

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 25, 1997

6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Blessing - Rev. Dawson Trenchard - Church of the Resurrection

1. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
2. Consent Agenda
  - a. Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#304-314) Totalling \$2,435.18 - Tax Collector
  - b. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the March 4, 1997 Special Town Council Meeting
  - c. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the March 11, 1997 Town Council Meeting
  - d. Consider Confirming the Appointment of a Steering Committee of the Wallingford Public Celebrations Committee for the Jubilee 2000 Celebration - Mayor's Office
  - e. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,900 from Health Insurance Acct. to Professional Services - Employment Acct. - Personnel
  - f. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,799 from Professional Services - Safety Consultant Acct. of Which \$899 is Transferred to Capital - Laser Printer Acct. and \$1,900 is Transferred to Capital - Personal Computer Acct. - Personnel
  - g. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$4,469 from Regular Salaries & Wages Acct. to Purchased Services - Clerical Acct. - Comptroller
  - h. Consider and Approve an Appropriation of Funds in the Amount of \$50,000 from Appropriation to Cash Acct. to Lien Expenses Acct. - Water Division
  - i. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. to Maint. Water Treatment Equipment Acct. - Water Division

j. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$3,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. of Which \$275 is Transferred to Misc. Exp. Pumping; \$750 to Electric Gas & Misc. - Treat.; \$1,575 to Maint. Transmission & Collection Lines and \$400 is Transferred to Supplies, Communication and General Exp. Acct. - Sewer Division

3. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

4. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

5. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,500 from Liability Insurance Acct. to Purchase of Water Acct. - Water Division

6. Discussion on a Proposal to Combine the Dispatching Function of the Departments of Police and Fire Services - Mayor's Office

7. Status Report Out by the Traffic Maintenance Officer on the Traffic Improvements to Hartford Turnpike, Cook Hill Road and the Wilbur Cross Highway - Areas Relating to the Oakdale Theatre Expansion Project as Requested by Councilor David J. Doherty

8. Report Out by the Department of Law on All Litigation Involving the Town of Wallingford with Special Attention to Litigation Involving the Department of Police Services as Requested by Councilor David J. Doherty

9. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$3,000 from Professional Services/Specialists Acct. to Self-Insurance Claim Acct. - Town Attorney

10. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(4) of the CT. General Statutes with Respect to the Purchase of Real Estate - Mayor's Office

ADDENDUM

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 1997

6:30 P.M.

11. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$15,000 from Engineering Salaries Acct. to Consulting Engineer Acct. - Engineering Department

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 25, 1997

6:30 P.M.

ADDENDUM TO AGENDA

12. SET A PUBLIC HEARING on a Proposed Ordinance Entitled,  
"Demolition of Older Buildings or Structures"

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 25, 1997

6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Tuesday, March 25, 1997 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:32 P.M. All Councilors answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., Town Attorney Janis M. Small and Comptroller Thomas A. Myers were also present.

A blessing was bestowed upon the Council by Rev. Dawson Trenchard - Church of the Resurrection.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

ITEM #2 Consent Agenda

ITEM #2a Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#304-314) Totalling \$2,435.18 - Tax Collector

ITEM #2b Approve and Accept the Minutes of the March 4, 1997 Special Town Council Meeting

ITEM #2c Approve and Accept the Minutes of the March 11, 1997 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #2d Consider Confirming the Appointment of a Steering Committee of the Wallingford Public Celebrations Committee for Jubilee 2000 Celebration - Mayor's Office

ITEM #2e Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,900 from Health Insurance Acct. to Professional Services - Employment Acct. - Personnel

ITEM #2f Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,799 from Professional Services - Safety Consultant Acct. of which \$899 is Transferred to Capital - Laser Printer Acct. and \$1,900 is Transferred to Capital - Personal Computer Acct. - Personnel

ITEM #2g Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$4,469 from Regular Salaries & Wages Acct. to Purchased Services - Clerical Acct. - Comptroller

ITEM #2h Consider and Approve an Appropriation of Funds in the Amount of \$50,000 from Appropriation to Cash Acct. to Lien Expenses Acct. - Water Division

ITEM #2i Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. to Maint. Water Treatment Equipment Acct. - Water Division

ITEM #2j Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$3,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. of Which \$275 is Transferred to Misc. Exp. Pumping; \$750 to Electric Gas & Misc. - Treat.; \$1,575 to Maint. Transmission & Collection Lines and \$400 is Transferred to Supplies, Communication and General Exp. Acct. - Sewer Division

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Approve the Consent Agenda as Presented, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

ITEM #3 Withdrawn

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Geno Zandri, Jr., 37 Hallmark Drive asked the Mayor if he agreed or disagreed with Mr. Zandri's statement that the purpose of deregulation is to eliminate monopolies and to allow the consumer the option of picking an electric supplier that offers him the cheapest rates?

Mayor Dickinson responded, some people have expressed that as the purpose but I would not agree with that purpose as being the ultimate affect of it. There are a multitude of reasons given for deregulation. I would not agree that it is going to have that affect.

Mr. Zandri stated, we will not know the outcome of it immediately but I think that the federal government's intent for deregulating the electric industry is to break up the monopolies and have the consumers have an option of picking a utility that offers them the best deal.

Mayor Dickinson asked, the federal government or state government?

Mr. Zandri stated, it is being mandated by the federal government but each state is working on their own legislation.

Mayor Dickinson responded, I don't think the federal government is mandating it, I think it is up to each state to determine whether they are going to accomplish those purposes within the boundaries of each state. I don't think the state has to adopt deregulation.

Mr. Zandri stated, I don't think it has gotten that far yet with the federal government but I think they are the ones initiating the concept.

Mayor Dickinson answered, similar to the deregulation of the telephone communication arena, I have some concerns about whether it will have a positive effect for the consumer. Large users of electricity may see some benefits but whether or not the occupant of a household will see positive changes is an open question and, if fact, at this point I would doubt it.

