

**CITY COUNCIL & WPCA  
BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
SPECIAL JOINT BUDGET MEETING  
City Hall Auditorium / Zoom  
May 8, 2023**

A **SPECIAL JOINT MEETING** of the City Council & WPCA and the Board of Public Safety of the City of Torrington was held at the City Hall Auditorium on Monday, May 8, 2023. Attending in person were Mayor Elinor Carbone, City Councilors Drake Waldron, Armand Maniccia, Keri Hoehne, Anne Ruwet, and Paul Cavagnero, along with Board of Public Safety Commissioners Darlene Battle, Glenn McLeod, Gregg Cogswell, and Douglas Benedetto. Also present at City Hall were Police Chief William Baldwin, Police Deputy Chief Bart Barown, Fire Chief Eric Borden, Deputy Fire Chief David Tripp, Trinity Health EMS Manager Jeff Ganung, and Trinity Health President David Kosciuk as well as Comptroller Robin Stanziale, Deputy Comptroller Kim Aviles, and Treasurer Daniel Farley. Commissioner Joseph McElroy participated virtually. Commissioner Molly Spino and City Councilor David Oliver were absent.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Fire Department Presentation**

Fire Chief Eric Borden gave a presentation to the City Council and the Board of Public Safety on the Fire Departments Response to EMS calls. Chief Borden said over a six-month period that the Fire Department was responding to EMS calls, to assist and supplement not to replace the care of the EMS. He stated that out of the 821 calls the Fire Department responded to, 126 of those calls were first on the scene. Currently, the Fire Department is responding to 132 of 478 EMD codes. Over the six months, the Fire Department has responded to 23.68% of all the EMS calls that have come in. Chief Borden went on to say that they have had a positive impact by being more present in the community, making a difference in healthcare, and providing overall better service to the City. Commissioner McLeod asked if adding an ambulance would be enough to provide service to the City. Commissioner Benedetto wanted to know what happens when the Fire Department is tied up on an EMS call and a fire call comes in, Chief Borden explained that you cannot predict when calls come in and what those calls might be. Mayor Carbone shared that the overall demand for Medical Emergency services has increased in the City. Commissioner Cogswell asked what calls the Fire Department does not respond to, Chief Borden told him psychiatric, seizure, and obvious death. Commissioner Cogswell also asked if the Fire Department has direct communication with Trinity, Chief Borden told him that it is in progress.

**Trinity Health of New England Emergency Medical Services, Inc. MOU**

On a motion by Commissioner Benedetto, seconded by Commissioner Battle, the Board of Public Safety voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute, and administer a two-year extension of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Trinity Health of New England Emergency Medical Services, Inc. (Trinity) of Waterbury, CT, which will include additional ambulance services at a cost of \$200,000 annually. Mayor Carbone explained to the City Council and the Board of Public Safety that Trinity acquired the ambulance service from Campion, and since that time there has been a heightened demand for ambulance services. She further explained that the current services that the City receives from Trinity are covered by patients, and the City pays for nothing. Councilor Hoehne asked how they would be providing extra staff for the additional ambulance, Trinity Health President David Kosciuk said that they will have additional staff available as of July 1, 2023. Commissioner McLeod asked if the City has control of the Primary Service Area (PSA) yet, Mayor Carbone said that they are currently working with Trinity to get the State to assign the PSA to the Municipality. Commissioner Benedetto asked about the impact that an extra ambulance would have on the City, Mr. Kosciuk said that there would be a decrease in out-of-town mutual aid calls, he also said that the extra ambulance would be staffed by EMTs and would be Basic Life Support, 12 hours a day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. when the City is the busiest. Councilor Hoehne asked if any other municipalities are seeing the same increase in EMS calls, Mayor Carbone said that they haven't investigated any other areas, stating that every City handles its ambulance service differently and there is no comparison. Commissioner Benedetto stated that the City is getting \$2.3 million in ambulance services for \$200,000 a year.

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Board of Councilmen voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute, and administer a two-year extension of the MOU with Trinity of Waterbury, CT, which will include additional ambulance services at a cost of \$200,000 annually.

**Fire Department Promotional Testing**

On a motion by Commissioner Cogswell, seconded by Commissioner McLeod, the Board of Public Safety voted unanimously to approve Mission CIT, LLC of West Hartford, CT for Promotional Testing Services not to exceed \$18,000 from the Fire Department Promotional Test Stress Psychological account.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the Board of Councilmen voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City to award, execute and administer a contract with Mission CIT, LLC of West Hartford, CT for Promotional Testing Services not to exceed \$18,000 from the Fire Department Promotional Test Stress Psychological account.

**Public Safety Miscellaneous Budget**

On a motion by Councilor Hoehne, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Public Safety Miscellaneous budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$1,855,000.

**Fire Department Budgets**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Fire Department budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$6,250,517. Chief Borden and Deputy Chief Tripp provided the Council with an overview of the increases in the Fire Department's budget. Mayor Carbone reminded the Council that this budget does not include wage increases.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Volunteers budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$88,500.

**Police Department Budgets**

On a motion by Councilor Maniccia, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Police Department budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$10,348,200. Chief Baldwin provided the Council with an overview of the increases in the Police Department's budget. Councilor Ruwet asked if there has been an improvement in the recruitment and retention of Officers in the last year, Chief Baldwin said that when they find an Officer, they end up going to another Police Department with higher salaries and better benefits. Councilor Hoehne asked if the pension is making a difference in retention and recruitment for the Officers, Chief Baldwin told her that they must be more competitive with other Police Departments in the state, who are offering sign-on bonuses and higher wages to start.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Council voted unanimously to move the motion forward and unanimously accept the proposed **Police Department budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$10,348,200.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Animal Control budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$358,391. Chief Baldwin explained with the new Animal Control Facility they will need to hire a third full-time Animal Control Officer. He also said that the cost of electricity and fuel has increased. Councilor Ruwet asked if other towns have been contacted about partnering with Torrington since it is a Regional Animal Control Facility, the Council was told at this moment that they haven't gone back to other towns yet.

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Traffic Division budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$596,984. Chief Baldwin told Council that this year they need to replace meters and some Traffic control settings.

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Hoehne, the City Council unanimously accepted the proposed **Emergency Management budget** for FY 23/24 in the amount of \$53,863. Chief Baldwin said this budget had increased because they are now funding the Torrington Alert System. Mayor Carbone said that this budget is covered 50% by the EMPG Grant.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Maniccia, the Boards voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by*  
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:

  
CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK