOF.

Robert Maynard, everyone who is sitting in this room is a resident of the Town of East Windsor, we need to have our voices heard.

Charlie Szymanski, I think we need to work with the town attorney on this, things can change with the budget, nothing is a guarantee.

D. James Barton, the reality is that if this happens the cost to run BBFD will come out of the budget, you can't really guarantee a reduction. Once the money comes out then the BOF crafts the budget for the next year. We need to do something for the fire service for the future.

Charlie Szymanski, myself and Andy went out to Barkhamsted to talk to them on how they run three departments under one district. We have gathered a lot of information and should be further along in this process. Both departments have been forced to work together due to lack of volunteer, (both chiefs spoke up and said we are all here for the same reason) working together is the right thing to do. This is a long-term solution.

Public questions- What happens with the 2% rule? Discussion on the 2% rule. Town Attorney spoke about the special act, in the special act there are some real specifics on what the district will look like, 6 commissioners, town clerk, 2 auditors...

Louis Flynn, the WHP side of town is in a bad position, the way it is setup is unfair. The other option is to have BB set up its own district. East Windsor needs to come into the real world, the fire service is only going to get more expensive.

Andy Hoffman, you can't sell this based on the double tax. BB side won't buy into that, you need to sell it on the needs of the fire service. We need to convince the tax payers the fire tax money will come out of the budget.

Steve Dearborn, Get a district out of your mind. The district has come to the BOS many times accusing us of double taxation, this is not true. You could tax and we could

not stop you. You only get 26 people here to vote on your budget, you can raise the tax and we could not stop you. The people of East Windsor are too lazy to get down here to vote. I will guarantee you will not get the votes on the Broad Brook side of town. I will put signs all over the town. One fire department East Windsor Fire Department, the town will support it. Get rid of the fire district. Get rid of the fire tax and the fire district. This will never pass the east side of town. I will make sure of that. I never see this side of town post information about their meetings. I pay my \$250.00 of fire tax for my farm. With the expansion of the town, the things coming into the town, we can support the fire service for the town.

Robert Maynard, what I would say Steve, if this fire department, we the town had them fund the Warehouse Point side, at the last minute we were told it was not legal. They had to tax to keep the department open. We the Town have a problem with no funding. The tax payers can come vote on the budget. The Town should be active, I totally disagree with. I agree we should have one district, an entire town district.

Chief Barton, for years we were funded by the town. We were not fully funded, we own the buildings so the town would not support the structures. A legal opinion was made so we moved forward with taxing. Town Attorney said some of the resources will have to be combined, only one treasurer, one clerk. There needs to be discussion of what will happen to the town owned fire trucks. You can change things with by-laws, I would consider creating a new fire district. This will give you benefits of combined fire service.

Public- How do you dissolve the district? Would it be smarter to create one district and then make the changes needed?

Chief Barton, we have discussed all of this. We can adopt by laws. Discussion of the special act.

Louis Flynn, the danger is going to a full-time paid department for the entire town at estimate of 8 million dollars. Something needs to get done. We need to have a fire department.

Charlie Szymanski, I think we are all in agreement, one fire district. We need to discuss the organization of the district. Who will own the trucks? How many commissioners? If you can put those things together, we can form that out legally.

Chief Arcari, the BB board of directors invited Charlie to the next meeting, present this and allow questions. Town Attorney, what if you run to analysis. One option a fire department under the town, two of district. What impact would each have on the town. Bottom line is the need for one fire unit, town fire department or one fire district.

Andy Hoffman, let's sit down to make a time line. The next meeting should be a working meeting. We don't have a plan, so far, we just sit and talk. We should be some place better than this. Andy passed out a plan of action.

Robert Maynard, I think that we need to assign some tasks.

Louis Flynn, both departments need to be polled to see what they want. I would also like the BOS to add the WHPFD back into the budget for the same amount at BBFD.

D. James Barton, could you research the Chapter 105. I believe we can adopt the 105. The big elephant in the room is a paid department. The end game needs to be one unit. We need to go to one paid department. You can more efficiently manage one fire department.

Chief Barton, I think within the next two-three years we will need paid fire fighters 24 hours a day. We are not getting the volunteers like we did years ago. Within five years both departments will need to replace a fire truck.

Chief Arcari, Jim is right. I put in my next year's budget to have a paid fire fighter on Friday and Saturday night. We will eventually need a paid career fire fighter on all the time.

Andy Hoffman, I would like each department to poll their departments, then sit down with a plan. I am not sure I would vote for WHPFD be put back into the budget. I don't think you would have much luck with the BOF.

Charlie Szymanski, we would need line items that you would want supported. BBFD next board meeting will be January 10th and the WHPFD will meet next week December 27th. We will meet January 15, at Warehouse Point Station One, 7pm.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION made (Hoffman) and **SECONDED** (Maynard) to adjourn.