Mr. Zandri stated, Senator Brian McDermott is on that committee and has served representing the Town of Wallingford. He asked the Mayor, did you attend any of those meetings representing the Town?

Mayor Dickinson responded, I attended a meeting held for legislators where representatives of the various municipal electric companies presented views. The Town has been represented at other meetings by both CMEEC (CT. Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative) as well as Raymond F. Smith, Director of Public Utilities.

Mr. Zandri asked the Mayor, are you aware of the language that is in the bill that passed today as it relates to the Town of Wallingford?

Mayor Dickinson answered, I have not seen the bill. I know the Town has advocated exempting municipally-owned electric companies from mandatory deregulation.....or the effects of the bill that are geared to the investor-owned utilities.

Mr. Zandri explained that he spoke with Senator McDermott to gain an understanding of the language of the bill as it relates to Wallingford. Senator McDermott explained that Wallingford, along with other municipalities that have their own electric division, is going to be exempt from deregulation and therefore the consumers will not have a choice even if another utility comes along and offers cheaper rates than what we are paying in Wallingford, Wallingford residents and businesses will not have the option of taking advantage of that cheaper rate.

Mayor Dickinson stated, the exemption would mean that competition within Wallingford will not occur unless we decided to allow that to happen. We could allow that to happen by our own decision making. Given that we have the lowest rates in this state, it will be interesting to see how the rate structure sorts out elsewhere in the state. We can determine then whether the projections for cost savings will actually occur.

Mr. Zandri stated that he wants to make sure that the residents of this community understand how the leaders of this town are directing us. The residents will not have an option as far as deregulation is concerned.

Mayor Dickinson responded, under the law we will not be mandated. It can be a town decision and through the process of local decision making, that decision could be made to allow competition.

Mr. Zandri stated, the way it is set up now obviously, we can always opt to join the rest of the groups. I just want people to understand, as individuals and consumers, we will not have the same ability as a resident does in Cheshire, North Haven, Meriden, Hamden or Durham. We will not have the same right that they will. Personally, I feel that we are being discriminated against and I think the State is opening itself up to a class action lawsuit.

Mayor Dickinson disagreed with the statement that we don't have the right. He stated, the right is exercised in a different manner and it is a majority vote kind of right. The whole community owns the Electric Division and the whole community would participate in one way or another with the process of determining whether or not there should be competition here. There is a right, it is just a different procedure than would apply in other communities without electric divisions.

Mr. Zandri stated, a resident of Cheshire and a resident of Wallingford do not have the same rights. As a resident of Cheshire I would be able to pick and choose; as a resident of Wallingford I have to let you and the P.U.C. Commissioners make that decision for me. That is the only point that I am trying to get across. As a business person and resident of Wallingford, I personally feel that I am being discriminated against. I have made this message perfectly clear to Senator McDermott last night and I will pursue this further. This is only the first hurdle for deregulation and there are other hurdles to get over yet. I have not attended any of the public hearings to this point because I did not realize the extent of the language of this bill but I will definitely become more involved in this now, knowing how it is going to effect me, personally.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 N. Orchard Street stated, I am one of the people who have asked, why aren't the P.U.C. meetings televised. What I read in the paper, a number of times the article leads off with the cost factor as the reason they are not. I don't know what the cost factor is. What does it cost to televise a P.U.C. meeting? What does it cost, \$10,000?, \$3,000? If the cost is small then there is no reason why it should not be televised. The other excuse used is that information would have to be brought up from John Street and Cherry Street, etc. I don't believe that. We are supposed to have intelligent people running our utilities. If they have an item on the agenda they should have all the information they need with them. What does it really cost?

Mayor Dickinson responded, I can't give you that information right now, it could be developed. The issue is not solely cost. It has been expressed in terms of sufficient staffing. We are not staffed to be able to handle every meeting.

Mr. Wasilewski asked for an explanation of the term "sufficient staffing".

Mayor Dickinson answered, the adequate number of people to handle the number of meetings that are requested to be televised.

Mr. Wasilewski stated, only twenty-four meetings would be need to be televised. You have to start with some base to figure what it will cost.

Mr. Parisi stated, there is a schedule which goes beyond the P.U.C. and there is only so many people to do the work. I think it then becomes a question of what the workload is for some of the staff and are they working longer than a forty hour week.

Mayor Dickinson stated, we can develop the cost but the cost in terms of just the dollars and sense is not the entire issue. We have one full-time employee, Scott Hanley, who works significant hours above and beyond the normal work week. It is with that staffing, virtually impossible to televise every public meeting.

Mr. Wasilewski would like to see Scott Hanley, Manager of the Government Access Television Department, at a meeting to report out on the workload issue.

Mayor Dickinson stated, Mr. Hanley is not the sole person who makes the determination of what will be televised.

Mr. Parisi added, it is also up to the P.U.C. as to whether or not they want to televise their meetings. Since this issue has come out in public I, personally, have not had a great number of calls from the public telling me they want the meetings televised.

Mr. Wasilewski asked that the cost factor be figured and provided to him.

On a separate matter, Mr. Wasilewski stated that, in his opinion, the videotapes of the meetings should be kept in a library. By destroying the tapes we are destroying history. Tonight's meeting would be a good tape to save.

Mayor Dickinson responded, the matter can be looked into, however I don't think videotapes have a long life. We will be talking about significant storage area, etc.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that the reason deregulation is in limbo is due to the fact that there is a lack of serious interest on the part of federal, state and local levels, relative to doing the job the way it should be done. Everyone is going their own way resulting in organized confusion. It will go on for years, resulting in an abundance of court cases.

With regards to Item #2h on the agenda, Mr. Melillo asked, why would a transaction of this amount (\$50,000) of money be placed on the consent agenda? What is the reason for the transfer?

Thomas Myers, Comptroller explained that the appropriation of funds provides a budget source for the Water Division to pay to release water liens placed against property owners whose bills are delinquent. The property owner pays the lien fees to the Water Division and the Water Division pays the lien fee to the Town Clerk for filing a release of the lien.

