

Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

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NANCY A. BRAY
TOWN CLERK

Gregg Schuster, First Selectman

**Board of Selectmen Minutes
Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 6, 2014
Colchester Town Hall – 7:00 PM
Meeting Room 1**

MEMBERS PRESENT: First Selectman Gregg Schuster, Selectman Stan Soby, Selectman Denise Mizla, and Selectman Mike Caplet

MEMBERS ABSENT: Selectman Rosemary Coyle.

OTHERS PRESENT: Maggie Cosgrove, Jim Paggioli, Rob Tarlov, Kurt Frantzen, Art Shilosky, Rob Esteve, Mary Tomasi, Walter Cox, Jeff Mathieu, Mary Ellen Harper, John Knapp, Nancy Bray, and Dottie Mrowka, Gail Therian, and other citizens.

1. **Call to Order**
First Selectman G. Schuster called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Additions to the Agenda - None**
3. **Approve Minutes of the January 16, 2014 Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting**
S. Soby moved to approve the Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting minutes of January 16, 2014 as presented, seconded by M. Caplet. MOTION CARRIED.
4. **Approve Minutes of the January 16, 2014 Commission Chairman Meeting**
D. Mizla moved to approve the Commission Chairman Meeting minutes of January 16, 2014 as presented, seconded by M. Caplet. MOTION CARRIED.
5. **Citizen's Comments-**
D. Mrowka suggested that a presentation be given to the Board of Selectmen at the next meeting regarding the electronic checklist for elections. The Board of Selectmen agreed that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting.
6. **Boards and Commissions – Interviews and/or Possible Appointments and Resignations**
 - a. **Blight Task Force – Carl Swanback – Possible Appointment**
No action was taken on this item as the Board is still recruiting members for the Blight Task Force.
 - b. **Sewer and Water Commission -**
 1. Thomas Hochdorfer to be appointed for a Three Year Term to Expire 6/1/2015
S. Soby moved to appoint Thomas Hochdorfer as a member of the Sewer and Water Commission for a three year term to expire 6/1/2014, seconded by D. Mizla. MOTION CARRIED
 2. Kurt Frantzen to be interviewed.
Kurt Frantzen was interviewed
 - c. **Historic District Commission**
 1. Stanley Stafanowicz to be interviewed.
Stanley Stafanowicz was interviewed
 - d. **Chatham Health District - Resignation of Board of Directors member Blyse Soby**
M. Caplet moved to accept the resignation of Blyse Soby with the thanks for her service, seconded by D. Mizla. Abstentions: S. Soby All others in favor. MOTION CARRIED

7. Budget Transfers -

D. Mizla moved to approve the budget transfer of \$1,800 from "Town Clerk's –Regular Salaries (11501-40101)" to "Town Clerk's Office Supplies (11501-42301)" and \$500 from "Senior Center – Mileage, Training and Meetings (15401-43213)" and \$75 from "Senior Center – Professional Memberships (15401- 43258)" to "Senior Center – Copier (15401-42233)" seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

8. Tax Refunds & Rebates

M. Caplet moved to approved tax refunds in the amount of \$12.75 to Kimberley McLaughlin and \$5427.69 to Christopher and Anne Snow, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

9. Fire Department Task Force Report and Presentation

Mary Ellen Harper, Chairman of the Task Force, presented a power point presentation on the "Recruitment & Retention Task Force Report". She highlighted the five recommendations to the Colchester Board of Selectmen: 1) Negotiate a Contract between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company; 2) Simplify the Fire Department's Training Program; 3) Establish Minimum Training and Educational Requirements for all Fire Officers; 4) Professionalize the Personnel and Human Resources Aspects of the Fire Department; 5) Create a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan. At the end of the presentation, Mary Ellen Harper tendered her resignation as Chairperson of the Task Force.

Task Force members: Clifford Bartiss, Judi Didato, John Knapp, and David Martin spoke in favor of the implementation of the five (5) recommendations.

The Board members thanked the Task Force members for their work and dedication to this charge. It was decided by the Board to take time to review the Report and to discuss it further at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

M. Caplet moved to accept the Task Force Report formally and to thank the Task Force for their work, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

10. Presentation by Lockton Benefits

G. Schuster said that he felt it was important to discuss benefits for the non-union employees and mentioned that he is one of the non-union employees.

Tim Hasselman and Debra Testa of Lockton Companies, LLC distributed copies of a document entitled "Town and BOE of Colchester Healthcare Reform Discussion. T. Hasselman reviewed the Healthcare Reform Regulations, the SBC Distribution Options, the time line, the Town/BO Medical Plans, Minimum Value, the Cadillac Tax and the taxes and fees. He compared the sample "Metal" plans and High Deductible Plans. Discussion followed regarding benefits for the non-union employees and negotiating of health care benefits in upcoming union contracts.

M. Caplet moved to add to the Agenda a discussion of non-union employee's benefits as presented by Tim Hasselman of Lockton Companies, LLC as a new number 10.1, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

10.1 Discussion of Non Union Employee Benefits

The Board was informed by M. Cosgrove, CFO, that there are currently ten (10) non union employees with health coverage. Discussion followed regarding the next steps to reach a workable option for non-union employee benefits. The Board decided to review the information received and to discuss this item at the next meeting.

11. Discussion and Possible Action on Security Upgrades

G. Schuster told the Board that the Board of Finance did not meet on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 because of the snow storm; therefore, the Board should wait until this item can be brought to the Board of Finance.

12. Discussion and Possible Action on 2014 – 2015 Budget

G. Schuster said that he has no information about the 2014 – 2015 budget as he has not met with all the Department Heads at this time.

13. Discussion and Possible Action to Authorize the First Selectman to sign the Insurance Trust Joinder Agreement with National Insurance Services

S. Soby moved to authorize the First Selectman to sign the Insurance Trust Joinder Agreement with National Insurance Services, second by M. Caplet. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

14. Discussion and Possible Action on Blight Task Force Charge

G. Schuster presented a draft of the Blight Ordinance Task Force Charge. Discussion followed and it was suggested to amend Item 4 to read: "Recommending to the Board if Colchester should have a blight ordinance, and if so, the language of such ordinance, **with all necessary rational and supporting data.**"

M. Caplet moved to approve the Blight Task Force charge as amended, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

15. Discussion and Possible Action on Building Committee Scope Statement

G. Schuster distributed revised copies of the Building Committee Scope Statement. He said he has met with Ron Goldstein, Chairman of the Board of Education and it was decided to amend Item 1 under the Statement of Scope to read: "building or buildings that will provide for a Middle School (Grades 6 – 8) and other Board of Education offices, as deemed appropriate by the Board of Education and in accordance the adopted educational specifications. Discussion followed with the Board agreeing this change would eliminate confusion about scope of the building project.

S. Soby moved to approve the Building Committee Scope Statement as presented this evening, seconded by D. Mizla. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

16. Discussion and Possible Action to Authorize the First Selectman to Accept and Sign any and all Documents for Professional & Technical Services Small Cities Application Assistance

M. Caplet moved that the Board of Selectmen, due to the specific nature of the grant application process, and the significant successful application funding grant history that L. Wagner & Associates has accomplished, enter into a contract with L. Wagner & Associates for the Professional & Technical Services Small Cities CDBG Application Assistance as outlined in RFP #2013-22 and to hereby authorize the First Selectman deliver said agreement and necessary documents required, seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

17. Citizen's Comments – None

18. First Selectman's Report

G. Schuster told the Board that Governor Malloy presented the State of the State address today and the new legislative session is now open. He said there are some proposed changes in the budget. He said that the Snow Removal budget will run over budget. J. Paggioli stated that there have been 27 snow responses this season. G. Schuster commended the Fire Department for their successful response to a cardiac arrest the other night. He said that the Town has had its first appeal for the towing of a car. He had to appoint the Public Hearing Officer for this appeal.

19. Liaison Report

There was no Liaison reports as most of the Board and Commission meeting have been canceled because of inclement weather.

S. Soby mentioned the "Freezing for a Reason" that will take place the weekend of February 6, 2014 on the green. The donations received from this event be for the Colchester Fuel Bank.

