

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
AND  
FIRE DEPARTMENT STUDY AD HOC COMMITTEE  
JOINT MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, August 20, 2015  
6:30pm  
Selectmen's Conference Room  
Town Hall**

**Call to Order:**

Fire Commission Chairman Keith Burger (representing the Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee) and First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini (representing the Board of Selectmen) called the Board of Selectmen and Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee Joint Meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Members Present:**

Members present from the Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee include Keith Burger, Kathy Devlin, Andy Rockett and Lisa Pellegrini. Fire Ad Hoc Member David Palmer was not available. Members present from the Board of Selectmen include Lisa Pellegrini, Kathy Devlin and Bud Knorr. Also present were Fire Chief Gary Schiessl, Deputy Fire Chief Frank Falcone, Firefighters Al Baker, Ray Stovall and Bob Wheeler, Somers Volunteer Association Chairman of the Board/EMS Division Chairman Rick McDonald, Somers Volunteer Association Fire Department Division President Tim Percoski, CMEDDS Consultant Ed Sawicki, Fire Commissioner Father Anthony Bruno (arriving at approximately 6:50pm) and one interested resident.

**Volunteer Fire Department Association/Town of Somers Agreement:**

First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini distributes a copy of the Agreement signed by Chairman Rick McDonald for review and discussion.

**Ad Hoc Committee:**

*Mr. Burger makes a motion to accept the Agreement and to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen to approve the Agreement (see attached), seconded by Mr. Rockett. The motion passes 4-0.*

**Board of Selectmen:**

*Mrs. Devlin makes a motion to accept the recommendation from the Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee and to also approve the Agreement, authorizing First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini to sign the document. A unanimous vote follows.*

Mrs. Devlin commends everyone for all their hard work. Ms. Pellegrini thanks everyone individually for their participation and dedication in achieving consensus.

**Job Description for Fire Chief:**

Ms. Pellegrini distributes the Job Description and asks Mr. Sawicki to update everyone as to the work that has been going on. Mr. Sawicki states that a consensus has been

achieved. He explains the job description has been going back and forth and that the final outcome has been ratified by both the career side and the Association side. He believes the document will give the Town a good applicant pool from which to choose from.

There was some discussion regarding the pros and cons of a 15 mile radius residency requirement. No changes were made, however it was noted that the job description is not a binding contract.

There was also discussion regarding the term "or equivalent" in the document. It was agreed the term "or equivalent" will be defined prior to the start of the interview process. There was also discussion regarding clarification of the Hazardous Materials Technician requirement. It was agreed that the EPA 40 Hour should be added to the requirement.

**Ad Hoc Committee:**

*Mr. Burger makes a motion to accept the Job Description for the Fire Chief with the following amendment "change Hazardous Materials Technician to Hazardous Materials Technician EPA 40 Hours" and to forward the amended Job Description (see attached) on to the Board of Selectmen with a recommendation to approve it, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The motion passes 4-0.*

**Board of Selectmen:**

*Mrs. Devlin makes a motion to accept the recommendation from the Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee to approve the amended Job Description for the Fire Chief (see attached), seconded by Mr. Knorr. A unanimous vote follows.*

**Process Discussion/Next Steps:**

The job description will be posted. The Selectmen reserve the right to keep open the posting of the job description until the position is filled.

The Board of Selectmen will select individuals to serve during the vetting and interview process. At present they are awaiting the list of suggested interviewers from the Volunteer Association. They agree that Consultant Ed Sawicki will actively assist in the hiring process.

**Approval of Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee Minutes:**

**July 16, 2015 Meeting Minutes:**

Due to a lack of time this item was tabled.

**Adjournment:**

*Mr. Burger and Ms. Pellegrini make a motion to adjourn the joint Board of Selectmen and the Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee Meeting at 7:10pm, seconded by Mrs. Delvin. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Pellegrini, Recording

*Minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.*

## **FIRE PROTECTION AGREEMENT**

**THIS AGREEMENT**, dated this **20th day of August 2015** by and between the **Town of Somers**, a municipal corporation located within the County of Tolland in the State of Connecticut, hereinafter "**Town**", and the **Somers Volunteer Fire Department Association Inc.** a non-profit Connecticut corporation, made up of volunteer fire fighters/rescue personnel/fire police, EMS personnel, and Auxiliary members, all the aforementioned above, hereinafter referred to as the "**Association.**" The **Volunteer Fire Fighters/Rescue Personnel/Fire Police and EMS Personnel** are hereinafter referred to as the "**Volunteer Fire Department**". The "**Somers Fire Department**" is composed of the career staff, fire chief, and the Association. Each entity noted above may be referred to in this Agreement as a Party, or collectively as Parties.

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 7-301 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, the Town may contract with volunteer fire companies to provide for all or part of the Emergency Services with the Town of Somers; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 4-5 of the Town of Somers Charter allows for the Town's Board of Selectmen to enter into contracts and agreements with volunteer organizations, the private sector, municipalities, state and federal agencies and/or may employ such persons as it feels is required to ensure public safety of the Town; and

**WHEREAS**, members of the Association are willing to use the Town's equipment and facilities for the purpose of providing Emergency Services within the Town of Somers; and

**WHEREAS**, the Association and the Town wish to enter into a written Agreement for the purposes herein enumerated;

**NOW THEREFORE**, in consideration of the promises contained herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. Purpose and Term of Agreement. During the term of this Agreement and any extension of it, the Association shall provide Emergency Services to the Town to include fire protection and ambulance services. The term of this Agreement shall commence on August 20, 2015 and shall terminate on August 20, 2020, provided, however, that this Agreement shall be automatically extended for a successive periods of five (5) years, unless either party hereto shall give written notice of its intention to terminate this Agreement not less than 180 days prior to the termination date.

2. Selection and Duties of the Fire Chief.

The paid Fire Chief shall be responsible for the operational portion of all Emergency Services. The Town agrees to include the Association in the hiring process of the paid Fire Chief. The Somers Fire Department will be led by the paid Fire Chief who will be appointed by the Town's Board of Selectmen as outlined by the job description and subject to the Town's personnel policies, rules and regulations pertaining to Town employees. Until such time as the Town hires the paid Fire Chief, the current volunteer Fire Chief shall remain as Fire Chief of the Somers Fire Department. The Association agrees to elect the individual the Town employs to be the Fire Chief. The paid Fire Chief and the Association will work in conjunction to promote community relations included but not limited to the use of the fire house for such functions/events.

3. Insurance and Benefits.

The Town shall carry and maintain insurance at all times with respect to its property and equipment, including, but not limited to fire trucks and the fire houses against risk of fire, theft and other risks as the Town may identify. The Town will pay for the Association's general liability insurance, medical malpractice, errors and omissions and supplemental Accidental Death & Dismemberment insurance. The Town shall carry Workers' Compensation insurance for the Volunteer Fire Department as required by state statute. The Town agrees to maintain a stipend program for the volunteers to be determined by the Board of Selectmen.

4. Successors and Assigns.

All rights of the Town hereafter shall inure to the benefit of its successors and assigns and all obligations of the Department shall bind its successors or assigns.

5. Modification of Agreement.

Any modifications to this Agreement shall be in writing and agreed to by the Parties. The current addresses for the parties are: Town of Somers, 600 Main Street, PO Box 308 Somers CT 06071 Attn: First Selectman; Somers Fire Department, 400 Main Street, Somers, CT 06071 Attn: Association Board of Directors. The parties will notify each other if there is a change in the mailing addresses where notices effecting this Agreement should be mailed.

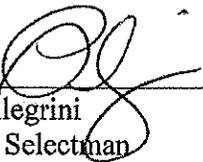
6. Governing Law.

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with laws of the State of Connecticut.

7. Severability.

If one or more of the provisions of this Agreement, or any application thereof, shall be found to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect, the validity, legality and enforceability of the remaining provisions hereof and any application thereof shall in no way be affected or impaired.