Mr. Melillo next asked, what is the status of the Durham property?

Mr. Zappala explained that Durham has expressed an interest in purchasing the property as has one other local developer.

Mr. Melillo asked, can the residents of Wallingford use the land for hiking, playing ball, etc.?

Mayor Dickinson responded, so long as the area is not posted or restricted.

Mr. Melillo asked if the Comptroller had compiled the figures he has been requesting namely, the total consultant costs incurred by the Town for 1996?

Mr. Myers responded, the figures will be mailed to Mr. Melillo shortly.

Albert E. Killen, 150 Cedar Street asked, why weren't agenda Items #5 & 9 included on the consent agenda?

Mr. Parisi responded, with regards to Item #5, there is a problem with Caldor, there is a question regarding a leak that occurred and a possibility that there could be more involved in this issue. With regards to Item #9, Mr. Rys explained that it is a lease agreement that the Town has had for many years with the Masonic Temple Corporation. We felt that it should be brought out to the public because it has to do with our public parking in the Simpson Court area. The lease lapsed for some reason.

Mr. Killen stated, I have just as much interest in all the other consent items as I do in Items #5 & 9. I can't understand why the format is always the same; ninety percent of the agenda is on

consent, there is usually an executive session at the end of the meeting and if it weren't for public question and answer period you (Council) could all fall asleep and no one would notice it. I cannot understand why someone (from the Council) does not question these items. One thing the Council learns about transfers early on is, did the department head get what they asked for in the first place? Why does he need a transfer? Where is the money coming from that he is asking for it to be transferred to? A little discussion along this line would let the public know that people up there (Council) are paying attention. It would make for a more lively meeting and would appear as though we are being represented a little bit better. There are 15-20 items on the agenda of which only 5 will be discussed and debatable. There is not much discussion for this size agenda. Why can everyone go along with so many items on a consent agenda?

Mr. Parisi stated, everyone has a different way of doing things and if we are doing it a different way, that is the way it is right now. If there is a problem with what we are doing anyone is welcome to speak up and state their case. The consent agenda is done and presented as agreed and listed in the Council's meeting procedures and so far there has not been any major problem to the best of my knowledge. That is the way we are conducting business.

Mr. Killen added, things go on in the name of the government of the Town of Wallingford that would raise a person's hair but nobody catches them because no one raises the issue. You are all up there to be very inquisitive and nosy. If something comes before you, you don't have to take it at face value, poke into it.

Mr. Parisi stated, no one is shy about asking questions. They may not ask them in this forum but they could be contacting department heads during the week to ask about an item, as I do. Sometimes I am satisfied with their answer and on some occasions I go down to their office to spend more time with them as do others.

Mr. Killen asked, did the Town ever express any interest in the Carrozella property before it was purchased by the Congregational Church?

Mayor Dickinson responded, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Killen stated, it was common knowledge that it was coming on the block (for sale) and you can never buy too much property in this area for the future.

Mayor Dickinson responded, we already own one piece of property and we don't have need for another building. I didn't feel a need to purchase another piece of property. We own the Lacey Property (Prince Street) and the property next door (American Legion). I don't feel that the Town needs another property fronting Main

Street.

Mr. Killen responded, in your life time and my life time we probably won't but if you buy now you buy for the future. When the time comes when you want the property it will not be on the block. This is the kind of planning that goes into a five year capital plan.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street referred to a copy of the Town Council Meeting procedures specifically, procedure V. which states, "Any Councilman may put an item on the agenda so long as it is in writing. All items so requested must be included on the agenda." He stated that it is his understanding that some of the items that did not get to the special meeting had been requested and not included on the agenda.

Mr. Parisi responded, that is correct.

Mr. Wright stated, it further states that when the Council waives or suspends any of its rules it takes a vote of five members to do that. Did five members vote not to put these items on the agenda?

Mr. Parisi answered, no they did not.

Mr. Wright asked, why not?

Mr. Parisi answered, because it was discussed and agreed to beforehand with the person who proposed the items that we would schedule the items on meetings as they came up, two or three items per meeting as the agenda allowed.

Mr. Wright asked, as each item was presented the Councilor was told that it was not going to be on the agenda?

Mr. Parisi corrected Mr. Wright stating, the Councilor was not "told" anything. It was discussed that all of the items would not be put on at once. Two or three items would go on each agenda.

Mr. Wright stated, I understand what the outcome was. How did we get the eight or nine items piled up? It is my understanding that these items were requested over a fairly long period of time by the Councilor, Mr. Doherty.

Mr. Parisi answered, that is not my understanding. I don't think so. As items came up they have been put on but when we got to this one agenda it was a full agenda.

Mr. Doherty stated, some of these agenda items go back to a list that I started back in December. Some of these items on the agenda tonight are in a letter I submitted December 4th and I re-submitted them and added more to the list on February 1st. Some of these do

go back to December.

Mr. Parisi stated, and some were not ready for report at the time they were requested. The Quinnipiac Corridor item was delayed because Richard Doll, Traffic Maintenance Officer, indicated to me and Mr. Doherty that he was not ready for the item.

Mr. Doherty responded, with regards to the traffic item, that is correct.

Mr. Parisi stated, I don't think that anyone has not been honored in their request if that is what you are trying to get at, that is not true.

Mr. Wright next referred to a part of the meeting procedures that requires written authorization from the Comptroller stating the source from which the money is coming and to which account number the funds are being appropriated or transferred. He stated that he does not see that being done anymore.

Mr. Parisi stated that the Council was advised that they do not have to read the account numbers.

Mr. Wright asked, who advised you to do that? Is it in your procedures or isn't it?

Mr. Knight pointed out that the section Mr. Wright is referring to requires written authorization from the Comptroller. The Council does have in its back up information the written transfer form which gives authorization.

