

Fire Protection Citizens Committee Report

Annual Town Meeting 2016

Background

The Citizens Committee began meeting on August 18, 2015 and has been meeting regularly in approximately 2 week intervals. The mission statement developed is as follows:

Provide facts related to alternative solutions to meet the fire protection needs of the Town of Winchester.

Five options considered to be viable were examined. Those options were as follows:

1. Fix the current Clayton/Winchester agreement
2. Establish a Town of Winchester Fire Department
3. Join with the Winneconne/Poygan Fire District as a fourth party
4. Contract with the Boom Bay Fire Company
5. Contract with the Town of Clayton Fire Department

Methodology

The committee brain stormed pros and cons associated with each option and developed what might be considered the ideal solution in terms of leadership and training, equipment, and supervision. The pros and cons for each option were categorized as technical, financial or contractual aspects. Where necessary, members of the committee were asked to investigate various aspects to bring facts to the committee. The committee set relative weights to the technical, financial and contractual and scored each option to calculate an overall rating of each option.

Findings

Option 1 – Fix the current Clayton/Winchester Agreement

The Town of Clayton leadership did not offer any alterations to the current agreement and has established the Town of Clayton Fire Department. The Clayton/Winchester Joint Fire Department has been dissolved and assets have been divided as of 2/22/2016. Weighted Score = 121. Cost for this option based on historic data is calculated to be \$54,865. Equipment replacement was not part of this cost estimate.

Option 2 – Establish a Town of Winchester Fire Department

As of 2/22/2016 ownership of the assets previously owned by the Joint Clayton/Winchester Fire Department have been divided so the Town of Winchester now owns four trucks and various equipment including some first responder supplies and equipment. The equipment now in our possession is adequate to support the fire protection needs of the town though some upgrades should be considered. Manpower to operate the equipment and manage the efforts is sufficient to date with the assistance from the Boom Bay Fire Company. Costs associated with this option are estimated to be approximately \$57,400. Weighted Score = 182. Equipment replacement was not part of this cost estimate. No charter has been written to formally establish and govern a Town of Winchester Fire Department.

Option 3 - Join with the Winneconne/Poygan Fire District as a fourth party

Per Chris Boucher, Chair of the Winneconne Police and Fire Committee, there is no interest on the part of the Winneconne/Poygan Fire District to add Winchester as a fourth party. They are comfortable with their current district and believe that they could be stretched if they had to respond to calls at both ends of the considered new district. Further, they have not figured out how to handle the equipment owned by the Town of Winchester and housed at the town hall in Winchester. They have no experience with operating a second fire station. They just don't see any advantage either technically or financially to joining the Town of Winchester to their current fire district. Costs associated with this option are estimated to be approximately \$45,000 to \$55,000. Weighted Score = 121. Equipment replacement was not part of this cost estimate.

Option 4 - Contract with the Boom Bay Fire Company

The Town of Winchester is currently contracting with the Boom Bay Fire Company at a cost of \$15,000. The Boom Bay Fire Company has been given permission to use the equipment now owned by the Town of Winchester and have added 15 volunteers from the town of Winchester to their roster. Leadership and training provided by the Boom Bay Fire Company has been adequate. Equipment provided by the Town of Winchester and the Boom Bay Fire Company has been adequate to meet our needs. The Boom Bay Fire Company is happy to support our needs but is not interested in a long term contract. Costs associated with this option are estimated to be approximately \$58,700. Weighted Score = 157. Equipment replacement was not part of this cost estimate.

Option 5 - Contract with the Town of Clayton Fire Department

Negotiations were held with the Town of Clayton leadership and the basis for a contract established. Open issues were related to services to be provided, costs and the basis for future costs, equipment to be used, and indemnification. General agreement was reached but no specifics or a proposed contract was provided. Costs associated with this option are estimated to be approximately \$58,000. This estimate includes the 2% which would be paid to the Town of Clayton for support of the Fire Prevention Program. The estimate also includes First Responder Services. (The Town of Winchester is currently contracting with the Town of Clayton for First Responder Services at a cost of \$9,400.) Weighted Score = 99. Equipment replacement was not part of this cost estimate.

Final Comments

The future needs of the Town of Winchester and those of our neighboring communities are subject to change. Consequently, we recommend that the Town of Winchester establish a standing committee to consider the safety and protection needs of the town. Such a committee would meet periodically as needed (perhaps quarterly) to review the needs of the town and its ability to address those needs. Further, such committee would provide a report at the Town Annual Meeting.

