

**Town of Princeton, MA
Meeting Minutes
Public Safety Committee
September 28, 2010
Town Hall Annex**

As the Committee had not yet organized, John called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Members present were Jim Comer, Bill Dino, Jon Fudeman, Stan Moss, Bob Sauer, Charlie Schmohl, and Neil Sulmasy. No Committee members were absent. Also attending were Selectman Edie Morgan, Fire Chief Ray LaPorte, and Town Administrator John Lebeaux.

Introductions

The Committee members introduced themselves and briefly related their backgrounds, skill sets, and why they wanted to participate on the Committee.

Election of Officers

The Committee deferred its election until later in the evening.

Role of Supporting Staff

John explained that the Selectmen had directed him to provide whatever support he can to the Committee and the two public safety chiefs to provide technical assistance. It was agreed that all requests for information to the chiefs be submitted through John for efficient coordination.

Discussion of BOS Charge to Committee

The Committee had a wide-ranging discussion of the Charge and how to accomplish its goals. The Committee assigned its highest priority to issues related to the following portion from the charge:

"The Select Board's objective is to start the process of regionalization of dispatch and improve the fire and ambulance emergency response and coverage while considering the implementation of a full-time fire chief position for the wellbeing of Princeton residents."

The Committee discussed details related to regional dispatch services at length including: coordination of communication frequencies, the Emergency Medical Dispatch component of public safety dispatch, the existing regional county models in Essex and Franklin Counties, and the present administrative functions of Princeton dispatchers.

John briefed the Committee on the City of Worcester initiative that is ongoing.

The Committee briefly discussed fire and ambulance emergency response and implementation of a full-time fire chief position. Ambulance replacement was noted as an important factor to be considered.

The Committee determined that it needs to provide its final report/recommendations to the Board of Selectmen by April 1, 2011.

The Committee's discussion then shifted to the overriding issues raised by the Charge and determined that it needs to answer three broad questions in order to do so:

1. What is the present "State of the Union" of public safety services? **What do we have?**
2. What public safety services should Princeton provide, and to what level? **What do we need to have that we don't at present?**

3. What are the shortfalls between 2 and 1? What is the recommended order of priority of actions necessary to achieve them? **How do we get from 1 to 2?**

The Committee agreed on the following course of action to begin to answer these questions:

- Develop a series of questions at its October 5 meeting to be posed to the Police and Fire Chiefs in order to learn their analysis of the current status of and their 3 to 5 year goals for their department. At the same meeting, develop questions for Worcester and North Central regional dispatch programs.
- Invite representatives from the Worcester and North Central regional dispatch programs to attend its Oct. 13 meeting to make individual presentations and take questions about each respective program. John is to make the contacts.
- Contact the Essex and Franklin County regional dispatch centers to explore either a representative attending a Committee meeting or having members of the Committee make a site visit. John is to contact.
- Invite Chiefs Powers and LaPorte to its Oct 19 meeting to report on current department status and future goals.

Election of Officers

By unanimous votes, the Committee elected Neil Sulmasy Chairman and Jim Comer Vice-Chairman.

Other Business

John briefly reviewed elements of the recently modified Open Meeting Law (OML). Committee members were encouraged to communicate through John's office to avoid any inadvertent OML issues.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Lebeaux,
Town Administrator

Referenced Documents

Selectmen's Charge to Public Safety Committee