Mr. Wright stated that the account numbers used to appear on the agenda, why don't they anymore?

Mr. Parisi instructed the Council secretary to include the account numbers on the agenda from this date forward.

Mr. Wright asked, who establishes the consent agenda?

Mr. Parisi responded, I do along with Vice Chairman Rys and if another Councilor chooses to attend the agenda meetings they are welcome to. No one has ever been refused attendance.

Albert E. Killen, 150 Cedar Street stated, I asked about the surplus accounts a while back at which time Mr. Centner informed me that once Mr. Myers returned from vacation a meeting of the Finance Committee would be scheduled to discuss this among other items. Has the meeting been scheduled or held?

Mr. Centner responded, a meeting was held and publicized in accordance with our rules. Mr. Myers did attend and he did go over the entire budget. It was a well-publicized meeting. There were a number of people in attendance in the audience.

Mr. Killen stated, I read the paper from top to bottom and I must have missed it. I am not saying it was not publicized but well-publicized? I would not have missed it. Are there minutes of that meeting?

Mr. Centner responded, yes there are minutes.

Mr. Parisi directed the Council secretary to forward a copy of the minutes to Mr. Killen.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 N. Orchard Street stated, as far as a surplus goes, in reading the Mayor's budget message in 1995, if we were in debt at that time to the tune of \$42 million with a \$2.7 million surplus, we don't have a surplus. We were in debt. Every year we don't have a surplus. We are going deeper and deeper in debt. With regards to listing account numbers on the agenda, I requested that last meeting.

Mr. Parisi apologized to Mr. Wasilewski.

The Chairman declared the Public Question and Answer Period closed at this time.

ITEM #5 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,500 from Liability Insurance Acct. #925-000 to Purchase of Water Acct. #602-000 Water Division

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Centner.

Correspondence from Roger Dann, General Manager of the Water Division explained how the water consumption at the Caldor Plaza has been higher than in prior years due to a leak which occurred on one of the service lines and a change in tenants at the location. Water supplied to the location is purchased from Meriden by the Water Division and subsequently billed to the property owner. A transfer is needed to increase the account by \$1,500 to account for this matter.

Mr. Centner asked, is the service metered? Did the leak occur after the meter?

Mr. Dann responded, there are two services. The domestic service is metered, the fire service is not. There is a detector check on the fire service which would record that a flow had occurred if necessary. There is a master meter at the point where we take service from Meriden's system. That is the basis for the billing

and is also utilized for reconciling the total bills to the various tenants within the Caldor plaza.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #6 Discussion on a Proposal to Combine the Dispatching Functions of the Departments of Police and Fire Services - Mayor's Office

John Gustafson from C-Med, Douglas Dortenzio, Chief of Police Services, Wayne Lefebvre, Chief of Fire Services and Peter Struble, Deputy Fire Chief were all on hand for this topic of discussion.

Mayor Dickinson stated, the subject of combined dispatch is one that we read about now and then. Generally, when you read about it it is in the context of saving money and it is something that has been entered into in a number of communities. We take up the issue...we are really orienting ourselves to public safety and the emergency response capabilities of the Town of Wallingford. Our purpose is; one, to provide better staffing for the 911 emergency calls and address the current situation where one individual is responsible for answering all 911 calls; two, we want to allow the re-assignment of our trained firefighting and police professionals to duties more suitable for people trained as they have been; three, we would like to eliminate the need for the maintenance and operation of two dispatch centers in Wallingford, one at the Fire Department and one at the Police Department. Obviously, there is a capital cost with replacement for those centers along with the operation and maintenance costs; lastly, I am going to represent to you now that there is an increase in cost in order to accomplish what we will talk about. This is a proposal. We are looking to address the needs that I have just spoken to. I am not going to sit here, nor will anyone else, and present this as a way of saving money and we go to combined dispatch. We have spent a considerable amount of time evaluating this subject. It has been over a period of years and has taken us in a variety of directions. It is a complicated subject but we feel that we have arrived at a comprehensive proposal and invite understanding and questions on the matter.

At this point in time Deputy Chief Struble facilitated a slide presentation on the proposal to the Council and public (Appendix I).

Deputy Chief Struble next reviewed the 1997-98 Budget Comparison Fire Department Dispatching printout which compares the cost of upgrading Central Fire Headquarters vs. relocation of the service to C-Med in New Haven (Appendix II).

Mayor Dickinson pointed out that it would cost \$485,281 to maintain the 911 system and improving the dispatch center by replacing the

console and increasing the dispatch staffing. The proposal to relocate C-Med to New Haven will cost the Town \$177,091. There is a line in the C-Med proposal titled, "Police", "Capital" in the amount of \$7,250 for locating the 911 system at the Police Department. The cost for two additional dispatchers at the Police Department is also listed as \$80,000., approximately.

Deputy Chief Struble pointed out, we need to make sure that our own people are not at risk and we don't create a situation that places our own people at risk. One of the elements that has reassured administration that our people will not be placed at risk is the fact that C-Med will have four dispatchers on the first and second shifts and two on the third shifts at all times. We feel that there will be an increase in firefighter safety. Structure fires are priority incidence and priority or significant incidence that require a lot of our resources become dangerous to firefighters. C-Med will assign one dispatcher to the incident commander until the incident commander states that he feels that the scene is stabilized; the fire is under control. This we feel will probably be an improvement because there is only one dispatcher right now. That dispatcher not only has to be assigned to the incident commander and take care of the incident commander's needs but that dispatcher also has to answer any additional 911 calls that are coming in as well as monitor the radios. It is a stressful job for one person to handle. It requires a couple of sets of ears and hands in there to do the job correctly. C-Med has procedures in place. Their on-duty supervisors can call in more staff should the call volume increase to a level where they would need to increase staff.

Mayor Dickinson reminded everyone that this is in process but there are other steps to be taken. We will be bringing an agreement to the Council from C-Med which would have to be approved at some point. In addition, there are negotiations that have to occur with the various collective bargaining units. This is an informational session at this point in time.

