

**TOWN OF SOMERS  
FIRE DEPARTMENT STUDY AD HOC COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2015  
7:00pm  
Selectmen's Conference Room**

**Call to Order:** First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Members Present:** First Selectman Lisa Pellegrini, Selectmen Kathy Devlin and Fire Commission Members David Palmer and Keith Burger. Member Andrew Rockett was not present. Those also in attendance included Town Attorney Carl Landolina, Fire Chief Gary Schiessl, Selectman Bud Knorr, and Somers Firefighters Al Baker and Ray Stovall.

**Fire Ordinance Discussion and Possible Action on Fire Ordinance:**

The Fire Ordinance Draft Document was reviewed and discussed by the Committee Members, the Town Attorney and the Audience. The need for certain documents, including the ordinance and the agreement between the Town and the Volunteer Fire Department Association was also discussed. The sequence of the before mentioned documents, along with the Charter Revision was also discussed. The Town Attorney clarified that the ordinance would replace the need for *Section 5-10. Board of Fire Commissioners* from the Charter. Once approved by the Ad Hoc Committee and forwarded on to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) the BOS would then start the process of adopting the Ordinance at their next meeting. It would require a Public Hearing, after which the BOS would then at some point convene to vote on its adoption. The Town Attorney also confirmed that before the Ordinance is adopted the Agreement between the Town and the Volunteer Fire Department Association must be in place.

***Mr. Burger made a motion to approve the amended Fire Commission Ordinance and to recommend the adoption of the Ordinance to the Board of Selectmen, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The motion passed.***

**Staffing Considerations/Costs:**

Ms. Pellegrini distributed the Financial Analysis of the four options originally requested by the Ad Hoc Committee at a prior meeting. No action was taken.

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

Chief Schiessl shared with the group that the Agreement was distributed to the Association and that there were revisions made to the agreement and that it was being forwarded on to the Association's Attorney for review. He detailed that the Volunteer Association would like a say in a variety of things including hiring, officer structure and appointment of officers in addition to clarification on the use of the fire house for Association functions, the use of the sign in front of the Fire House, etc. The revisions will be sent to the Attorney for review, then received back to the Association for discussion and forwarded to the Ad Hoc Committee by March. There was much discussion as to why such items should be included in the agreement or if such items should be included in a Memorandum of Understanding instead. There was agreement to wait to hear from the Association before taking action on the Agreement. It is hoped that comments will be received by the Volunteer Association the first week of March as the Committee Members believe that time is of the essence with regard to the 2015/2016 Budget. Mrs. Devlin believed that an element was missing and that it included a presentation to the public as to why there is a need for a paid Fire Chief. Chief Schiessl agreed that it was important to have the public understand the duties and coverage needed and would be happy to educate the public.

**Approval of Minutes:**

*Mr. Palmer made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 3, 2014 Fire Department Study Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The motion passed.*

**Adjournment:**

*Mr. Burger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02pm, seconded by Mrs. Devlin. The meeting was adjourned.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Pellegrini-Recording

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