

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
SPECIAL WORK SESSION MINUTES**

**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019
TIME: 7:00 P.M.**

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Paterna called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Mayor Andrew Paterna
Deputy Mayor Liz Pendleton
Councilor Karen Lydecker
Councilor Mary Justine Hockenberry (arrived at 7:02 p.m.)
Councilor Matthew Riley
Councilor Janice Snyder

Members Absent: Councilor Audrey Delnicki
Councilor Cesar Lopez
Councilor Lisa Maneeley

Also Present: Matthew B. Galligan, Town Manager

3. Public Participation

None

4. Communications

Mr. Walter Summers, Fire Marshal, came before the Town Council to remind residents to check their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to make sure they are operating. Smoke alarms, whether they are battery or electric, are only good for ten years. Carbon monoxide alarms are good for five to seven years. Residents should plan to have two ways out of their homes with an escape plan for their children.

5. Items for Discussion

A. General Government Budget for Fiscal Year 2019/2020

Fire Marshal

Mr. Galligan explained that the proposed increase to this budget is for a 9.82% increase. The driver of this increase is having a part-time employee become a full-time employee. The community has grown which creates more responsibilities to the Fire Marshal's Office. The position will not be full time until January with an impact of approximately \$25,000 over a period of one year. A Deputy Fire Marshal is a key position and will cover the Fire Marshal when he is away on vacation or training. Other changes consist of communication equipment upgrades, the leasing of a Ford Truck, and salary adjustments.

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ITEM:

5. A. (Continued)

Answering questions from Councilor Hockenberry, Mr. Summers explained that the current portable radios that every employee has when they go out in the field are seven years old. The Fire Marshal's Office is going to start a replacement program for these devices which cost approximately \$1,800 each. There are four budgeted part-time employees. One employee left in August, so after reviewing the positions, it was decided that it would be best to combine two part-time positions into a full-time position. Mr. Summer explained that the Town presently does inspections of apartments every other year. The State requires that you do that every year, but the Town has struggled with that and has developed a program where we go and do inspections every other year.

Mr. Summers explained to Deputy Mayor Pendleton that the \$16,893 amount is what will be paid to the part-time employee up until January 2020. That employee will then go full time, and the remainder of his salary is under Full-Time Salaries. The other two line items are for the part-time employees.

Answering questions from Councilor Riley, Mr. Summers explained that a Fire Inspector could only do fire code inspections per the State Statute. They can assist in a fire investigation, but they cannot take responsibility for it. The Deputy Fire Marshal can step in to do some of the Fire Marshals functions because he is granted that responsibility. Deputy Fire Marshal can also go to meetings in place of the Fire Marshal and can do some investigations for the Fire Marshal. The part-time positions work 24.5 hours with no benefits.

Councilor Riley recognized that while in this budget, these requests will have a 9.82% increase that is being built into the budget, next year there will be a 24% increase.

Mr. Summers explained to Councilor Snyder that .3 FTE's is about 16 hours. A 20-hour position and 16-hour position are being combined to create a full-time position. The two part-time employees will have increased hours but will be below 25 hours for benefits.

Mr. Galligan stated that the commentaries would be changed when the budget is complete. The Fire Marshal and the Health Director will take on additional responsibilities in Emergency Management.

Mr. Summer explained that Heather Oatis and himself would evaluate what the Emergency Management position requirements are and look at what the goals are of the Town over the next five years and come up with a long term plan and how to implement that. CERT is very important so the leadership will be brought into more Town meetings and be more involved. There is also a HAM radio group which retired Fire Chief Philp Crombie is involved with and has taken the lead on. He will do a

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ITEM:

5. A. (Continued)

great job. Mr. Summer's stated he feels they will have to manage the program and let the volunteers run the program. When they need assistance, they can come to the Town for assistance. The program can be evaluated after one year.

Mr. Galligan stated that the Fire Marshal and Health Director would receive a stipend in the amount of \$4,000 for taking on these additional responsibilities.

Mr. Summer's explained for Deputy Mayor Pendleton that the Fire Marshal's office pays for two trainings regarding fire investigations for the Police Department. If these trainings are not attended, there is a surplus in the budget at the end of the Fiscal Year. CERT will not be disappearing.

Mr. Galligan informed the Council that it would be a team effort to take over the Emergency Management responsibilities.

Mr. Summers clarified that the Town would have a full-time Deputy Fire Marshal who would make \$60,000 per year and there is a part-time Deputy Fire Marshal who makes \$47,000 with no benefits.

Councilor Hockenberry voiced her concern that last year the Fire Marshal's Office did not have enough employees and this year the Fire Marshal is making a part-time employee full time, but more responsibilities are being added to the department. Mr. Summers explained that there had been numerous meetings and he feels confident that they should be able to take on the additional responsibilities.

Councilor Hockenberry stated that CERT is a great program and she hopes that the \$4,000 will cover the additional responsibilities for the Fire Marshal. Mr. Galligan informed the Council that the additional responsibilities are being divided up between department heads and will be cost effective. If there are other recommendations, they will be brought to the Council.

Mr. Summers informed the Council that there is a group consisting of Public Works, Fire Marshal Office, Fire Department, and Police Department called SWERC (South Windsor Emergency Response Coalition) that meets every other month to discuss any problems that there may be. The team is also involved with MDA31 which the State is reviewing to regionalize.

Answering further questions, Mr. Summer explained that he would be asking the CERT about what training they would like to see, what training is required, and whether there are certain certifications that they need to maintain. Mr. Summers

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ITEM:

5. A. (Continued)

stated he would also talk to Manchester and East Hartford CERT to see what level of training they are at and hopefully South Windsor will match other Towns. The other thing that can be discussed is to regionalize with surrounding Towns. The Town has an Emergency Action Plan presently, but it is not employee friendly, so a new Emergency Action Plan is being developed which will be employee friendly.