Douglas Dortenzio, Chief of Police Services commented on the expected impact the change will have on the police department. He stated that the department currently does not get any of the number or address identifiers that are associated with 911. The department does perform computer-aided dispatching and has for the past five or six years. From the department's standpoint the transition will bring the department information which will make their operation even more efficient than it has been to the present point in time. The \$7,250 expenditure listed is the software enhancement to the existing computer-aided dispatching system which will allow the computer to transfer data from the telephone company's data banks into the department's computer system while the call is being answered so as not to waste time asking people where they are calling from with specific instructions or delay the

call for typing reasons or deal with typographical errors. The information will be read via the software bridge and its input into the system, the response and directions to cross streets, special instructions, etc., are already being polled in our system and provided to the dispatcher. Currently, that is all manual. This transition, as proposed, will result in a more efficient and effective process within the department. As far as the two civilian dispatchers are concerned, we fill in with police officers and we use a police officer on the third shift. The addition of the two proposed civilian positions allows us to enhance public safety in the Town to a greater extent than we already can. We are going to take trained police officers who are answering telephones and put them in the role of providing traditional police service. In the long term, the transition will result in substantial savings to the Town. The savings listed on the spread sheet (Appendix II) is really just a glimpse of what is to be realized over a period of time.

Mr. Centner asked the C-Med representative present, does C-Med have a systematic plan for expanding as more and more whole communities come into the system?

Mr. Gustafson responded, currently we are staffed with twelve (12) FTEs (full-time equivalents) and some part timers. That covers twenty-four hours, seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year. There are three people on days, three on evenings and two on midnight (shift). With the anticipated expansion of the service we calculate and see where the situation is and increase staffing at that point in time. Our workers are currently represented by Communication Workers of America, Local 1103 under the Municipal Employees Relations Act.

Mr. Centner asked, do you anticipate a reduction in the cost of services being given back to the communities when your economies and scale change as you grow and revise the way you provide service?

Mr. Gustafson responded, with the exception of the three towns that are currently asking for increased services (Ansonia, Wallingford and East Haven), all of the other communities will actually realize a savings in the next fiscal year over what they are paying this year partly due to a change in revenue streams in the State and partly due to the sound fiscal management of the C-Med Oversight Committee.

Mr. Centner asked, to date, have you had any problems with the C-Med service in which a user may have pushed for a liability case against C-Med?

Mr. Gustafson responded, we have had no liability cases; we have had two bills of disclosure filed for an instance in the City of

Shelton last summer. Both of those were probably filed more for the attorney who did not know how to get the freedom of information. After he filed the bills of disclosure we contacted our attorneys, he then filed a freedom of information act and we have not heard anything since. It is still a court matter at this point and Mr. Gustafson could not comment further on the matter except to say that there were no real issues for C-Med in the action. There were some issues for some of the providers that were involved in the incident but not for C-Med.

Mr. Centner was concerned with how the cost of a liability case would be shared back to the communities.

Mr. Gustafson responded, under the compact that is being considered by the Council of Governments right now, the local agreement provides for indemnification of the member towns and cities. Coverage in the amount of \$2 million is currently carried for errors and omissions for each occurrence by C-Med.

Mr. Centner stated, in reference to the spreadsheet on the dollar cost comparison, although it reflects the capital and operating costs how would it pull out year after year? Would it be operating costs only by comparison? Would it be the \$297,780. against C-Med's proposal of \$103,000.?

Wayne Lefebvre, Chief of Fire Services responded, that is correct. The capital expenditure would be a one-time deal except for general maintenance, of course.

Mr. Centner stated, we are currently somewhere in the \$51,000 to \$56,000 range for the service and we would see the increase because of the two dispatchers that would be added under the operating cost to C-Med. Would we share part of that?

Chief Lefebvre responded, that is correct. The actual amount that we are going to pay beyond the \$56,000 for dispatching service is \$9,600. The other money broken out on the spreadsheet is for equipment usage, telephone lines, etc.

Mr. Centner commented, I am very positive with any case where we have trained personnel for primary function to be returned to that function versus taking a secondary operation such as your dispatch desk. In the event the Council does go forward on this I would be very happy to see those trained individuals returned to their primary responsibilities.

Mr. Knight asked for some background on C-Med. He asked, how is it constructed, how long have they been in business?

Mr. Gustafson responded, we were founded in 1976 as a consortium between Yale New Haven Hospital and the Hospital of St. Raphael to provide regional emergency communications for EMS back in the early

days. Those two hospitals were able to get it started because of the reluctance of the commercial ambulance providers. The City of New Haven had taken over administration of the program on behalf of the other ten towns in the original area. That arrangement has continued for twenty years. The New Haven Fire Chief is the unpaid director of the service.

Mr. Knight asked, what percentage of the calls that come in to 911 now are police as opposed to medical emergencies?

Chief Lefebvre responded, the vast majority of the calls are for the police department. We had approximately 4,200 calls last year of which the police assigned 35,000 case numbers. There are seven dispatching centers in the State dispatching for seventy-one communities.

Mr. Rys stated, national standards indicate that if C-Med were to go "down" due to fire or tragedy the Town would be backing the service up with our own equipment. Do the national standards apply for the back up equipment? Is there a cost to upgrade?

Mr. Gustafson responded, that would be considered an alternate dispatch point under the standards. As an alternate dispatch point it is intended to function until the restoration of the primary dispatch point is complete. You will not invest the same amount of money in an alternate site that you would in the primary site. It does fulfill the requirements because it is considered an alternate site.

Mr. Rys stated, it has not been determined that our center is not in conformance currently.

Mayor Dickinson explained, with this proposal the Police Department would be the alternate or back up center. There would be no dispatching from the Fire Department.

Mr. Rys asked, would it take any additional funds to upgrade the Police Department center?

