**Fire Advisory Committee**

**Thursday February 27, 2020**

**19:00**

**Community Fire Department**

**MINUTES**

**Present**:

Kim Austin, Chair

Steve Bodreau – Quinebaug Chief

Matt Grauer – Thompson Hill Chief

John Sharpe – Community Chief

Kyle Cimochowski – West Thompson Chief

Christine Chatelle – Citizen Chief

Jeff Sheldon – East Thompson Chief

1 firefighter, Ron Fournier

**Absent:**

none

1. **Call to Order** @ 19:23
2. **Approval of December Minutes**
   1. Motion – Kyle C.
   2. Second – Steve B.
   3. Aye -7 nay -  **0**
3. **Member and Alternative Contact Update**
   1. Received from Community, West Thompson, and Quinebaug
   2. Will give names to selectman for vote and then to Renee to be sworn in
4. **Budget Workshop update**
   1. Kim brought up the large discrepancy in the estimates for equipment. Chief’s responded with that it depends on vendor and company made equipment will change the prince of the items needed.
   2. Kim asked about capital expenses in the budget. Chief’s responded with no capital expenditures are in the price they want from the town. Capital is all in the capital expense side. Kim mentioned maybe adding that in for next year if the Association was not up and running by then.
   3. Chief Steve asked how to do capital expenses for years 2 -10. Kim responded with potentially having Orla or another finance member attend a meeting prior to the budget for next year to answer those exact questions.
   4. Most chiefs felt the same in regard to the budget being all about perception, the town wants the departments final number to not be in the negative. The departments aren’t set up for perception, they are set up to be black and white. Some chief’s have asked for more guidance with budget preparedness. Same concept for a lump sum, they need more direction as to how to make it look like they are not getting enough (show no profit or very little profit).
   5. When asked what the chiefs need/want from the town. Responses included they want to see the BOF and BOS to meet with each other and see what questions are being answered and how. They want BOF to see the information that the BOS have.
   6. The chief’s feel unsupported when their budget is “nitpicked” and torn apart during budget meetings.
   7. Kim mentioned that once the association comes about, there will be a town line item for capital expense for all five departments
5. **Kim’s Update with Woodstock**
   1. Process Woodstock went through to start their association – 1st departments, then bylaws approved by FD, then state, then town approval
   2. Woodstock is considered a “designated department” in town
   3. 1 budget divided into 4 sections with 2 sections being untouchable\* (1) Chief’s Discretionary fund 2) non-discretionary funds for payment of bills, lawyer fees, insurance, fuel, and utilities\* 3) Apparatus replacement\* 4) Recruitment and retention program – no abatement)
   4. Money to each department is the same for the chief’s discretionary and the apparatus replacement. Non-discretionary gets paid as needed. Recruitment and retention Is the same per department but overall amount is based on the number of calls.
   5. When bills come in, the chief signs the bills then sends to association to be paid
   6. Retain a separate attorney from the town
   7. town puts the capital for the departments on the town budget (roofs, buildings, etc)
   8. Audited annually and town is given a copy
   9. Don’t report the fundraising amount/cell tower income
   10. Members on the board are appointed/voted in by the Chiefs. No chief can sit on the board, however they must attend meetings. Woodstock does 3 members and 1 alt from each department all serving a 3 year term up to 2 consecutive years.
   11. Business manager for the association to keep records of everything NOT the town
6. **Thompson Fire Protection Association Budget** to be tabled until next fall
7. **Thompson Fire Protection Association Bylaws** to be tabled until next meeting
8. **Next Steps for Thompson Fire Protection Association**
   1. Vote in each department to join Thompson Fire Protection Association
   2. Review bylaws at next FAC meeting
   3. Pick a physical address for Thompson Fire Protection Association
   4. Submit paperwork to the state for incorporation
   5. Once the Thompson Fire Protection Association is approved, present to the town for approval
   6. Find/Pick members to sit on the board
   7. Once June 2020 comes, have each department create a new bylaw to be part of the Thompson Fire Protection Association
   8. Plan budget for Thompson Fire Protection Association come October 2020
9. **Other Business**
   1. Kim told the men that she was planning on stepping down from the FAC at the end of April due to schooling and her family.
   2. Town “Ask Me” presentation
10. **Adjourn at 20:51 motion by Kyle Cimochowski, second by John Sharpe – unanimously approved**