Attachments

Pros and Cons with Ratings

Ideal Solution

Settlement Summary

Note:

Minutes for each meeting and additional discussion details are available through the Town of Winchester website files.

| Option 1 - Fix Agreement with Clayton | T F C | SCORE |
|---|-------|-------|
| LEGEND: QUESTIONS - STATEMENTS - PROS - CONS - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS | | |
| Administration is existing and in place (policies + SOPs) | T | |
| Closest Response Time Lack of members available during the day | T | |
| Training-professional | T | |
| Morale has been an issue | T | |
| Technical Considerations Importance - 10 | | 7 |
| Cost stay the same, based upon valuation Would cost go up, due to expansion of Clayton's needs, or would it continue to be based upon valuation? No split - no equalizing payment - so this would be a benefit to Clayton | F | |
| Less expensive to fix existing contract-legally | F | |
| Financial Considerations Importance - 8 | | 6 |
| Representation on the Joint Fire Board would need to be renegotiated | C | |
| Is Clayton willing to reconsider? | C | |
| Lack of willingness to cooperate - Leadership in both towns would need to be open to this option | C | |
| Contract Considerations Importance - 3 | | 1 |

| Option 2 - Town of Winchester FD | T F C | SCOR E | |
|---|-------|--------|--|
| LEGEND: QUESTIONS - STATEMENTS - PROS - CONS - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS | | | |
| <p>Same Response Time</p> <p>Adequate staff - list of 29 potential volunteers</p> <p>How many of the 29 potential volunteers are current members of the Boom Bay Fire Company?</p> <p>Are there any potential Liability concerns for volunteers belonging to 2 depts (?) (Boom Bay and Winchester)</p> <p>It takes time to get a roster going</p> | T | | |
| <p>Training offered by Boom Bay</p> <p>Fewer Resources could cause a Drop off in training</p> | T | | |
| <p>Would have to set up Records and Administrative process to comply with rules and regulations</p> | T | | |
| <p>Few structure fire calls in the Town of Winchester, mainly highway accidents and grass fires.</p> <p>Does this warrant the expense of setting up a standalone department?</p> <p>Clayton is nearby and said they would respond.</p> | T | | |
| <p>Technical Considerations Importance - 10</p> | | 8 | |
| <p>What is a realistic budget based upon potential replacement of trucks and equipment?</p> | F | | |
| <p>Smaller Tax Base to Support Expenses to Replace Equipment</p> <p>Winchester has had Minimal growth</p> <p>The estimate with the same as what we are now paying only covered the operating expense with a fully volunteer staff.</p> <p>No significant increase in the operating budget</p> <p>Cost to get up and running should be covered by the equalizing payment</p> <p>May not be much money left for a contingency fund to purchase vehicles at a later date</p> | F | | |
| <p>Financial Considerations Importance - 8</p> | | 9 | |
| <p>Additional legal fees and ordinances</p> | C | | |
| <p>Local control</p> | C | | |
| <p>Potential political implications - What does this mean?</p> | | | |
| <p>Contract Considerations Importance - 3</p> | | 10 | |

| Option 3 - Partner with Winneconne FD (Joint Fire District w/Poygan, Town of Winneconne, Village of Winneconne) | T F C | SCORE |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| LEGEND: QUESTIONS - STATEMENTS - PROS - CONS - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS | | |
| Is Winneconne willing to work with us and add an additional community? Primary station across the river Our Winchester "satelite station" could be a benefit to Winneconne | T | |
| Administration is existing and in place (policies + SOPs) | T | |
| Would need to join their fire district and negotiate the fee for the Town Larger pool of personnel and equipment - Additional assets to service the people of our community | T | |
| Because we would still have our local station, response time should not be adversely affected Interested firefighters could still serve locally if hired by Winneconne - would maintain our local station and still have some autonomy Our local volunteers would have the opportunity to join a department and thereby receive training | T | |
| Training programs in place Location of Training - would some take place in at the Winchester station or would all be at the Winneconne station? | T | |
| Strong Community Support | T | |
| Good Reputation | T | |
| Technical Considerations Importance - 10 | | 7 |
| What would this cost the Town of Winchester? | F | |

| | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| <p>MUCH Larger Tax Base to Share the Cost</p> <p>Where would the ambulance/first responders come from?</p> <p>The equalizing payment could be deposited into a contingency fund instead of being spent on setting up a standalone department</p> <p>Truck Loan would be paid off so the Tax Levy could be readjusted down</p> | F | |
| Financial Considerations Importance - 8 | | 6 |
| <p>What if Winchester would decide later that a stand alone department would be better for the community?</p> <p>Should have a contingency plan but</p> <p>One doesn't go into a "marriage" expecting to get a "divorce"</p> | C | |
| Limited autonomy/representation | C | |
| Contract Considerations Importance - 3 | | 1 |