Councilor Snyder voiced concern about doing a re-organization with a new Town Manager coming in. Mr. Galligan stated that if the new Town Manger wants any changes, he will make those changes.

Mr. Summers explained that the delta in his department after all changes occur would be \$21,500.

Volunteer Fire Department

Chief Cooney explained that the budget increase being proposed is for a 2% increase. There will be no new services being requested. The increase would go mostly towards member benefits. Chief Cooney stated that he has been seeing an increase in calls and responsibilities and foresee changes in the future such as making the Fire Chief a full or part-time position and/or the hiring of staff during the day. The Fire Department has applied for a FEMA grant which would help offset some of the expenses.

Answering questions from the Council, Chief Cooney stated that there is almost \$1,000,000 in the length of service fund. Mr. Galligan explained that this fund needs to be separate from the Town funds because the Volunteer Fire Department is a grant agency. Chief Cooney stated that the Fire Department has established a Committee to oversee these funds and has also hired a new accountant. Any unexpended funds go toward priorities of the Fire Department.

Mr. Galligan explained that the Town leases new fire trucks through a bank. These leases go from seven years to ten years depending on the price of the truck. They are not put out to referendum because you get into issues with useful life.

Chief Cooney informed the Council that the Fire Department has an Apparatus Replacement Plan that was developed in 2005. Once the budget is complete, the Council will be updated with the next truck that will need to be replaced.

Chief Cooney answered Councilor Snyder's question explaining that the Fire Department is governed by the Fire Commission which consists of five members.

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ITEM:

5. A. (Continued)

Public Works

Mr. Galligan stated that the Public Works budget is only increasing by 1.98%. The increase is mainly between three items but does have salary increases and a GIS Intern. There is an increase of \$2.00 per ton for the refuse disposal.

Mr. Gantick, Director of Public Works, came before the Council and explained that there are three major budget drivers for the budget. The Public Works budgets for all of the GPS that is installed into all of the vehicles at the cost of \$22,000. The new restroom facilities on Nevers Road Park is in Clay's budget for the electrical and maintenance of that at the cost of \$30,000. There is an increase of approximately \$82,000 in the refuse and recycling budget. Those three items consist of an increase of \$135,000 of the \$172,000 being requested. The remainder of \$38,000 is spread throughout the budget.

Mr. Galligan added that the GPS in the vehicles is an important item which also helps with emergency management. GPS has helped to reduce costs and be more efficient.

Answering questions from Deputy Mayor Pendleton, Mr. Gantick explained that money had been turned back in last year which is mainly due to what happens with the snow season. Mr. Galligan informed Deputy Mayor Pendleton that the amount turned back in last year was about \$242,000. Mr. Gantick went on to explain that there are no new staffing positions being requested. There are 49 full-time employees that take care of 140 miles of road. There has been the same number of Maintainers since 1989, the same number of Supervisors since 1979, and the same number of Mechanics since 1963 with a lot more moving stock.

Mr. Gantick stated that there is a request for a new Intern in the Engineering Department. After a Maintainer I has been with the Town for two years, they can be promoted to Maintainer II. The \$30,000 decrease in Maintenance Contracts came out of the road fund and snow fund. Mr. Vincent Stetson has taken over the position of being the Tree Warden. He has identified a plan for the next four or five years where Ash trees will need to be taken down due to disease. He also works exclusively with Eversource for tree trimming. Mr. John Caldwell handles the trees in the park properties and school properties. Mr. Stetson handles the trees on the Town's right of way. When trees are taken down, the Town tries to find the right location to plant a new tree. It is the goal of the Public Works Department to do succession planning, especially if an employee would like to grow into a position and continue working for the Town.

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ITEM:

5. A. (Continued)

Mr. Galligan explained that if the Town did a budget line item by line item, the budget would be very thick. Also when the budget is submitted to Rating Agencies, there are requirements that need to be met when doing the budget. If more detail is wanted, Town staff can do that. Council members can ask questions on any part of the budget, and the answer will be supplied to them.

Mr. Gantick stated that South Windsor has been one of the leaders in the State of Connecticut changing from sand and salt to deicing. South Windsor has trained sixty to seventy municipalities on the proper calibration of their sander, so they are using the right amount of material on the streets. South Windsor was involved in a conference last year with the Department of Health called Driving Water Supply. It was recommended that a Statewide Task Force be established to look at this issue. South Windsor was the first one to weigh our salt. The biggest challenge is the public has a greater expectation than what can happen. South Windsor has the same amount of salt needed as in previous years.

Human Services

Mr. Galligan informed the Council that the largest increase in this budget is for salaries and a promotion of a part-time employee to a full-time employee.

Answering questions from the Council, Mrs. Cofrancesco, Director of Human Services, explained the proposed salary increases. There is a proposed increase of \$3,500 under printing in Adult and Families due to sending more newsletters every month. Presently Human Services has four buses and has just sent in a grant application for a replacement bus but will not know anything until this summer. This process is very competitive, so it was not included in the budget. If the Town does receive this grant, Mrs. Cofrancesco stated she would be coming to the Council for \$14,400. The total cost of the bus is \$72,000 and the Town would only have to contribute \$14,400. Human Services has served 185 kids for the Adopt A Child Program and 200 families for the Thanksgiving Basket Program.

6. Executive Session

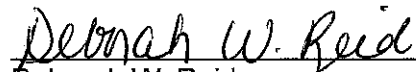
None

ITEM:

7. Adjournment

At 8:36 p.m. Councilor Snyder made a motion to adjourn the Work Session. Deputy Mayor Paterna seconded the motion; and it was approved, unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Deborah W. Reid
Recording Secretary