20. Executive Session to Discuss:

- a. Performance of Town Employee A
- b. Performance of Town Employee B

D. Mizla moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the performance of Town Employee A and Town Employee B, and to invite the Chairman of the Board of Finance and the Chief Financial Officer in for Part A. Seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED

Entered into executive session at 8:43 p.m.

R. Tarlov and M. Cosgrove exited the executive session at 9:08 p.m.

The Board exited from executive session at 9:21 p.m.

21. Adjourn

M. Caplet moved to adjourn at 9:22 p.m., seconded by S. Soby. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Therian, Clerk

Attachments:

1. Fire Department Task Force Presentation
2. Fire Department Task Force Chairman Memo
3. WJJMS Building Committee Scope

First Selectman Gregg Schuster
Colchester Town Hall
127 Norwich Avenue
Colchester, CT 06415

February 6, 2014

Dear Mr. Schuster,

The presentation of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Task Force Final Report to the Board of Selectman this evening completes the charge of the Task Force. It also completes my tenure as Chair of the Task Force.

It is my sincere hope that the work of this Task Force will be used by the Board of Selectman as the basis for creating a Strategic Plan for the Colchester Hayward Fire Department. This Strategic Plan should then be used to guide the future growth of the fire department to assure that it can continue to meet the needs of the Town of Colchester in both the short and long terms.

The Town of Colchester, including its Fire Department, is positioned to face many changes in the years ahead. The Fire Department will need a well-designed Strategic Plan that meets the community's expectations for the future. This plan must have specific deliverables with associated timelines. It is imperative that this plan be formally endorsed by the Board of Selectmen, the Fire Chief, the Volunteer Fire Company, and the Career Fire Fighters, because they are all equally invested in the partnership of providing emergency services within our community. Following the approval of this Strategic Plan, it is vital that everyone be held accountable for upholding their role in this plan.

In advance of the presentation to the Board of Selectmen tonight, the Task Force members and I presented this report, in three separate meetings, to the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief, then to the career fire fighters, and then to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company.

To say that there were some tense moments during some of these meetings would be an understatement. There were people who strongly objected to some of the bold statements that were represented in the report. They serve the Town of Colchester with

pride, and to see their fire department represented in writing as having some very specific areas in which there could be improvement, was upsetting.

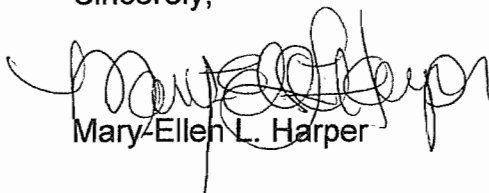
That, however, is not where the story ends. During the course of all of these meetings, those concerned individuals took the time to ask questions of the Task Force and to listen to our answers. And, in almost every case, these very same individuals were then able to eventually step back and admit that while they didn't like everything that they read, that implementing the recommendations in this report would all contribute to a positive direction for the future of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department. This is a testament to the willingness of the fire department to work collaboratively to assure that it is serving the needs of the community in the best way possible.

The Town of Colchester is blessed with a core group of dedicated individuals who care deeply about the people they serve. They have all indicated a willingness to have the difficult conversations that need to be had about where the fire department is, where it wants to go, and how best to get there. These individuals are willing to put the work into drafting a Strategic Plan and are committed to putting the plan into action. It would behoove the Board of Selectman to capitalize on this spirit by approving the recommendations in the Task Force Report and assuring that they are implemented.

The Colchester Hayward Fire Department is an incredible asset to the Town of Colchester. This is your opportunity as the Board of Selectmen to demonstrate to the department's membership that their service is valued, and that the town is committed to working with them to serve the members of the community in the years to come.

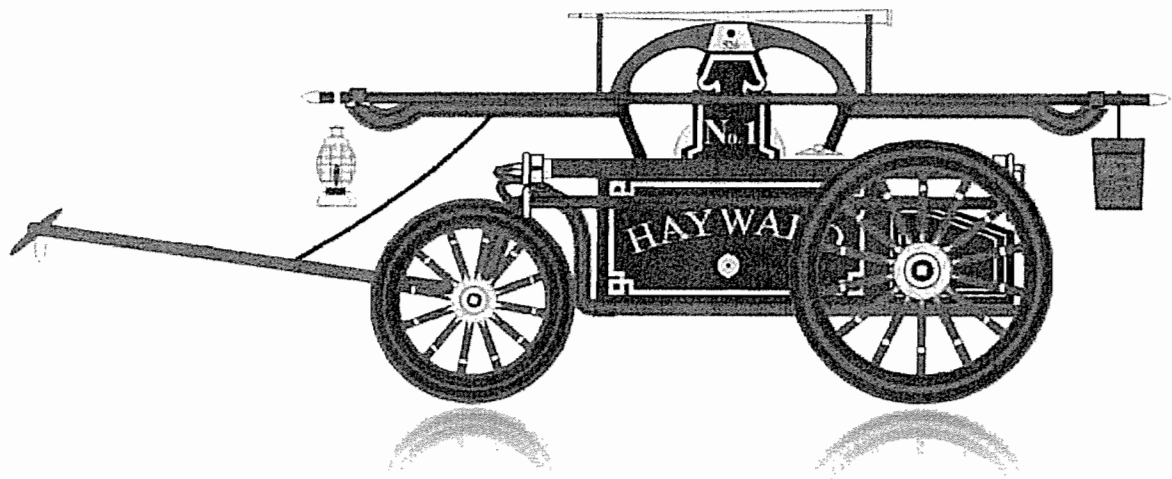
Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Chair of the Colchester Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Task Force.

Sincerely,

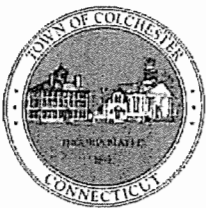


Mary-ellen L. Harper

Colchester Hayward Fire Department



Recruitment & Retention Task Force Final Report



February 2014

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Colchester Fire Department Task Force Report

February 2014

Acknowledgements

The 2013 Colchester Fire Department Task Force extends a very sincere thank you to all of the members of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department for their dedicated service to all of those who live, work, or pass through the Town of Colchester.

This document is dedicated to helping the CHFD help each of you to continue to safely and efficiently provide your community with quality fire, EMS and rescue services.

Thank you for your service,

Clifford Bartiss
Task Force Member

Judi Didato
Task Force Member

Mary-Ellen Harper
Task Force Chair

John Knapp
Task Force Member

David Martin
Task Force Member

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Colchester Fire Department Task Force Report February 2014

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Executive Summary

The Colchester Hayward Fire Department Task Force was charged with making recommendations to the Colchester Board of Selectman for the recruitment, retention, and participation in the department.

The finding of this Task Force is that the Colchester Hayward Fire Department (CHFD) consistently attracts a steady stream of applicants who wish to volunteer as emergency responders. Recruitment efforts within the CHFD are adequate and successful.

The deficiencies that exist within the CHFD's ability to consistently staff the fire department to the required levels are a direct result of the culture that has been allowed to exist within the fire department as it relates to retaining first responders.

The Town of Colchester needs to commit to fixing the infrastructure of its fire department before efforts at retention, and increased participation will meet with long-term success.

The Task Force offers the following five recommendations as immediate steps to be taken to create an environment within the fire department that is more conducive to sustaining a viable volunteer workforce.

- 1. Negotiate a Contract Between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company.**
- 2. Simplify the Fire Department's Training Program**
- 3. Establish Minimum Training and Educational Requirements for all Fire Officers**
- 4. Professionalize the Personnel and Human Resources Aspects of the Fire Department**
- 5. Create a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan.**

Introduction

The 2013 Colchester Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Task Force has prioritized the 5 specific areas within the Fire Department that need to be addressed in the short term to establish an environment within the Fire Department that is conducive to the recruitment and retention of emergency responders, and to consistently staff the fire department to the required levels.

This list is not comprehensive; it is simply a starting point for the addressing the most important issues that, based on the findings of the Task Force, need to be addressed immediately.