Mayor Dickinson responded, the issue is whether the Police Department would be an adequate back up under this proposal. If C-Med burns down the Police Department would become the back up center and we would still have the equipment in place in fire headquarters.

Chief Dortenzio stated, the entire 911 system and how we process emergency calls regardless of which service they are for are replete with redundancies. If we were to lose the entire 911 system, the telephone lines that bring the emergency calls in, they are immediately switched over to SNET (Southern New England Telephone Co.) to Cheshire. Cheshire is already pre-determined to

pick up the slack for us in the event of some extraordinary disaster which may make us incapable of handling the routine load.

Deputy Chief Struble stated, there are two issues causing confusion. There is the radio dispatching of fire and emergency medical services and there is 911 answering. The Police Department would be the primary answering point for 911. When the call was for fire or emergency medical services they would transfer the call to C-Med. If C-Med was not there the Police Department would then have to take those calls temporarily while C-Med came back on line or was re-built. The current radio that sits at Fire Headquarters would be an acceptable alternate site under the national standards. The Fire Department would keep a mobile radio with some equipment in the event that C-Med went down so that it could back itself up. The backup for the 911 itself would be the Police Department first, then to Cheshire. Mr. Gustafson is correct in stating that it would not be wise to invest large dollars into an alternate site.

Mr. Gustafson extended an invitation to the Council to visit the C-Med facility which is located in the basement of the City of New Haven Hall of Records. All of the operating equipment at the center is backed up by a 5.3 kva uninterruptable power supply with a back up on that of 250kw automatic start diesel generator with a fourteen day fuel supply. We currently have two separate United Illuminating feeds to the building from different substations and seven separate telephone cables that come into the building. We have a lot of redundancies built into the system.

Mr. Rys stated that he would like to tour the facility at a time when most of the incidences occur. He would like to see it fully staffed and how it is operating.

Chief Lefebvre stated that he will be arranging the tours. The day volume at C-Med is approximately 79 calls while the evening calls amount to approximately 59 with the lowest amount received on the midnight shift.

Mr. Parisi stated that the tours should be handled through the Council Office. The secretary can poll the Council to see what the availability is and the best time for everyone.

Mr. Renda asked the Mayor and Chief Lefebvre, have you checked other towns that are involved in this C-Med?

Chief Lefebvre responded, we conversed with the other people as part of our research.

Mr. Renda stated, I checked certain towns, East Haven being one. They seem to be up in arms in fact, they are calling for a referendum on this. They have been having serious problems with C-Med. The people I spoke with are supposed to get back to me with

a list of the problems. He went on to say that this situation reminds him of T.C.I. (cable television company) who have promised that we would get more channels, better programming, etc., for a certain amount of money. If you look closely the rates have increased steadily over the years. I am looking at the long term cost of the C-Med program. What is it going to cost us five or ten years from now? If certain towns participate and then drop out it will cost us more. I would like the figure "locked in".

Chief Lefebvre stated, I cannot see how anyone can guarantee that.

Mayor Dickinson stated, the estimate right now is that instead of a low of \$9,000 for the additional dispatching by C-Med for Wallingford it could go to a high of \$15,000 if another community does not participate, is that right Mr. Gustafson?

Mr. Gustafson responded, without running the most recent numbers, after the budget revision I could not tell you right now. I can run the numbers tomorrow. The figures could be higher.

Mayor Dickinson asked, how high? In excess of \$20,000.?

Mr. Gustafson answered, I could not tell you right now. I don't think it will be in excess of \$20,000.

Mayor Dickinson stated, naturally, we are concerned about the cost. If at some point in the future the cost becomes a factor in terms of not justifying our continued use of C-Med, the community can always revisit the subject and deal with the dispatching needs in a more cost-effective manner.

Mr. Renda stated, if it has to come back to this town at a later date, what will it cost us to upgrade the system at that time? It could cost two or three times more.

Mayor Dickinson stated, that could be but given that you would have to be replacing computers in five years anyway, you save the money in the interim. Upgrades will have to occur regardless, given changes in technologies and the fact that the machinery, itself, does not have too often a long life.

Mr. Renda stated, on the other hand in two or three years when C-Med has to upgrade their system we are going to have to contribute to that.

Mayor Dickinson agreed and stated, we would be contributing along with all of the other members of C-Med which reduces the cost to all of them. It is one dispatch center for multiple communities rather than each community having its own dispatch center which maximizes the cost in terms of equipment as well as the staffing.

Mr. Gustafson responded, the referendum in East Haven has to do with 911 and fire dispatch. It does not have to do with the membership with C-Med. East Haven would continue to be a member of C-Med even if the referendum did not pass.

Mr. Parisi stated, that is not the way that I heard it either. I heard that East Haven does not want to join C-Med.

Mr. Gustafson stated, East Haven is already a member.

Mr. Parisi responded, then they don't want to stay in it. What is it? Do they not want to stay in or what?

Mr. Gustafson responded, it is my understanding that the referendum is to ask the Town Council to keep fire and 911 dispatching in the Town of East Haven and not to join or withdraw from C-Med.

Mr. Parisi stated, doesn't that sound like they may not want to stay in?

Mr. Gustafson responded, we still have to do the EMS work for them as well. I have not seen the referendum question to know what it is.

Mr. Zappala stated that he was surprised and disappointed that Chief Lefebvre painted such a dark picture of the 911 system. He thought the system was very efficient and has been working properly.

Chief Lefebvre responded, that is not the picture I am trying to paint at all. The people who are performing the job are doing it to the best of their ability. Under the circumstances they are doing a very good job but we do recognize that it requires a staff of two and we are looking at options to enhance our ability to meet standards and make sure that there are two people awake answering your calls twenty-four hours a day. We have recognized some deficiencies that were brought to our attention by the ISO standards people and by reading the NFPA standards. We are trying to move in that direction to meet the standards in a better manner. We have looked at two ways of accomplishing that, one is the re-capitalization and replacement of all of our equipment and hiring more personnel in Wallingford and the other is capitalization to allow us to operate through the C-Med center.