All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jill Caron


Reviewed by First Selectman Robert Maynard




East Windsor Fire Services

Provided by the Broad Brook and Warehouse Point Fire Departments








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Presentation by:

James P Barton

Warehouse Point Fire District


29 years with the Warehouse Point Fire District

13 Years as Fire Chief




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Objectives


1. Explain the History of the Fire Services in East Windsor
2. Inform town residents of the Volunteer fire services
3. Inform town residents of the future needs of the fire service.
4. Explain the future needs of the fire service and the most equitable way to provide fire emergency services.




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Broad Brook Fire Department
 Established 1896

Warehouse Point Fire District
 Established 1911 with Special Act through the
 CT state Legislator







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Both Fire Departments were completely
 volunteer until 1993 when Firefighters would
 receive \$3 per call to respond to emergency
 calls.


This was put in place to try and retain
 volunteers to respond to emergencies





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In Approximately 1998-2000 the Incentive
 Program was increased from \$3.00 per call to
 \$10.00 per call. This was hopeful to continue
 to retain volunteers and to entice more
 volunteers to help assist with the increasing
 emergency call volume in town.





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In 2009 the Incentive program was revised from \$10.00 to \$12.00 per call and the annual stipends for fire officers were doubled

Chief \$750.00 to \$1,500.00

Assistant Chief \$600.00 to \$1,200.00

Deputy Chief \$500.00 to \$ 1,000.00

Captains \$350.00 to \$700.00

Lieutenants \$250.00 to \$500.00



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BBFD and WHPFD currently have part-time Fire Service Maintainers that are at the fire stations 10 hours daily Monday through Friday to perform all maintenance requirements and respond to daytime emergencies.



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Fire Service Maintainer Program

In 2015 both Departments in conjunction with the Town of East Windsor began the Fire Service Maintainer Program. This would pay volunteers who were available to fill 8 hour shifts Monday through Friday in order to adequately check all fire equipment and respond to emergencies due to the lack of volunteers during the daytime hours.



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Fire Service Maintainer Program (cont.)

As volunteers during the day were scarce, it was decided during the next budget cycle to increase the number of FSM's to 2 staff on duty in Each fire Station, BBFD and WHPFD.



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Fire Service Maintainer Program (cont.)

As of today, the FSM Program consist of 3 FSM's in BBFD and 3 FSM's in WHPFD. The shifts are staggered in order to cover the critical hours while volunteers are working their full time jobs.

A-shift 7am to 3pm

B-shift 8am to 4pm

C-shift 9am to 5pm



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East Windsor Emergency Call Statistics

Broad Brook Fire Department
and
Warehouse Point Fire District



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Types of Emergency Calls

Structure Fires	Motor Vehicle Accidents
Fire Alarms	Mutual Aid Responses
Hazardous Incidents	Water Rescues
Outside Fires	Service Calls
Medical Calls	Other Fires (vehicle)

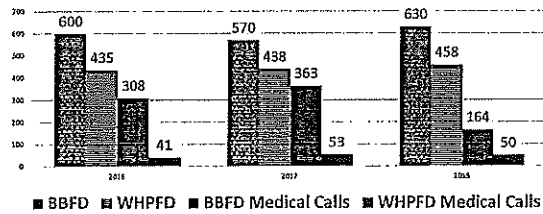


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Annual Emergency Incidents: Past 3 Years



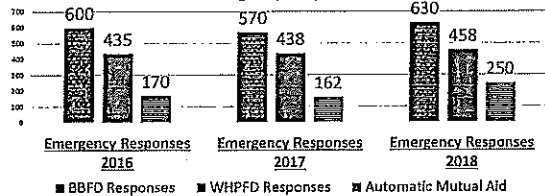


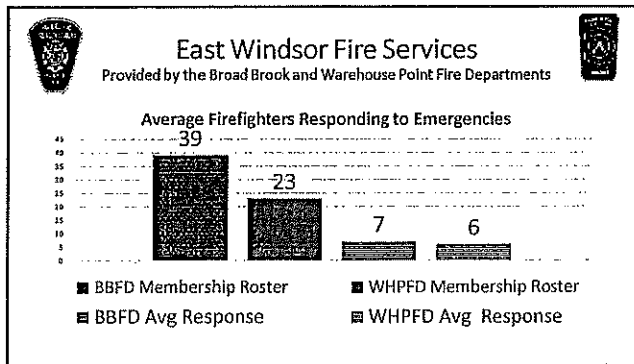
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Emergency Responses





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Firefighter Training Requirements

Initial FF-1 Training 190 hours
Approximately \$1,500 for FF-I with books per firefighter

Annual Mandatory Training 72 hours
Volunteers normally teach the mandatory training unless an outside instructor is needed

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- 15 Personnel Required (NFPA-1710)
- 17 Personnel if an Aerial Device and Supply Pump are in Operation
- Total on Scene
 - Incident Commander-1 Officer
 - Aerial Device- 1 Officer 2 Firefighters
 - 2 Firefighters assigned to Victim Search and Rescue
 - Engine -1 Officer 2 Firefighters
 - Engine -1 Officer 2 Firefighters
 - Engine -1 Officer 2 Firefighters
 - 1 Firefighter assigned as IC aid
 - 1-Officer and 1 Firefighter assigned as RIT

§2.12.2 Initial Full Alarm Assignment Capability Deployed Within 5 Minutes

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How to Provide Future Fire / Rescue Services

The East Windsor Fire Protection Committee along with the Board of Selectmen Sub committee feel that expanding into one Fire District will enable the Departments to provide better fire service to the citizens of East Windsor.



