



## ***Public Safety & Health Committee - Board of Representatives***

Gloria DePina, Co-Chair  
Chair

Scott Mirkin, Co-Chair

Anabel Figueroa, Vice

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Thursday, July 29, 2010

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** Republican Caucus Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Government Center,  
888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford CT

The Public Safety & Health Committee met as indicated above. Present were Co-Chairs DePina and Mirkin and Committee Member Reps. Caterbone, Coppola, Figueroa, Giraldo and Pia. Also present were Reps. Adams, DeLuca, Franzetti, Gabriele, Layton, Mitchell, Molgano, Savage, Taylor and Uva; Mayor Michael A. Pavia and Executive Assistant Lynn Arnow; Bobby Valentine and John Leydon of the Fire Services Task Force; Jim Hricay, OPM; Michael Larobina, Esq., Director of Legal Affairs; Ernie Orgera, Director of Operations; Anne Fountain, Acting Director of Health and Ron Miller and Michael Kraynak of the Health Department; Captain Mullin representing Chief Nivakoff of the Police Department and approximately 50-75 firefighters.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
1. <a href="#">PS28.012</a>	APPROVAL; of an agreement with University of Connecticut re: Research of Contamination in Scofieldtown Area.	<b>NO ACTION TAKEN</b>
2. <a href="#">PS28.011</a>	PRESENTATION; of Fire Protection Plan. 06/09/10 – Submitted by Co-Chairs DePina & Mirkin	<b>REPORT MADE</b>

Co-Chair DePina stated this is a presentation, there will be no public participation.

Mayor Pavia stated:

- The plan was put together by a task force, chaired by Mr. Valentine.
- This is a very complicated issue involving different organizational structures, different operations, and the issue became increasingly complex.
- Doing nothing about the situation is not an option.
- The solution was designed so that can be implemented sooner rather than later. This plan may not be ideal, but it can be implemented to provide a solution within the myriad of legal complexities and contractual obligations, take into consideration current financial concerns, and preserve the tradition of community service.

#### Highlights/Goals:

- To create a system that provides maximum fire protection to all Stamford residents.
- Extend fire service city wide.
- Unify volunteer fire departments into one organization with consistent standards, policies & procedures.
- Minimize the cost to the taxpayers
- Replace varied interests with one common interest by creating a single, unified volunteer fire service.

#### Approach:

- Merges Belltown, Turn of River, Long Ridge and Springdale into the Stamford Volunteer Fire Department (SVFD). The SVFD will be under one command.
- Capitalizes on combined resources & redefines the fire coverage area.
- Creates a Stamford Fire Services District (SFSD) and creates a contract between it and the SVFD.
- The SFSD will have a President, Vice President, Clerk, Treasurer and 5 directors. This Board will be elected by the members of the District (there are approximately 16,000 households in the District).

#### Benefits

- Clear command structure and lines of authority.
- Optimum fire services to all residents.
- Consistent training, standards and operations, including purchasing, training, recruiting and service delivery.
- Promotes fiscal control.
- Creates a self-sustaining operation.

#### How do we get there?

- The Board of Representatives needs to redraw or redefine the Stamford Fire District by using the current Long Ridge District as the corporate structure.

- The Long Ridge Fire Department needs to file a name change with the Secretary of State, trade name certificates with City & Town Clerk, and revise its by-laws to include directors from Springdale, Belltown and Turn of River Fire Departments.
- The SVFD will enter into an agreement with the SFSD.
- The SVFD will hire paid personnel, and it is encouraged to reach out to the Stamford Fire & Rescue Department for staffing needs.
- Recruitment of additional volunteers.

Mayor Pavia stated that in the near future, the Board of Representatives will begin receiving information on the various details, proposed ordinances and other action items that it will need to approve.

Mayor Pavia referenced the last time the Board of Representatives took a project up of this magnitude, and it resulted in SEMS. To this day, there have been no problems with SEMS.

Mayor Pavia stated that this plan will not result in layoffs, adding that because of the cost and time involved in training a firefighter, it makes no sense to make that investment and then lay people off. Further, the South End is growing quickly, and if anything, there will be a need for more public safety personnel.