As the governing body of the town of Colchester, the Board of Selectmen has overall responsibility for the safety and protection of the citizens of Colchester. Actions need to be taken to continue to support the Fire Department's efforts at both recruiting and retaining its members.

It was the finding of the Task Force that the Fire Department lacks specific direction and guidance from the Board in both short and long term goals for the department. The Chief of the Department should be tasked with proposing such goals, to be approved by the Board of Selectmen, with specific deliverables along with agreed upon deadlines for each goal.

It is incumbent upon the Board of Selectmen to demonstrate the importance of the service provided to the community by the members of the fire department by then holding the Fire Chief accountable for satisfactorily accomplishing each task in the specified timeframe.

Background

First Selectman Gregg Schuster has had concerns about the staffing of the Colchester Hayward Fire Department (CHFD) since he was elected in November, 2009.

In 2010, First Selectman Schuster requested that students from the University of Connecticut Masters of Public Administration Program conduct their graduate research project on the CHFD. At the time, according to the First Selectman, the CHFD had to tone calls out two and three times in order to get emergency responders to respond to calls. This is problematic because each tone represents a delay between the time someone calls for help and the time that someone arrives on scene to render assistance.

The UCONN Report was released in April, 2011 and identified some very significant issues regarding the management and operations of the CHFD that were having a direct negative impact on the department's ability to recruit and retain members and resulted in members not responding to calls in an immediate manner.

The issues identified in the UCONN report remain largely unaddressed by both the Town and the Fire Department Administration. As such, staffing of the fire department continues to remain below the level needed for immediate responses to emergency calls with adequate staffing.

The Colchester Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Task Force was established by the Colchester Board of Selectman in 2012. Seats on the Task Force were specifically designated for four members of the community and three members of the CHFD. The First Selectman's Office never received any applications from members of the community who were willing to serve on the Task Force, so after one year, the Task Force was automatically disbanded.

When consistent staffing continued to be a challenge for the fire department, the Board of Selectman reestablished the Task Force in 2013.

The evaluation conducted by the 2013 Colchester Fire Department Recruitment and Retention Task Force indicates that very little has changed within the CHFD since 2011. Many of the issues identified in the 2011 report have yet to be addressed, and CHFD continues to have challenges with consistent staffing.

Task Force Charge

The Colchester Board of Selectman charged the Task Force to:

Return to the Board with recommendations for recruitment, retention, and participation in the department and if there is any financial impact to that, that should come to the board [of Selectmen] as well.

The Task Force Members

Clifford Bartiss

Mr. Bartiss graduated 1962 as a machinist from Eli Whitney trade school. He served 2 years in the United States Navy, achieving 3rd class Petty Officer for Damage Control. He then joined the West Shore Fire Department in West Haven as a full time fire fighter and EMT. Mr. Bartiss retired on disability in 1978 and opened Cliff's Garage, which he maintained for 15 years. Mr. Bartiss was also responsible for the used car department of Saturn of Branford for 3 years, served as assistant service manager for Ford of Branford for 5 years, and worked as a warranty administrator for Killingworth True Value Hardware.

Judi Didato

Ms. Didato is an active member of the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company (CHVFC) going on 18 years. She has served in the role of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) / Fire Fighter. Ms. Didato has served on multiple committees, is the Chairwoman of the Annual Awards and Recognition Banquet, and is the maker of all the reflective address signs seen around town. Prior to moving to Colchester, she volunteered with Suffield Volunteer Ambulance Association for 10 years as an EMT, serving as a Shift Supervisor for 3 years. She currently works for Saint Francis Hospital & Medical Center as a CT Technologist. She has been there 24 years. Ms. Didato is married 18 years to her husband Kenn, and is the proud mother of Jack (10) and Gina (7).

Mary-Ellen Harper

Ms. Harper was elected by her fellow Task Force Members to Chair the Colchester Fire Department Task Force. She has been a resident of Colchester for the last 12 years. Her service as a volunteer fire fighter and EMT includes 5 years of service with the CHVFC, 10 years with the Blue Hills Fire District in Bloomfield, 5 years with the Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance, and 3 years with the Allingtown Fire District in West Haven. Ms. Harper holds a BS in Fire Technology and English, and Masters of Public Administration from the University of New Haven, and is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. She has been employed full time for the last 16 years by the Town of Farmington, where she is the Director of Fire & Rescue Services. Her responsibilities in Farmington include the management and operations of a 175-member predominately-volunteer combination fire department that operates 17 fire apparatus out of 5 stations and responds to approximately 3,500 calls per year. Ms. Harper has been an Adjunct Instructor for the Connecticut Fire Academy for the past 12 years. Ms. Harper has been called upon by more than a half dozen different communities in Connecticut to offer assistance in the management, oversight, and consolidation of volunteer and combination fire departments. Ms. Harper has been married to her husband Tom for 15 years, and is the proud mother of Thomas (8) and Shannon (6).

John Knapp

Mr. Knapp during his 37 years as a volunteer, has served as a company officer and treasurer for the CHVFC for more than 20 years. He has also held the positions of Engineer and Captain of EMS and Fire. For the past 34 years, Mr. Knapp has served as the Chairman of Schuster Park. Presently, he holds the positions of Department IT Staff and Chairman of the Applicant Review Committee for the CHFVC.

David Martin

Mr. Martin is a second-generation firefighter. His father was a career fire fighter in Waterbury, Connecticut. Mr. Martin completed his Fire Fighter I/II with the Prospect VFD and has been a member of the CHVFC for 22 years. He currently serves as a fire ground support personnel for the Department and has been President of the Company since 2005. Mr. Martin is retired from the US Postal Service with over 35 years of service and was honorably discharged from US Army after serving 3 years with a ten-month deployment to Vietnam.

The Task Force acknowledges the contributions of William Curran and Robert Holdsworth, who were seated as Task Force Members at the start of the project.

UCONN Report

The Town of Colchester formed a partnership with the University of Connecticut which resulted in the April 29, 2011 report "Recruitment, Retention, and Participation of Volunteer Emergency Responders in the Colchester Hayward Fire Department" from Masters of Public Administration Students Kelsey Brown, Shawn Morris, and Chelsea Ross.

The Task Force Members reviewed the UCONN report and found merit in each of the report's recommendations.

The Task Force Members further agreed that while variations of some recommendations had been implemented, many of the recommendations made in the UCONN Report in 2011 had yet to be appropriately or successfully implemented as of the writing of the Task Force Report, almost three years after the initial report.

Task Force Evaluation Process

The Task Force began its investigation of the CHFD's recruitment, retention and participation issues by conducting a series of interviews. The Task Force thanks the following individuals for their assistance and candidness as it relates to the CHFD:

Colchester First Selectman Gregg Schuster
CHFD Fire Chief Walter Cox
CHFD Assistant Chief Paul Giudice
CHFD EMS Captain Audriè Babineau
CHFD Departing Union President and Career Fire Fighter Nicholas Fischer
Gardner Lake (Salem) Deputy Chief Joseph Danao

Task Force Findings

The Task Force was seated by the Board of Selectman to make recommendations about the recruitment, retention, and participation of the members of CHFD.

The finding of this Task Force is that the Colchester Hayward Fire Department (CHFD) consistently attracts a steady stream of applicants who wish to volunteer as emergency responders. Recruitment efforts within the CHFD are adequate and successful. The Task Force identified no reason to make changes to the current recruitment program.

The Task Force, throughout its research, was repeatedly confronted by the negative effects of the current relationship between the Elected Town Officials and the Administration of the Fire Department. At present, this relationship is poor at best.

The finding of the Task Force was that there are significant deficiencies within the administration of the CHFD that need to be addressed before any additional efforts at retaining emergency responders can be expected to have long term success.

There has to be a culture change within the CHFD. The CHFD needs to be managed with the mindset that it is grateful to have volunteers, rather than the current predisposition that volunteers should feel lucky to be affiliated with the department.

It should be the common goal of the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Chief to promote and support a predominately volunteer combination fire department so long as the residents of Colchester are willing and continue to staff it. This goal should be specifically articulated, formally adopted, and constantly reaffirmed by every action taken by the Fire Chief and the Board of Selectman.