| Option 4 - Contract with Boom Bay Fire Company | T F C | SCORE |
|--|-------|-------|
| LEGEND: QUESTIONS - STATEMENTS - PROS - CONS - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS | | |
| Administrative process in place | T | |
| Equipment (sell/lease?) - Complex negotiation required | T | |
| Slower Response time Daytime firefighters available Boom Bay has a new station Close to the West Town Line | T | |
| Training provided Fall off in training | T | |
| Technical Considerations Importance - 10 | | 8 |
| What would this cost the Town of Winchester? | F | |
| Would likely fit within budget The equalizing payment could be deposited into a contingency fund instead of being spent on setting up a standalone department | F | |
| Would insurance for the Town go up if another fire department is using our building and equipment? | F | |
| Financial Considerations Importance - 8 | | 7 |
| No autonomy/representation | C | |
| Would need to contract with them. They are a Private Fire Company. What would the legal arrangement look like? | C | |
| Community politics - What does this mean? | | |
| Contract Considerations Importance - 3 | | 7 |

| Option 5 - Contract Back to Clayton | T F C | SCORE |
|--|-------|-------|
| LEGEND: QUESTIONS - STATEMENTS - PROS - CONS - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS | | |
| Same Response Time | T | |
| Technical Considerations Importance - 10 | | 6* |
| What would this cost the Town of Winchester? | F | |
| Would cost go up, due to expansion of Clayton's needs, or would it continue to be based upon valuation? | F | |
| Clayton had initially said they would contract to us at the same cost we are currently paying | F | |
| The equalizing payment could be deposited into a contingency fund instead of being spent on setting up a standalone department | F | |
| Equipment (sell/lease?) - Complex negotiation required | F | |
| Would insurance for the Town go up if another fire department is using our building and equipment? | F | |
| Financial Considerations Importance - 8 | | 4 |
| No autonomy/representation | C | |
| Contract negotiation | C | |
| Buy time to get ducks in a row | C | |
| Contract Considerations Importance - 3 | | 1 |

* This score was upgraded from a 5 to a 6 based on the recent addition of a 1994 engine to the Clayton fleet.

| Leadership and Training | Equipment | Supervision |
|--|--|--|
| <p>LEADERSHIP</p> <p>Lead Officer in our station Should this be an Appointed position or Elected by members of the Fire Department? (Elected would still need to be confirmed by the Town Board)</p> <p>Define Term</p> <p>24/7 Key Leadership Availability - Backup for Lead Officer Required</p> <p>Personnel Manual List Qualifications and Physical Requirements/Assesments appropriate for the Role Served</p> <p>Hierarchical Formalized Structure with structure appropriate based on the size of the department</p> <p>SOPs and Guidelines</p> | <p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>As required by NFPA</p> <p>To DOT Standards (vehicles)</p> <p>Weekly & Monthly In-house Inspections (NFPA) (full function test safety)</p> <p>Annual In-house Inspections (NFPA ladders & hoses)</p> <p>Maintain Checklists for Inspections w/pass-fail</p> | <p>Reports to Town Board</p> <p>Lead Officer submits budget to Town Board</p> <p>Status report to Town Board (ie training, calls, maintenance issues, trends, staffing)</p> <p>NIFRS Reports (incident reports)</p> <p>County Monitoring of Response Time</p> |
| <p>TRAINING</p> <p>Continued Training Encouraged Appropriate Training for Role served NFPA Training (required)</p> <p>Meet state requirements for training (2%)</p> | <p>REPLACEMENT</p> <p>Per RW Management would need to begin Replacing Soon</p> <p>E144-E43-T343-G44</p> <p>Additional Gear Required Radios Turnout Gear Pagers Air Tanks I AM RESPONDING</p> | |
| <p>GRIEVANCES</p> <p>Defined Procedures to express a Grievance</p> | | |

SETTLEMENT SUMMARY

EQUIPMENT RECEIVED BY TOWN OF WINCHESTER FROM DISSOLUTION OF CLAYTON-WINCHESTER FIRE DEPT

VEHICLES (with equipment):

2005 Welch Engine (E144)
1995 Welch Engine (E44)
1979 Ford F8000 Tender (T44)
1975 GMC Grass Truck (G44)

RADIOS AND PAGERS:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| APX 6000 Model 2.5 Qty 8 | APX 6000 Model 1.5 Qty 9 |
| APX 7000 Dual Band Qty 4 | APX 6500 Mobile Qty 5 |
| Motorola GP 300 Qty 6 | I-COM Qty 9 |
| Minitor V Pagers Qty 36 | |

TURNOUT GEAR:

11 Sets of new gear and all older turnout gear

HOSE:

One-half of the hose owned by the joint department

OTHER MAJOR ITEMS:

One set of jaws, one thermal imaging camera, 10 SCBAs, one set of vehicle stabilization equipment (airbags)

EQUALIZING PAYMENT FROM TOWN OF CLAYTON TO WINCHESTER: **\$182,375.00**

FROM TRUCK FUND: **\$40,481.51**

FROM JOINT BOARD CHECKING ACCOUNT: **\$15,773.85**

From Volunteer Funds – Fire Dept., 1st Responders, and Auxiliary: **\$8,904.56**