TOWN OF SOMERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Pellegrini  
Its First Selectman  
Duly Authorized

SOMERS VOLUNTEER FIRE  
DEPARTMENT ASSOCIATION INC

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard J. McDonald  
Chairman of the Association Board  
of Directors  
Duly Authorized

Version 08.17.2015

**TOWN OF SOMERS**  
**Position Description**

**Approved:**

**Title: Fire Chief**

**Job Summary**

Responsible for the direction and control of the ongoing operations of the Town of Somers Fire Protection Services. Duties include: management and administration of the department, direction of Firefighting and EMS operations and prevention programs, management of department personnel and activities, budgeting, and other similar duties pertaining to the operations and function of the Fire Department. Chief must maintain the highest level of ethical and moral values as he/she provides leadership to the department. Position reports to the 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman.

The Somers Fire Department is a combination (paid/volunteer) department providing the town with Fire, Rescue and BLS EMS transport services with the volunteers represented by the Somers Volunteer Fire Department Association Inc., hereafter, referred to as the "Association".

**Essential Job Functions/Skills**

- Plans, organizes and directs all departmental operations with respect to equipment, apparatus and personnel
- Prepares departmental budget and monitors expenditures to ensure effective and efficient use of budgeted funds, personnel, materials, facilities and time; evaluates departmental equipment and apparatus needs, and requisitions new apparatus and supplies
- Directs and supervises departmental activities at fires and emergencies as necessary.
- Develops and directs the implementation of departmental policies and operating procedures
- Gathers, interprets and prepares data for studies and reports, and conducts research to prepare policy recommendations; prepares written and oral reports and studies; makes public presentations.
- Oversees the activities of the fire marshal's office.
- Monitors the department's revenue recovery program.
- Writes grant applications and administers awards; helps to write and administer contracts, agreements and specifications.

- Supervises all paid personnel; administers union contract language and discipline; hears and resolves grievances; participates in labor negotiations.
- Supervises all operational aspects of volunteer personnel; administers discipline; hears and resolves grievances.
- Hires paid personnel; evaluates work performance of employees in accordance with Town policies.
- Develops and directs the implementation of departmental in-service training program, to include safety training; ensures safety work
- Supports the Association in the development, implementation and administration of volunteer recruitment and retention programs.
- Serves as custodian of various departmental documents and records, excluding Association documents (i.e. financial documents).
- Responds to inquiries from employees, outside agencies and the media; builds and maintains relationships with local emergency services organizations; represents the town and department on various boards, commissions, task forces and committees.
- Performs related tasks as required.
- Understands and follows the stipulations of the Fire Protection Agreement between the Town of Somers and Volunteer Fire Department Association, Inc
- Responds to emergencies, as needed; assume command, when appropriate.
- Proficient in using Microsoft Word, Excel, and Powerpoint.

### **Job Responsibilities**

This description is intended to reflect the major responsibilities and duties of job and is not intended to describe minor duties or other responsibilities as may be assigned from time to time.

### **Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree in Fire Science, Management or Public Administration or equivalent
- Certified to NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications – 2003 Edition to the Fire Officer II level, Fire Service Instructor I and Incident Safety Officer or equivalent
- Minimum five (5) years' experience as a Line Officer, with preferably three (3) years' experience as a Chief Officer. Experience in a Combination department that provides similar services as the Somers Fire Department is highly preferred.
- Meets National Incident Management System (NIMS) training requirements to function at the Command Level.
- Minimally certified by the State of Connecticut, or a Nationally Certified equivalent, to the level of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Minimum five (5) years' experience.

- Possession of valid motor vehicle operator's license to operate a motor vehicle in the State of Connecticut with a Q endorsement or a minimum of CDL Class B.
- Trained as Hazardous Materials Technician EPA 40 Hours or above.

**Physical Requirements**

- Must be able to pass the standard Somers Fire Department structural Firefighter's physical as required by the Town of Somers and the Somers Fire Department.

**Other Special Requirements**

- Connecticut Fire Marshal certification preferred.
- Must reside in Somers or within a fifteen (15) mile radius of the main fire station in the Town of Somers. The Fire Chief has 12 months from date of hire to comply.