Task Force Recommendations

The CHFD Task Force offers the following five recommendations to the Colchester Board of Selectman, in order of priority, that need to be addressed in order to begin to establish an environment within the CHFD that is conducive to successfully recruiting and retaining emergency responders to consistently staff the fire department to the required levels.

- 1. Negotiate a Contract Between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company.**
- 2. Simplify the Fire Department's Training Program**
- 3. Establish Minimum Training and Educational Requirements for all Fire Officers**
- 4. Professionalize the Personnel and Human Resources Aspects of the Fire Department**
- 5. Create a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan.**

Recommendation #1: -

Negotiate a Contract between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company

The Board of Selectmen should make it a priority for the Town to negotiate a contract with the CHVFC.

The Fire Chief should be charged with assisting the First Selectman in achieving successful outcome to this effort. This charge should fall to the Fire Chief because he is the Town's chosen representative within the fire department. He is also uniquely positioned to be the most familiar with the issues that have the most impact on his emergency responders and the operations of his department and finding common ground that best serves the needs of both the CHVFC and the Town of Colchester.

Much of the contract will be formalizing the existing relationship between the two entities. Significant time and attention must be focused on assuring that these relationships are appropriately managed to make certain that the emergency responders are compensated, insured, and otherwise fairly and consistently treated across the entire department. The final contract would then go to both the Board of Selectman and Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company for ratification.

In recent years, the Town has begun offering an increasing number of monetary stipends, reimbursements and other incentives. As the amount of money being exchanged between the Town and the volunteers continues to increase, the volunteer emergency responders run an increasing risk of becoming categorized as employees of the town. This may or may not be the employment relationship that is desired by either the Town or the volunteers. It is for this reason that, a plan needs to be put in place to assure that the desired employment relationship is maintained and doesn't become an unintended one. Federal and State Labor laws, as well as Tax Laws, all need to be considered when putting together a plan for the future of incentives and how they will be distributed.

The contract should specifically address, at a minimum,

- The role of the CHVFC in the emergency, non-emergency, leadership and business operations of the CHFD as it relates to the Town of Colchester.
- Ownership, maintenance, and responsibility and liability associated with fire department equipment, apparatus, and other assets.
- Entitlement to revenue realized as a result of the operations of the CHFD, including proceeds from rental of the fire station meeting room and revenue from billing for ambulance services.
- The Points System, Tax Abatement Program, and all other stipends and incentives that are offered to emergency responders need to be re-evaluated and updated to better meet the needs of the membership.

- The responsibility for the costs associated with Recruitment and Retention Activities, including but not limited to, awards banquets, recognitions, and meals that are served during meetings for the volunteer emergency responders.
- Performance Measures
- Formal grievance process volunteer members can invoke to resolve issues between the Town's Fire Department and the Fire Company.

When finalized, a contract would give the emergency responders a sense of security regarding their status within the department, thereby establishing a much-needed sense of stability in what currently appears to be an unsettled fire department environment. This is important because volunteers need a stable, predictable, and supportive environment.

Recommendation #2: -

Simplify the Fire Department's Training Program

The Task Force repeatedly heard concerns about the Training Program in the CHFD. Common complaints were that it was difficult to know what training was required, that the program was constantly changing, that it was not understood, and that the schedule was often inconvenient for a volunteer who is trying to fit training in between work and family obligations.

It should be the common goal of the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Chief to promote and support a predominately volunteer combination fire department so long as the residents of Colchester are willing and continue to staff it. This goal should be specifically articulated, formally adopted, and constantly reaffirmed by every action taken by the Fire Chief and the Board of Selectman.

There has to be an immediate culture change within the CHFD. The CHFD needs to be managed with the mindset that it is grateful to have volunteers, rather than the current predisposition that volunteers should feel lucky to be there. This needs to start with the volunteer application process and be carried out in all aspects of the department, and most importantly with training.

Training has to be a priority. The CHFD needs to reevaluate its Training Program to make the requirements easy to understand and as convenient as possible to achieve. The baseline should be the "Required Minimum Training for Connecticut Fire Services to Meet State Regulations" as put forth by the Connecticut Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Minimum (Appendix A). Incentives for additional training should be tiered from the baseline.

It is important to note that OSHA does not differentiate between Volunteer and Career Fire Fighters when it comes to training. Neither should the CHFD. It was brought to the attention of the members of the Task Force that Career Fire Fighters lack a formal program to assure they receive the required annual training.

Training requirements for Emergency Medical Technicians and Emergency Medical Responders are established by the Connecticut Department of Public Health and updated in 2011. Consistent with fire training, the baseline should be these minimum requirements and incentives for additional training and should be tiered from the baseline as put forth in "Changes in the EMS Certification & Education System (Appendix B.).

There exist within Connecticut many successful models for training emergency responders in combination departments after which CHFD could model its program. A cost benefit analysis will reveal that investing funding in an appropriate training program that is both volunteer and career emergency responder schedule friendly is still significantly less expense than the costs associated with transitioning the CHFD to a predominately or all career fire department.

Training Program Consideration should be given, but not limited to:

- Hiring Instructors.
 - It is imperative that CHFD needs take steps to assure that its volunteers are ready and able to achieve the necessary training requirements and respond to emergencies.
 - There may be a benefit in hiring outside instructors rather than requiring those same volunteers, who already dedicate so much time responding to calls, to teach classes. The increased time commitment associated with having to prepare and deliver the required ongoing training courses to their fellow emergency responders, risks prematurely burning out these volunteers
 - It may be cost effective to hire instructors to teach initial Fire Fighter I and EMT Classes in town.
 - This might be an initiative that would interest the surrounding communities and could, depending how it is structured, even qualify for grant funding or create a revenue stream for CHFD thereby making this effort cost neutral. Instructors could be hired from within or outside of the department.
- Assigning an emergency responder to the position of Training Officer.
 - The Training Officer should be tasked with creating a training schedule that includes training offerings during the days, evenings, and on weekends to accommodate the varying schedules of the emergency responders.
 - This could be a career fire fighter that is reassigned, it could be volunteer officer position, or it could be a part time position established expressly for the purpose of managing the training.
 - The Training Officer may see fit to have a committee assist with the functions of training, but would be ultimately responsible to the Fire Chief for the successful implementation of the Training Program.
- Training schedules should be established at the start of each year and include the specific topics that will be offered on each date.
- This will allow volunteer emergency responders who are balancing the responsibilities of working, a family, and volunteering the opportunity to plan their schedules to assure that they can fit the required training into their busy lives.

- CHFD needs to give additional consideration to training reciprocity.
 - It is understood that there is a benefit in volunteer emergency responders completing at least some of their training in their fire station with the members of their department.
 - Volunteer emergency responders should be encouraged to seek training opportunities outside of the department. This will improve the diversity of the skills that the volunteers bring to their department from outside agencies, and allows volunteers to avail themselves of training opportunities that might be more convenient to their schedules.
 - Consideration should be given to allowing more credit for appropriate training that takes place in other Fire or EMS Departments, relevant training that volunteers take through their workplace, or training that volunteers complete through the various county, state, or other training programs.
 - The goal should be to train emergency responders to safely and efficiently do their jobs, not to require them to spend a specified number of hours sitting in the CHFD Meeting Room.

**Recommendation #3: -
Establish Minimum Training and Educational Requirements
for all Fire Officers**

The position of Fire Chief is no longer just about knowing how to drive a truck, fight a fire, or perform a rescue. The position of Fire Chief is about managing a diverse group of people that are different in age and background. Today's Fire Chief needs to be as proficient at managing a business as he is at managing a fire scene.

Throughout its research, the Task Force was repeatedly informed of independent factions that exist within the CHFD. There are established formal leaders, but it appears that there are many more informal leaders who often times have more followers than the formal leaders. This is not conducive to an effective work environment, and is certainly not a situation to which emergency responders should be expected to volunteer to subject themselves.

National Association of Fire Protection Association Standard 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, sets the nationally accepted best practices for the development standards for a Fire Officer. These standards constitute the minimum standard for successful performance of an individual at each rank.

