

**Thompson Fire Protection Advisory Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at 7 p.m.**  
**West Thompson Fire Department**  
**MINUTES**

**Present:** Mike Rivers, Steven Bodreau, Jeff Sheldon, Hogan Krohn

**Alternates:** Todd Montford, Eric Fiske, Kyle Preston – substituting for Jamie Seney/Rocky Navarro

**Citizens:** Paul Baer, Celeste Fifield, Tanya Park

- Meeting called to order by Chair, Kerstin Forrester at 7:04 p.m.
- Motion to accept minutes of January 29, 2014 meeting – Steve Bodreau, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jeff Sheldon, unanimous
- Citizens Comments:
  - Paul Baer asked what happened to the citizen members of the committee. (Both have been sworn in. Bill Poirier did let me know that he would not be able to make the meeting tonight due to a family obligation. Kerstin will check with Larry Guillotte). Paul also provided some emphasis regarding the need to prepare well thought out budgets by each department with emphasis on need to replace gear, tires, etc. to ensure compliance with OSHA whenever feasible.
- Committee Member Comments:
  - Steve Bodreau stated that he felt the comment made by Kerstin at the budget review meeting to Mike Rivers was inappropriate; Kerstin fully agreed and apologized to Mike and the rest of the members.
  - Mike Rivers asked if everyone understands the need for posting Fire Department agendas and minutes to comply with FOIA.
- Correspondence:
  - Kerstin brought up the email sent by Mike River which she had forwarded to all members of the committee. Noted that all call cards have been reviewed and that all members had agreed to discuss redistricting needs. Assurance that the committee was not singling out West Thompson for these reviews.
- Kerstin stated that she had met with Attorney Bill St.Onge to discuss the Town's authority to request "consolidation" of the fire departments and the authority to enforce recommendations made by a consultant. Attorney St.Onge stated that the Town has no legal authority to require consolidation; the only way that can be accomplished is for the Town to purchase the assets of the various Fire Departments or for the Departments to voluntarily consolidate the individual corporations. The Town also does not have the legal authority to require changes made by a consultant. On the other hand, the Town does not have any legal responsibility to provide the funding/grants to the Fire Departments that currently totals \$38,000/department. It does however, make sense for the Town and the five Departments to work together to ensure appropriate fire protection for the citizens of the Town. Attorney St. Onge is reviewing some state statutes and will provide further

information. Attorney St. Onge also commented that unless districts are defined in the Charters for the Fire Departments, the districts are set by the Town.

- Redistricting for the following roads: Hagstrom, Norman Hill, Lowell Davis, Linehouse, and others that may be identified. The members discussed the pros and cons of redistricting and agreed that the Chiefs will get together to make proposals and bring back to the Committee at our April 30, 2014, meeting. Kerstin agreed to find out who has final approval of changes to districts,
- Discuss the original charge of the Advisory Committee with focus on **#2 – Review fire protection in Thompson**, and **#8 – Evolution of fire services to meet future demands**. Kerstin handed out copies of “Bylaws of the Woodstock Fire Protection Association, Inc.” to each chief for review prior to our March meeting. Kerstin will contact the Woodstock Fire Protection Association and ask members to come and talk to our group again about their process and how it has worked out. This appears to be a good step to move towards long-term planning for the departments and address the needs of the Town of Thompson’s citizens. Members agreed to review the bylaws and come prepared with questions and concerns for this meeting.
- Kerstin handed out copies of the CL&P Interstate Reliability Project presentation made to the Board of Selectmen, along with a map of the portion that will be done in Thompson sometime in September 2014.
- Reminder that as we work on addressing fire protection, the Tactical Priorities are of foremost importance:
  - Life Safety
  - Incident stabilization
  - Property Conservation
- Motion to Adjourn made by Hogan Krohn; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jeff Sheldon. Adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Next Meeting is on March 26, 2014 at 7 p.m. at the Quinebaug Fire Station

Respectfully submitted,

Kerstin Forrester, Chair