OPM is working on cost estimates. This Plan will shift the cost center for providing fire service. It does not raise taxes. The tax for the district will be offset by a reduction in the real estate tax. There will be a small increase in the districts that currently receive full fire protection, and he considers this to be minimal. The taxes being raised will be directly related to the service being provided.

(Mayor Pavia's entire presentation is available on [video](#).)

3. [PS28.014](#)

REVIEW; Health Department fees, including multi-family housing and daycare facilities, pools, liquor stores, condo license fees, etc.

**COMMITTEE  
APPROVED  
PUBLICATION  
5-0-0**

Director Anne Fountain reviewed the proposed increase in health department fees, particularly restaurant inspection services. These are the most labor intensive services that the Health Department environmental staff performs. There has been no increases since June of 2000, and current fees are far below those of surrounding town. They opted to phase in increases to existing fees this current year and proposing some new fees for next year. Corporations are subject to these fees.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee voted 5-0-0 to publish the fees (Reps. DePina, Mirkin, Figueroa, Caterbone and Coppola in favor).

4. [PS28.015](#) REVIEW; status of civil citation officers

**REPORT  
MADE**

Mr. Larobina reviewed the existing ordinance, emphasizing that to appoint civil citation officers, the request must come first from a director, department head, board or commission. Then the Mayor may appoint and the Board of Representatives may approve the appointment of a civil citation officer.

Mr. Caterbone stated that there are many types of complaints and issues that residents have to deal with, such as trash in the streets, barking dogs, that the Police Department is either too busy to address or does not deem a serious enough issue. Mr. Caterbone feels the logical way for the City to address this is the utilization of civil citation officers. He asked that the Police Department provide a listing of lesser complaints it received, how the complaints were handled and the disposition of the complaints. This would allow the committee to see what types of quality of life issues residents are reporting and the level of response residents are receiving..

In response to a question by Rep. Mitchell, Mr. Larobina stated that the impact of this appointment on labor contracts would have to be reviewed by Mr. Hibson, and the Committee should consult with him prior to making any decisions. He also added that, while he has not discussed this matter with the Mayor, it is unlikely given the current budget restrictions, that new employees would be hired to perform these functions. In addition, the ordinance calls for existing employees to be appointed. Currently, there is one civil citation officer.

Mr. Orgera stated that previously the City had tried to appoint several civil citation officers from the collections and highway departments, but there was an issue with the Legal Department about certifying them.

Mr. Larobina concluded by saying that the Committee should engage in a dialog with the Health Department, the Operations Department and the Human Resources Department in order to review in more depth how the city could benefit from the increase use of civil citation officers. Mr. Caterbone reiterated his position that the Committee should start out with some data from the Police Department.

5. [PS28.016](#) REVIEW; status report on blighted property.

**WITHDRAWN**

Co-Chair DePina stated that this matter was taken care of, and Mr. DeLuca, the submittee of the item, did not feel the Committee needed to take any action at this time.

6. [PS28.010](#) RESOLUTION; urging the administration to install a police substation in the old South End Fire Station.

**COMMITTEE  
APPROVED  
7-0-0**

The Committee discussed using the old South End Fire Station as a police substation. Captain Mullin stated that the Police Chief is in favor of this, and this is a growing area that will benefit from the security a substation brings to a neighborhood.

In response to concerns about the feasibility of rehabilitating the building by Mr. Coppola, Rep. Adams stated that the community intends on seeking grant funding (it is a historic building), corporate donations and volunteer labor to accomplish this. Rep. Coppola asked that the Committee be apprised of the cost of this project, and Mr. Orgera offered to ask the City Engineering Department to inspect the building and provide cost estimates.

The resolution merely asks that the feasibility and possibility of the fire station's use be investigated by the administration. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the resolution was approved by a vote of 7-0-0 (Reps. DePina, Mirkin, Figueroa, Adams, Caterbone, Coppola and Giraldo in favor).

Respectfully submitted,

Gloria DePina, Co-Chair

*A videotape of these proceedings is available at  
[www.boardofreps.org](http://www.boardofreps.org)*