The Task Force endorses the NFPA's minimum requirements for initial training and certification of an officer. Accordingly, the minimum standard for all Supervising Fire Officers is Fire Officer I Certification, Managing Fire Officers is Fire Officer II Certification, Administrative Fire Officers is Fire Officer III Certification, and Executive Fire Officers is Fire Officer IV Certification.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) takes the position in the 2nd Edition of their *Officer Development Handbook* that "The 21st Century fire service recognizes a need to move from traditional practices of promoting its members based on tenure to new norms that focus on effective, standardized professional development processes that foster true leadership qualities in prospective leaders". The IAFC further recognizes that increasingly, most chief and mid-level officers in the nation's leading fire departments are being required to hold a bachelor's degree.

On a local level, beyond the IAFC's recognition that a bachelor's degree is becoming the norm for mid and chief-level officers, it is increasingly more common in Connecticut, most especially with chiefs who are paid a salary, for individuals holding those positions to have advanced training, including masters degrees, Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Training, and / or Chief Fire Officer Designation (CFOD).

The Task Force recommends establishing and phasing in minimum training and education requirements for all CHFD Officers. These requirements should be consistent with accepted best practices that are presently in place across the state and nation. They should also be consistent with the training and educational requirements that the Town of Colchester requires of the supervisors and department heads that perform similar-level supervisory and management functions within the municipality.

The Task Force further recommends the establishment of baseline officer training and education requirements as a necessary first step. The second, step, which is perhaps even more crucial to the long term future success of the CHFD, is to establish a successful ongoing officer training program.

The IAFC's Officer Development Handbook puts particular emphasis on the fact that professional development process is life-long and that the initial achievement is not sufficient to meet the challenges of the fire and rescue service leaders.

"Fire officers need to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities. They must also push forward as a network of educated professionals dedicated to teaching each other, their teams, their communities and their successors. As they seek to sharpen their skills, they need to look beyond themselves and achieve a level where they can develop performance consulting capabilities to support managers, teams, and employees as those individuals seek to implement and take their own action on the changing strategies and innovations in the fire service. As these professionals evolve within the profession and merge the old with the new, perhaps they can join the change agents who are taking the fire service to new heights. These all serve as reminders that the fire service is not just a job, but indeed a career."

It is the recommendation of the Task Force that the CHFD's Ongoing Officer Training Program use professional associations, conferences, seminars, workshops, and similar offerings to meet the needs of the department.

**Recommendation #4: -
Professionalize the Personnel and Human Resources Aspects
of the Fire Department**

Just as the word “volunteer” does not mean “free”, the word “professional” does not mean “paid.”

The Task Force is not convinced that the answer to the CHFD’s personnel problems is in the form of an employee. The term “professionalize” was chosen to reflect the need to have someone who is educated and has experience in the area of Human Resources. The Board of Selectmen should evaluate the feasibility of appointing someone to take over Human Resources for the Fire Department. This could be a volunteer, part time, or even a full time position that also oversees personnel for the Town of Colchester in addition to the CHFD.

A single person should be tasked to oversee this area of the fire department to assure that personnel issues are consistently handled in accordance with labor laws as well as in the best interests of the town, the fire department, and the emergency responders. The Town could even consider putting this responsibility on the Fire Chief or one of his officers if that individual is given the appropriate training and oversight by the First Selectman.

The person charged with managing the Personnel and Human Resources aspects of the Fire Department must also be charged with taking steps to address the following deficiencies that currently exist within the CHFD and are having negative impacts on its ability to consistently achieve its required staffing.

- How can CHFD make it easier for people to volunteer?
 - The CHFD needs to update and streamline its volunteer application process. The current process does not consistently check the backgrounds of individuals who are granted access to fire stations, expensive equipment, and personal information about members of the community during their time of need.
 - The current process is also too complicated and time consuming. Prospective volunteers often lose interest before being appointed and are often lost to the CHFD forever.
- CHFD needs to formally reach out and encourage people who are already trained to return to volunteering for the fire department.
 - The Town of Colchester has an abundance of well-known and highly regarded individuals with significant fire, police, EMS, training living within its community.
 - Efforts need to be focused on finding a way to encourage these individuals to share their highly valued training and experience with the Town of Colchester and the CHFD by returning as volunteers.

- It needs to be recognized that skill sets beyond just emergency response are vital to the future success of the department.
 - Specific efforts should be made to recruit other skill sets including but not limited to HR, fundraising and accounting.
- There exist within the CHFD many minute idiosyncrasies as a result of the various relationships that have been put in place between the Town and individuals who serve as full time, part time, stipend and / or volunteer responders.
 - An unplanned result of these different relationships is that situations will present themselves where individuals facing the same circumstances could actually realize different insurance benefits or discipline depending upon whether their status at the time puts them under the auspices of the Town or the CHVFC.
 - When a contract is in place between the Town and the CHVFC formalizing the relationship between the two entities, significant time and attention must then be focused toward assuring that these relationships are appropriately managed to assure that the emergency responders are compensated, insured, and otherwise fairly and consistently treated across the entire department.
- The Fire Chief needs to have a specific role in the review and subsequent approval or denial of new applicants to his department.

Recommendation #5: -

Create a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan

A strategic plan is the basic building block of the fire department. It is unfortunate this is not already in place. The committee was given a compilation of information that resembles the basis for what could become a strategic plan, but this is far short of an actual blue print for the future of the CHFD.

Task Force Recommendations 1-4, if implemented, will lay the groundwork for a master plan for the fire department.

The Board of Selectmen needs to make establishing a Strategic Plan for the future of the CHFD a priority and task the Fire Chief with delivering a final product within a year.

If the current administration of the fire department is not able to achieve that goal, the Board of Selectmen should consider hiring someone from outside of the Fire Department to help draft a plan to guide the fire department in a successful direction for the future.

An important component of the Strategic Plan is the role of the volunteer emergency responders in the future. The word "volunteer" means that the Town's emergency responders serve without a salary, however it is incumbent on the Fire Chief to create an understanding within the Town that this does not mean that the service comes without cost to the Town.

Conversely, the Town has an obligation to adequately fund and support its predominately volunteer Fire Department. The concern that was repeatedly identified by the volunteer emergency responders was the budget. Volunteers who do not believe that they are adequately supported tend to volunteer less time – or stop volunteering all together. The Town may immediately save a few dollars today by cutting line items from the budget, but in the long run, such action could result in having to increase the budget to fund the salaries of career emergency responders. A written plan that addresses the funding would go a long way to allaying the fears that were repeatedly expressed to the Task Force about the funding of the CHFD.

It should be the common goal of the Board of Selectmen and the Fire Chief to promote and support a predominately volunteer combination fire department so long as the residents of Colchester will continue to staff it. This goal should be specifically articulated, formally adopted, and constantly reaffirmed by every action taken by the Fire Chief and the Board of Selectman.

The Strategic Plan should address, but not be limited to, the following issues related to the identification and public face of the fire department, its staffing, and its budget. These issues were all repeatedly brought to the attention of the Task Force throughout its evaluation of the CHFD.

- The CHFD
 - Colchester Today and Colchester Tomorrow – Population, structure types, major businesses, fire protection infrastructure, etc. Describing Colchester in 2013 and describing what Colchester is anticipated to look like in 2015, 2020 and 2023 will feed the strategic plan with requirements that are reactive (today) and proactive (2023) all based on what is relevant to CHFD.
 - CHFD needs to brand itself. What is CHFD? Is it a fire department providing EMS? Is it an EMS Agency that provides fire suppression? Throughout its work, the Task Force encountered references not only to the CHFD and the CHVFC, but also the CFD, and CHVFD. The Fire Department needs to know who they are before they can expect the public to understand who they are.
 - Once the Fire Department has branded itself, the name, logo and representation needs to be consistent on everything from trucks to letterhead and uniforms.
 - There needs to be one official website for the fire department. The Task Force found three separate websites that claimed to represent the fire department. The information provided to the public was inconsistent from web site to web site. When one official web site is established, it should be linked into the Town's homepage.
- Staffing
 - There needs to exist with the CHFD a formal plan for staffing the need of the department. How many volunteer emergency responders are necessary to be able to reasonably expect to consistently staff the CHFD at its present call volume? How many additional volunteers are necessary for each incremental increase in call volume?
 - The days of volunteers being active within the fire department for their entire life appear to be long gone. A prudent business practice is a cost benefit analysis where the cost of training and equipping a volunteer is compared with that of maintaining a full time staffed position. Is 3-5 years of active volunteer service a reasonable return on the investment? Are new volunteers averaging at least that many years of active service with the department?
 - The career fire fighters are an important aspect of the staffing CHFD. There does not seem to be a well-defined plan in place that addresses the expected staffing needs of the fire department in the short and long-term future. Increased stipends and other initiatives appear to be last minute defensive actions that are made when volunteer participation reaches near-crisis levels rather than planned retention

programs. There should be established “trigger points” to identify when it is necessary for that to happen. This plan should articulate assurances to both the volunteer and career emergency responders of their future roles within the fire department as it evolves, and should also have the support and funding of the Board of Selectmen. The Task Force was not able to find evidence of any sort of plan to this effect.

- It is imperative that the Fire Chief closely monitors volunteer response. The increased call volume and additional training requirements mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have made being an emergency responder more complex than it has ever been. The Fire Chief must be acutely aware of the burden this places on the volunteers and be prepared to take steps to lessen the impact.
- Once the CHFD commits to staffing a predominately volunteer fire department supported by career fire fighters, time and resources need to be invested in identifying opportunities to support response goals as established in NFPA 1720: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments. This could include establishing affiliations with local colleges for Internship opportunities, working with Bacon Academy to find ways for students to earn high school or college credit for their work with the CHFD, expanding and reinvigorating the existing Fire Cadet Program, establishing a Mentoring Program to help assure the success of new members coming into the department, and investigating opportunities for housing volunteer emergency responders, such as creating living space at Company 2 or securing town-owned housing that could be available at an affordable rent for active volunteers.
- There needs to be within the CHFD a formal, written NIMS compliant command structure that is understood and followed by all emergency responders. The specific duties and responsibilities of each of the officers included within the Command Structure should be clearly spelled out in job descriptions. The Command Structure should be updated following the election of officers or at any time there is a change in the ranks of the officers. Job descriptions should be updated as necessary to reflect industry practices and the operational needs of the fire department. Chain of Command and specific job descriptions codified in writing and be available for review and reference by all members of the fire department and the public. These documents should be required training for all new officers and incoming department members.
- The established chain of command must set forth that ultimately the Chief is responsible for all personnel in the Fire Department,

regardless of status; full time, part time, stipend and /or volunteer emergency responders ultimately report to the Chief. All personnel must follow the established Chain of Command either tactically, or administratively.

- Budget
 - The Chief must create well-thought out short and long term plans for apparatus, equipment and building upgrades. This needs to include both the ongoing maintenance and Capital Improvement Program for the replacement of each of these assets.
 - It is imperative that the Chief have buy-in from both the emergency responders and the Board of Selectmen into the plan and associated price tag, and that he follow through with the successful implementation of these plans, thus showing the emergency responders that there is a plan, a strong sense of leadership, and that the department is moving in a progressive direction.
 - Failure to create the plan, establish buy-in, and implement the plan successfully in recent years has contributed to the continued sense of unrest that appears to be present among the emergency responders, and has created a situation where the town is not current with scheduled apparatus replacements.

Conclusion

The deficiencies that exist within the CHFD's ability to consistently staff the fire department to the required levels are a direct result of the culture that has been allowed to exist within the fire department. This culture lacks clear, formal leadership, is often fueled by conflict, and is not conducive to encouraging volunteers, especially, new volunteers, to want to spend time at the fire station. This was identified in 2011 by the UCONN Report and has been verified by the Task Force in 2013.

The Town of Colchester must to commit to fixing the infrastructure by implementing the five recommendations set forth in this Task Force Report before efforts at retention or increased volunteer participation will meet with success.

- 1. Negotiate a Contract Between the Town of Colchester and the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Company.**
- 2. Simplify the Fire Department's Training Program**
- 3. Establish Minimum Training and Educational Requirements for all Fire Officers**
- 4. Professionalize the Personnel and Human Resources Aspects of the Fire Department**
- 5. Create a Colchester Fire Department Strategic Plan.**

Appendices

***Appendix A:
Required Minimum Training for CT Fire Services to Meet
State Regulation***

***Appendix B:
Changes in the EMS Certification & Education System***

REQUIRED MINIMUM TRAINING FOR CONNECTICUT FIRE SERVICES TO MEET STATE REGULATIONS

<p>Firefighting 1910.156(c)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training and Education commensurate with duties 2. Prior to work as firefighter 3. Officers have more comprehensive training than members. <p>1910.156(c)(2) - Training (Frequency)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least quarterly for interior 2. Annual for others <p>The following subjects: (Examples or Key Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safety and Protective Equipment 2. Chemistry of Fire and Fire Behavior 3. Self Contained Breathing Apparatus 4. Fire Streams 5. Hose 6. Pumping Fire Apparatus 7. Ladders 8. Rescue 9. Forcible Entry 10. Ventilation <p>Examples of Training Standards I.F.S.T.A. ESSENTIALS meet 1910.156(c)</p> <p>E.F.1 exceeds or meets this requirement. Training can be classroom and hands on.</p>	<p>Hazardous Materials Operations 1910.120(q)(6) Training of Department Responders to a Haz Mat</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness (no set hours). Department takes no action and remains in the cold zone. 2. (ii) Operational (8 hrs). When the Department acts in a defensive mode and does not mitigate. (Damming, diking and decontamination is operational level) 3. (iii) Technician (24 hrs). This level mitigates (plug & patch) and uses chemical protective clothing. Note: Must meet specific competencies. List in 1910.120(q)(6) for each type of responder. 	<p>Command Leaders and Incident Commanders Incident Command and Standard Operating Procedures - HazMat 1910.120(q)(6)(v)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requires 24 hours training equal to operations plus - competencies listed in 120(q)(6)(v)(A-F) <p>ICS courses are a means of meeting this requirement as long as employer specific conditions and plans are also addressed.</p> <p>Note: The standard allows for command to be passed on as higher ranking officers arrive. 120(q)(6)(v) applies to employees who are expected to assume command.</p>	<p>Infectious Disease Control 29 CFR 1910.1030</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicable Disease Risk Exposure and Prevention of the Transmission of Bloodborne Pathogens for Emergency Responders <p>TB</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a program, training, skin test and respirators if: exposed to active or possible active TB and <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Transport them B. Prolonged indoor contact with patient C. High Risk Procedures <p>Note: State EMT, MRT, EMT-P Training covers some elements. Training must be site specific and annual for 1030.</p>	<p>Confined space 1910.146</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only required for rescue activity. 2. Based on hazards, monitoring and rescue equipment to be used. 3. Annual Training 4. The "employer" must ensure timely, effective rescue where outside service is used. (see appendix "F") <p>The 1910.146 is intended for employers entering spaces to supply their own rescue capability.</p>
<p>It is strongly recommended that a fire department have personnel on the scene of an incident that have at least First Responder certification to provide emergency medical care to any firefighter injured on the scene.</p> <p>EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS Not required but suggested there be a program in place.</p>				

1. The local authority having jurisdiction may require additional training and education: **EXAMPLE:** A fire department may require Responder Certification or Emergency Medical Technician Licensure.

2. Curriculum for firefighting practices will be based upon interior or exterior fire attack principles, practices and procedures. The equipment in the department and the instructor will make this determination. (Training on any special hazards (an industrial location, location with particular hazards); have to be included in training.

3. The Department of Labor and the supporting agencies and organizations encourage each fire department to exceed this minimum training. High standards for training and education; and health and safety are key factors to quality job performance and service to the community. State of Connecticut, Commission on Fire Prevention and Control courses often exceed OSHA requirements.

4. All training must have an evaluation component and participants must pass the evaluation to receive credit for the training. A pass/fail system is adequate. Evaluation instruments and/or activities are to be determined by the instructor based upon the instructional objectives of the class. Training activity must be documented.