Mr. Zappala stated, as the old saying goes, if it works, why fix it? It has been working, why not stay within our own town and fix what we have so it will work properly and better. I am concerned, as others are, with the response time we will get from C-Med. I don't want to place a value on that emergency. We should be inclined to get the best service for the people of Wallingford. Money should not have any bearing whatsoever. (applause)

Mayor Dickinson responded, unfortunately, dollar figures are always pertinent. I don't care what the issue is ultimately you have to justify the direction you take and the cost visited upon the public. Where there are alternatives to provide solid service even arguably better service and they cost less money, the cost of providing that in the other manner is a very justifiable part of an analysis. We are very concerned about the public interest and public safety but we can't ignore what happens when we make moves and incur costs that in the long run could have been done more effectively, more efficiently, more cost-effective by taking another tact. I disagree with Mr. Zappala that there are items where cost bears no relevance. With budgets of limited resources cost is absolutely and always will be a necessary part of decision-making.

Mr. Zappala responded, I don't doubt, Mayor, that you are very concerned about the service that we will provide to the people of Wallingford but I strongly feel that this should not be an item that we should be weighing the cost factor on. Our service has been working well we just need to update our equipment. We will not be getting service from C-Med in the future for nothing.

Mayor Dickinson answered, there is new technology out there which is geared towards large volumes of information being handled in a very effective and efficient manner. That technology is geared to regional areas. It was mentioned that Los Angeles handles the entire Los Angeles region from one dispatch center. The northeast does lag behind the rest of the country. The technology is there and has been developed to use in circumstances like this. For us to say that we need two dispatch centers for a population of 41,000 people in an area of 41 square miles, I find very hard to justify given the realities of the technology as well as costs and other factors and the need for our trained personnel to be assigned to other duties than answering phones.

Mr. Zappala asked, why have two? Why not have one good one that will serve the police and fire?

Mayor Dickinson answered, the answer to that is found in the different methodologies within police and fire departments for answering calls and dealing with a 911 incidence or emergency. As I understand it, they handle situations differently. To have one department answer for another raised questions that we did not have complete answers for. As a result in that analysis we became aware of C-Med and its track record of answering fire and emergency calls for the region and upon further review it appeared that their service meets the needs of the community, hence the proposal before the Council tonight.

Mr. Zappala stated, the statement that C-Med has trained personnel answering the calls leads me to ask, why can't we have the same

trained personnel to answer those calls in Wallingford.

Mayor Dickinson answered, as far as I know, when dispatchers answer calls at the police department, they typically don't stay on the line with incidence. That is part of the issue. With regards to the fire department, the dispatcher will stay on the line and it is more of a continuing open line scenario. There are other methodologies that are involved as well.

Chief Lefebvre stated, it is our feeling that if we were to combine dispatch centers with the same personnel that we would have to have them cut out and assigned to the police department and some to the fire department and not co-mingle because of cultural differences, work differences and that which is demanded of a fire dispatcher and that which is demanded of a police dispatcher. They are two different worlds and are difficult to blend. To satisfy both Chief Dortenzio and myself we would have to have people selected for these areas. It is an expensive operation and we can have trained personnel, it is a matter of training.

Mr. Zappala asked Mr. Gustafson, what kind of personnel do you employ to answer the calls?

Mr. Gustafson responded, they are all professional telecommunicators. They are State certified E.M.T.s, they are certified by the State as emergency telecommunicators. Their experience in handling calls is far and above those who respond at a single dispatch center. These folks have handled anything from delivering babies over the telephone to major fatal fires and mass casualty incidence in elderly highrisers. They have the training and experience that far outweighs what usually comes up at a smaller dispatch center. We are able to do our own inhouse training. We are able to contract and train our own people to do our own training inhouse which is a very difficult problem with one hundred nine (109) public safety answering points in the State. It is more cost-effective to keep people up to date and trained.

Mr. Zappala asked, do you have a franchise? Can anyone learn what those people are doing?

Mr. Gustafson responded, absolutely, anyone can learn the job.

Mr. Zappala commented, we could train our personnel to do the same job that C-Med's staff does.

Ms. Papale stated, everyone sitting on the Council and out in the public has the same concern in mind; the safety of the Town of Wallingford. I recently found out that the dispatchers at the Fire Department were trained career firefighters and it is too bad that they have staffed the dispatching function for so long. It is a waste of personnel in my mind. That change has to be made. Why

can't civilians be trained to be dispatchers? We received a handout from the Wallingford firefighters. There are a large number of them, both career and volunteer firefighters, in the audience tonight. I don't get it, we are all here for the same subject; safety first. I don't understand why the volunteers do not feel that this is the safe way to go? I hope that some of the firefighters will let us know what is on their mind so that we can understand the issue. Something is not right here. I realize that the four firefighters who will no longer dispatch will not be laid off so that is not the issue. There must be a good reason why they are all here in attendance at 8:45 p.m. on a Tuesday night when the men's UCONN game is on. I would like to hear from them. Is what we are talking about here with C-Med, is this considered privatization?

Mr. Gustafson responded, not in my opinion. We are a governmental entity. Our employees are covered by the Municipal Employees Relation Act. This is not privatization by any means.

Mr. Doherty asked, is it possible to get some State funding for the upgrading in our own firehouse?

Chief Lefebvre responded, not to my knowledge. The State's funding coming to the dispatching centers is geared toward those communities that combine their dispatching. In this current year, beginning July 1, the Town benefits by \$10,000 because we are in the C-Med compact. That goes directly to C-Med and is taken off of our bill. State funding is not earmarked for improvements to dispatching. Only after combining dispatching will the State provide funding.