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How to Provide Future Fire / Rescue Services

Due to the declining number of volunteers, Fire Services will be provided in the most equitable way possible.



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Why an East Windsor Fire District?

- Residents will have direct impact on the fire services annual budget.
- Residents will vote on all major expenses of the fire service.
- Capital purchases will be voted on by the district residence.
- Fire District Residents will have a direct influence on the line items of the fire service at the monthly, annual meetings, and the budget hearings.



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Why an East Windsor Fire District? (cont.)

- Fire Emergency responses will continually be provided by each department as they currently are.
- Response to Emergency calls will provide more safety for fire personnel and the citizens due to the lack of volunteers.
- Training will be collaborative between all fire personnel.
- Cost sharing will save tax payers money on certain purchases that can be bought in bulk.



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Why an East Windsor Fire District? (cont.)

- Tax payers concerns will be presented to one Board of Fire Commissioners.
- The Board of Fire Commissioners will be the deciding body for the citizens of the district pertaining to all fire services.
- The Board of Fire Commissioners are elected by the residents of the fire district.
- The Fire Departments Inc. will be able to keep their history and autonomy.




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Town Funded Fire Department

- Residents will **NOT** have the direct impact on the Fire Service Expenses.
- Several town boards will decide how the fire service monies are spent and not the tax payer.
- Fire service annual budget would compete against several other town departments.
- Capital Improvements would compete with other town departments.




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How do WE Expand the Current Fire District to cover the boundaries of the entire Town?

Any district may enlarge or reduce its territorial limits if the board of directors of the district approves a resolution proposing such an enlargement or reduction and stating the proposed boundaries of the area proposed to be included or excluded, as the case may be, provided:




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How do WE Expand the Current Fire District to cover the boundaries of the entire Town? (cont.)

(1) The board of directors of the district shall call a meeting of voters of the area proposed to be included or excluded, which meeting shall be held within thirty days of the board of directors' approval of such resolution and shall be called by publication of a written notice of the same, signed by the members of the board of directors of the district, at least fourteen days before the time fixed for such meeting in two successive issues of some newspaper published or circulated in such town, provided not later than twenty-four hours before any such meeting, two hundred or more such voters or ten per cent of the total number of such voters, whichever is less, may petition the clerk of the district, in writing, that a referendum on the question of whether the area proposed to be included or excluded should join or leave the district be held in the manner provided in section 7-327




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How do WE Expand the Current Fire District to cover the boundaries of the entire Town? (cont.)

(2) a two-thirds majority of the voters of the area proposed to be included or excluded in attendance at such meeting, or, if a referendum is held, two-thirds of such voters casting votes in such referendum, vote in favor of joining or leaving such district;



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How do WE Expand the Current Fire District to cover the boundaries of the entire Town?


(3) that any area to be added is contiguous with some portion of the existing district, and

(4) if the enlargement of the territorial limits of the district will overlap the territorial limits of another district within the town, the legislative body of the town approves such enlargement. If any district enlarges or reduces its territorial limits, the clerk of such district shall notify the town clerk of each town affected by such enlargement or reduction within thirty days after the vote.




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Fire District Mill Rate

The Warehouse Point Fire District Mill Rate is currently 1.4 mils for the taxpayers of the district and the current mill rate for the Broad Brook Fire Department is approximately 1 mil.



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Expanded Fire District Mill Rate

The restructure and the renaming of the Warehouse Point Fire District to the **EAST WINDSOR FIRE DISTRICT** would allow the current approximate 1 mil of residents taxes to be **completely removed** from the town portion of property tax.


The District tax would then be figured on the entire town Grand list and the new East Windsor Fire District mill rate would be approximately **1.2 mils** for the current fire rescue services taxpayers are receiving today.




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Estimated Fire Tax for a Resident

Assessed Property value \$200,000.00
 Mil rate of 1.2
 Estimated tax \$240.00 per year.







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Steps to begin improving Fire Rescue Services for the community

Present restructure to the Broad Brook and Warehouse Point Department Memberships







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Steps to begin improving Fire Rescue Services for the community (Cont.)

Present to the Board of Selectmen
 Board of Selectmen take action on the previous submitted report from the **East Windsor Fire Protection Committee**






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Steps to begin improving Fire Rescue Services for the community

Schedule 2-3 informational sessions for the residents of the East Windsor to explain how this merger will benefit the future of Fire Rescue Services




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Steps to begin improving Fire Rescue Services for the community


Move forward with the expansion of the District in the Months of April or May. It should be the goal of this committee accomplish this by the next fiscal year.



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Questions



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Thank You