5. All training and education must be delivered by an instructor who is capable of delivering subject and trained in the area being taught. (See Appendix A to 1910.156).

6. All training components require annual refresher training of sufficient content and duration needed to maintain competency. Competency can be demonstrated annually in place of refresher training. Means of demonstrating competency must be documented by the Department. Employer could use drills, tests as means of demonstrating competency.

7. Attendance at "state" Fire School could be included as meeting training as long as employer specific conditions are addressed as well.

8. OSHA standards allow flexibility and do not specify that recipients have a certificate. Employer must certify training is done.

9. OSHA does not regulate level of EMS response (i.e., BLS, MRT, EMT, Paramedic, etc.).

Firefighting Practices

29 CFR 1910.156(c) Fire Brigades

1. Training and education commensurate with those duties and functions members are expected to perform, provided before they perform fire emergency activities.
2. Training and education frequently enough to assure each member is able to perform assigned duties and functions satisfactorily and in a safe manner.

All members shall be provided training at least annually. Members who are expected to perform interior structural firefighting shall be provided training at least quarterly.

Hazardous Materials

29 CFR 1910.120(q)(6) and (8) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response

General Requirements

1. Training shall be based on the duties and function to be performed by each emergency responder. Hazardous Material First Responder Awareness - Individuals who are likely to witness or discover a hazardous substance release and have been trained to initiate an emergency response plan. You can tailor to your operation.
2. Annual refresher training of sufficient content and duration to maintain competencies, or shall demonstrate competencies yearly.
3. 1910.120(q)(1) Emergency response plan. Must cover all elements. Town plan may meet these requirements.
4. 1910.120(q)(3) Requires provision for having a safety officer, air monitoring prior to SCBA removal, back up personnel, first aid support at site, PPE, implementation of decontamination.

EPA 40 CFR Part 311

EPA Regulations are identical to OSHA.

Breathing Apparatus

Must comply with 1910.134

- 1910.134(c) Written respirator program
- 1910.134(e) Medical evaluation
- 1910.134(f)(2) Annual fit test
- 1910.134(g)(1) Facial hair policy - not allowed in face seal area
- 1910.134(g)(3) Written procedures for dangerous atmospheres planning for communications, standby persons equipped for rescue of entrants.
- 1910.134(h) Monthly SCBA inspections
- Records of inspections
- Low air alarms
- 30 minute bottles
- Cylinders fully charged
- Current hydrostatic test on cylinders
- Flow test apparatus as recommended by manufacturer

Incident Command System (ICS)

CFR 1910.120(q)(3)(ii) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response

Requires the implementation of an Incident Command System. Training in ICS is inherent in this requirement. For officers who are expected to be I.C. [see 1910.120(q)(6)(v)]

Infectious Disease Control

29 CFR 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens

All employees with occupational exposure shall participate in a training program at least annually. Occupation exposure means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from performance of duties. This covers most, if not all, fire departments in the State of Connecticut.

1910.1030 Requires the following:

1. Written exposure control plan
2. Training
3. PPE
4. HBV vaccinations
5. Post exposure follow up
6. Maintain records of training (3 years)
7. Maintain medical records 30 years

Other Requirements General

1. 1910.156(d)(1) - Equipment annual inspection and maintenance
 - a. Hose (To NFPA 1962 or equivalent)
 - b. Ground and aerial ladders (To NFPA 1932 and 1914 or equivalent)
2. 1910.156(b)(1) - Organizational statement
3. 1910.156(e)(1) - PPE provided at no cost
4. 1910.156(e)(1-5) - PPE meets .156 or NFPA
5. 1910.147 - Lockout/Tagout. Employee exposure most likely will apply to large department with a repair facility
 - a. 1910.1200 - Employee exposure (site chemicals such as cleaners, fuels)
 - a. (e) Program must be in writing
 - b. (g) Material safety data sheets available to employees
 - c. (h) Training (firefighters may have equivalent through 1910.120 awareness level)
7. 31-371 - OSHA notice posted
8. 31-374 - Form 300 must be maintained back 5 years. 300A has to be posted every February 1 through April 30.

Maintaining a safe workplace in accordance with all laws is your responsibility. This informational guide is intended to provide a generic non exhaustive overview of CONN-OSHA firefighting standards. This document does not itself alter or determine compliance with any particular CONN-OSHA standard.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

DATE: December 30, 2011

TO: All EMS-Instructors

FROM: Kevin Scott Brown, MS, NREMT-P, EMS-I
State Education and Training Coordinator

REF: **CHANGES IN THE EMS CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Changes in EMS Statutes enacted in January, 2010 enabled changes in a number of aspects of Certification and training for EMS professionals.

Effective January 1, 2010, the names of EMS Certification levels changed:

1. Medical Response Technician (MRT) became Emergency Medical Responders (EMR)
2. Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (EMT-B) became Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT)
3. Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate (EMT-I) became Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (AEMT)

In June, 2011, the EMS Advisory Board and the Connecticut EMS Medical Advisory Committee (CEMSMAC) voted to support the adoption of the *National EMS Education Agenda for the Future's National EMS Education Standards* for the Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician and Paramedic provider levels. CEMSMAC deferred discussion and decision regarding the National Scope of Practice Model for Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians until a future date.

Initial Certification Programs of Instruction:

Effective September, 2011, all initial certification programs are to address the EMS Education Standards for the National Scope of Practice Model content for all certification levels except the Advanced Emergency Medical Technician, which continues to address the EMT Intermediate 1985 National Standard Curriculum.

The National EMS Education Standards focus on the development of candidate competency as opposed to addressing specific curriculum content and length. However, for planning purposes, instructors should consider minimum class length guidelines suggested by the National Education Standards.

For Emergency Medical Responder courses, the guideline suggests 40 to 60 hour programs; OEMS will be expecting that new EMR programs will require 60 hours to address breadth and depth of knowledge and to assess of EMR candidate competency.

For Emergency Medical Technician courses, the expectation is 150 to 190 hours.

Advanced Emergency Medical Technician programs should be based on the National Standard Curriculum for EMT Intermediates (1985), and should extend to about 100 hours in length.

Paramedic

Programs are to

achieve and maintain Program Accreditation as recommended in the *National EMS Education Agenda for the Future* and national accepted guidelines and as approved by the Department.

Recertification Interval:

The recertification intervals have changed for all levels to a three-year interval.

All initial certifications issued after January 1, 2010 will receive certifications with a three year expiration date.

All individuals certified prior to December 31, 2009 with two year certification intervals at that date will move to a three year recertification cycle on completion of their upcoming recertification process. All individuals on the three year recertification interval are unaffected by the change.

By January 1, 2012, all two-year recertification cycles should have ended and all EMS certified individuals should be on three-year intervals.

Recertification Program Length:

With the implementation of the three-year recertification interval has come change in re-certification program expectations.

1. EMR (MRT) recert programs will increase from fifteen hours to eighteen hours
2. EMT recert programs will increase from twenty-five hours to thirty hours
3. AEMT recert requirements will change from the two stage expectation of a twenty-five hour EMT recert program plus twenty-three hours of additional CEU hours to the thirty hour EMT recertification requirement plus a twenty-three (23) hour program of AEMT (ALS) appropriate continuing education.

Recertification Program Content:

National trends in EMS education focus more on assuring that training programs develop candidates who demonstrate competence in essential knowledge, skills and behaviors As opposed to assuring that instructors follow specific curriculum guidelines.

Recertification training should have as its primary goals:

1. The ability to assure that participants capably maintain core competencies,
2. The opportunity to refresh training in essential topic areas, and
3. The avenue by which experienced providers may enrich their pre-existing knowledge base with more current EMS information.

Therefore, all recertification programs will allow for substantial flexibility in both content and format.

EMS Instructors will serve as the point of contact for re-certifying Emergency Medical

Rev: 12/29/2011

Responders, Emergency Medical Technicians and Advanced Emergency medical Technicians. EMS-Instructors offering AEMT level recertification programs must be certified as AEMT practitioners or licensed as paramedics. Candidates for recertification will be required to demonstrate that they have met at least the minimum number of hours for recertification at their provider level. In addition, all candidates must demonstrate they have completed a course of study that addressed each of the following core competencies:

1. Airway Management and Patient Respiratory Emergency Assessment and Interventions Scope of Practice level appropriate
 - a. patient assessment for respiratory distress and failure;
 - b. interventions for establishing and maintaining patent airways, assuring effective oxygenation and ventilation and managing respiratory distress
2. Cardiac Care, including Cardiac Arrest Management appropriate for their certification level and meeting Emergency Cardiac Care standards for both adult and pediatric populations. Certification such as CPR for Healthcare Providers in such nationally recognized programs as the AHA, ARC, ASHI, AAOS, NSC, etc. satisfy the requirement for BLS providers.
3. Medical Emergency Assessment and Care: (including at least one of any of the following categories: behavioral emergencies, toxicological emergencies, anaphylaxis and allergic reactions, environmental emergencies, endocrine emergencies, stroke and other neurological emergencies; gastro-intestinal and other abdominal disorder emergencies, or other non-traumatic emergency medical conditions)
4. Trauma Assessment and Care (including any of the following: penetrating and blunt trauma to the head, thorax, abdomen and pelvis, extremities; burns, HazMats or other mechanisms of injury)
5. Obstetrics and Gynecological Emergencies
6. Pediatrics and Other Special Care Populations (pediatric assessment and any of the following categories: geriatrics, special needs patients, etc.)
7. EMS Operations (including any of the following: medical-legal issues, documentation and communications, multiple casualty even management, Incident Command System topics, etc.)
8. **Transition:** For a complete recertification cycle (from July 1, 2012 until December 31, 2015) all refresher courses must include a module that addresses materials described in the *Gap Analysis* for the specific Scope of Practice level. More information will be forthcoming.
9. Skill Maintenance
 - a) Airway management, oxygenation and ventilation, including suctioning and basic adjunct use (EMR, EMT, and AEMT; approved advanced airway AEMT only)
 - b) Cardiac Care including cardiac arrest management (CPR Healthcare Provider level)
 - c) Patient Assessment – Medical
 - d) Patient Assessment – Trauma
 - e) Spinal Immobilization (seated, standing, supine; assist only – EMR)
 - f) Random Skills

- a. Simple Immobilization (Long bone and joints –all levels; traction splinting EMT and above)
- b. Hemorrhage control and shock management (including intravenous therapy, for AEMT's)
- g) Medication administration

Recertification Program Format:

At the discretion of the EMS Instructor, elements of the recertification program of study may include distributive and / or alternative learning modules. In order for Instructors to recognize distributive learning, each module must have recognition of continuing education credits by

1. the Continuing Education Coordinating Board for Emergency Medical Services (CECBEMS) or other nationally recognized EMS / Emergency Medical care education/certification organization;
2. a sponsor hospital / or training entity medical director.

All CEU credit assignment will apply to recertification hour recognition on a one-for-one basis.

Recertification Programs may incorporate distributive / alternative education modules in the following ways:

1. A program of instruction specifically designed to fulfill all recertification requirements via distributive / alternative learning modalities. Such a program must contain modules that address each and all of the core topic areas, must consist of a minimum number of contact hours: eighteen (EMR) or thirty (EMT) or twenty-three (AEMT), plus the EMT requirement continuing education hours, and must adequately prepare the candidate to successfully complete OEMS approved cognitive and psychomotor examinations.
2. EMS-Instructor selected modules that are integrated into and support his/her program of instruction that, in total, addresses the range of topic categories, meet the eighteen (EMR), thirty hour (EMT), or twelve (AEMT) minimum expectation and adequately prepare the candidate to successfully complete OEMS approved cognitive and psychomotor examinations. For example, the EMS Instructor may choose to have live class sessions that "cover" five of the eight (nine with the transition) topic areas and specify particular on-line courses that address the remaining modules.
3. EMS-Instructors may provide a course of live instruction that addresses the full range of topic areas and may allow program participants to substitute distributive modules for particular course sessions. For example, if a live participant program is designed to run over the span of a year, and a participant is absent for the pediatric module, the instructor may elect to recognize the participant's certificate of completion of an appropriate on-line pediatric module in the place of the missed program.
4. Candidates holding current Connecticut licensure in good standing as a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, registered nurse or paramedic, may apply continuing education unit credits earned to maintain licensure for recognition as continuing education for Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, and / or Advanced Emergency Medical Technician.

An EMS Instructor may require candidates to participate in a program of live instruction with no recognition of distributive learning at all.

All skills verification is to be accomplished through live demonstration of competency.

Recertification Examination:

Regardless of any distributive learning content, all candidates must successfully complete cognitive and psychomotor examinations appropriate for their certification level at the completion of the recertification training. The written recertification examination may not be completed more than one year prior to the technician's recertification date. Written exams must be OEMS approved, follow OEMS procedural requirements, and must be administered by OEMS approved proctors.

To qualify for the written exam, all candidates must:

1. Meet an EMT-Instructor's criteria for successful completion of a course of instruction as described above (i.e.: be enrolled in OEMS-approved recertification course)
2. Meet or exceed BOTH the minimum number of hours required AND address each and all of the required core competency areas
 1. Airway Management,
 2. Cardiac Care,
 3. Medical Emergencies,
 4. Trauma Emergencies,
 5. Obstetrics and Gynecological Emergencies,
 6. Pediatrics (Special Populations),
 7. EMS Systems,
 8. Essential Skills Maintenance
 9. Transition materials
3. Be eligible to appear on the Instructor's Course Completion Form (T4), and
4. Be eligible to have the signature of that EMS-Instructor on his/her Application for Certification (202 Form). AEMT candidates programs require that the candidates' training meet a medical director's approval for AEMT level content. AEMT Applications for Certification (202 Forms) may require a sponsor hospital medical director signature in addition to that of the EMS-I/Clinical Care Coordinator.

Recertification programs are to include skills development opportunities as well as skills examinations. Skills development sessions may address new technology for new interventions (mechanical CPR devices, for example), new or alternative technologies for existing skill competency expectations (traction splints from different manufacturers, for example) and / or skill competency re-development for existing but rarely used interventions (childbirth management skills, for example).

The recertification psychomotor examinations may be incorporated into the recertification program or recertification candidates may participate in OEMS approved psychomotor

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examinations (“EMT Initial Practical Exams and/or Sponsor Hospital “Concert Exams”, for example) and must address the essential skills for specific EMS practitioner level and employ OEMS approved psychomotor “skill sheets”, records of which are to be maintained by the EMS-I of record for the candidate’s recertification process.

The Instructor must be able to document the technician’s successful completion of all requirements (including records of competent skill performance), and must maintain records of successful course completion for a minimum of six years. The records may be audited by OEMS at any time within the six-year interval.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

Initial certification program standards are to be implemented immediately in preparation for certification examination changes to take effect January 1, 2012.

Recognition of distance learning / alternative learning modalities and recognition of Continuing Education Units for licensed health care providers for recognition as recertification education are to be implemented immediately.

Beginning January 1, 2012, recertification programs may either meet approval standards currently in place (EMR – 15 hours at National Standard Curriculum requirements, EMT at 25 hours at National Standard Curriculum requirements) or address the new standards. After July 1, 2012, all recertification programs must comply with the new format.

WJJMS Building Committee Scope

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a high level statement of scope for the building committee to follow. This should be used as a guide in developing a proposal for the WJJMS project.

Statement of Scope

The building committee shall develop a proposal for a project with input from the public, Board of Education, Board of Selectmen, and Board of Finance. Said project shall include:

1. A building or buildings that will provide for a Middle School (Grades 6-8) and other Board of Education offices, as deemed appropriate by the Board of Education and in accordance with the adopted educational specifications.

Said project may include:

1. Recreational fields
2. Other incidental general use space such as storage

Said project shall not include:

1. A senior center
2. A youth center
3. A community center
4. Any other town department

Said project shall be accomplished through any, or a combination of, the following methods:

1. Construction of new spaces
2. Renovation of existing spaces
3. Demolition of existing spaces

Adopted by Board of Selectmen on xx/xx/2014

Adopted by Board of Education on xx/xx/2014