Mr. Gustafson stated, each public safety answering point whether it be Wallingford, C-Med in New Haven or Bethany, etc., will receive new 911 answering equipment using State funding. That is specifically to screen...the equipment that is in the 911 center that receives the 911 call. Radio consoles, transmitters, cost of staffing, personnel, there are no funds available for any regional communities for that. In order to qualify for State funding for 911 you must have three towns or more sharing their public safety answering point. There is a five year program to phase out the twenty percent per year funding from the State entitled, "Emergency Telecommunications C-Med Credit" which will end in five years. There are also monies available for the transition grants by which towns wishing to join regional communications centers will receive funding for doing that. There is also some planning money. The only other monies out there is for the seven largest communities. Those funds are available to them for operation costs the same way that regional dispatch centers receive them. Those towns are New Haven, Hartford, New Britain, Waterbury, Bridgeport, Stamford...they received funding through the State formula. Starting June 15th everyone will see a surcharge for 911 service

on their telephone bill throughout the State and that funding stream comes from there.

Mr. Doherty stated, there are a lot of comparisons being made to Los Angeles. We have a different situation in New England with a very strong volunteer fire department tradition in this part of the country. I would assume that the L.A. fire department is comprised of regular firefighters. We have to take into account the fact that we have a large number of volunteer firefighters in this town as well. I was invited to view an exercise at Cytec some time ago, in cooperation with the Wallingford Fire Department, during which they mocked the handling of hazardous material. He asked, how does this play into C-Med? If a call comes into C-Med that there is a problem of some sort at Allegheny Ludlum or Cytec, how would C-Med handle the situation?

Mr. Gustafson responded, in our computer-aided dispatch system, each individual site that is identified by the fire department that has special hazards or special risks is identified as a separate response. When that address is entered into the system it will bring that site card up. Cytec's site card should come up with a flashing light that says there are hazardous materials on site. The site card will provide what ever information the fire department wishes C-Med to have to dispatch the resources to that location.

Chief Lefebvre added, we currently do not have this ability. With regards to volunteers, they are part of our system. They are the Wallingford Fire Department and they are not treated any differently in this fashion than anyone else now, or will they ever be. I don't understand why you would think that our having 132 volunteer firefighters in this town makes our position any different.

Mr. Parisi asked, if someone in a moment of panic said that the incident is near the general vicinity of Cytec but down by the old dump site, is that going to come up on your card file at C-Med?

Mr. Gustafson responded, if the information is there from the Fire Department. If it is not provided, then it will not be there. The caller would be queried by the dispatcher.

Mr. Parisi stated, my concern is that the system is only going to be as good as it is prepared to be. It cannot match, on occasion, local knowledge of an area.

Mr. Gustafson responded, it is the local knowledge that will supply the data for the database.

Chief Lefebvre pointed out, we will be sending the information to

C-Med to use; C-Med does not run the fire ground, our commanders do on scene. They dispatch and we run the fire ground.

Mr. Doherty stated, I would like to have a dispatcher who answers the Wallingford call for if it is Cytec or Allegheny and it involves hazardous material I feel better knowing that someone like Jerry Kennedy, for instance, is answering the phone because he knows what is down there and he will dispatch the right stuff immediately. I would like that to continue. (applause)

Mr. Farrell asked, I assume this is before the Council tonight to sort of gauge how the Council, as a whole, feels about this and what direction you are going to go in. To determine whether you are going to continue with this consideration of C-Med or not or look at something else, is that correct?

Mayor Dickinson responded, no. I think at this point we have evaluated various options over the past two or more years. This is the recommendation that is before you. It is for informational purposes at this time but I think that as information comes in there will be a C-Med agreement, etc., there will be time for people to make actual judgments as to what they feel is in the interest of the community. This is an occasion where we are sharing with you what is the result of an evaluation that I believe was very thorough and will serve the community very well.

Mr. Farrell stated, if you asked me my feelings at this point, you can call me parochial if you want, but I really do feel much more comfortable with local control. I have been a recipient of the 911 services when I have had health problems. I have a lot of confidence in our people in their familiarity with the area and with the response that you get out of them. It is going to take great lengths to make me willing to hand it over to an outside entity. (applause)

Mr. Parisi asked, is this cost in the upcoming budget? When will the Council have to make a decision?

Mayor Dickinson answered, it is in consideration in the budget and components of it probably would be in the budget. The decision for actual implementation would not occur before Fall.

Mr. Parisi asked if the call that goes into C-Med is monitored by the Fire Department? Page six states that Fire Department units are under the supervision of a shift commander who worked in this field for many years. Shift commanders will monitor dispatching and have the authority to give dispatchers specific directions when necessary. Is that correct?

Chief Lefebvre responded, shift commanders are not present for all dispatches and when everyone leaves the building the dispatcher is

alone.

Deputy Chief Struble responded, what that is trying to explain is that the shift commander is present in town all the time. He is going to be hearing the dispatches coming over the radio. He has the authority to change dispatchers or alter responses if necessary.

Mr. Parisi asked, does that apply to C-Med or our own personnel?

Chief Lefebvre responded, to our own. When the service is with C-Med the shift commander has the authority to instruct C-Med dispatchers to give him certain responses.

Mr. Parisi stated, initially, I thought the dispatcher was all alone but after I have read this I have the opinion that, in fact, he has help available to him.

Chief Lefebvre answered, currently the dispatcher is in the center by himself. If the shift commander is not on the road he is available in that building and the dispatcher can communicate with him. If, however, the shift commander must respond to a call and other people in the building must also currently, our dispatcher then is alone. He will then use the shift commander in the field for advice by calling him as with the C-Med dispatchers.

Mr. Parisi stated, that back up is supplied both ways, with C-Med and with our dispatchers. It is a wash item.

Mayor Dickinson stated, there is a concern under current practice that the dispatcher who is on duty can be asleep. It should be well known by everyone that an individual assigned to answer emergency calls can be asleep and wake up to answer the call. That raises concerns about our exposure and that is where the standards become an issue. We do not feel that is a good practice.

Mr. Parisi agreed that one person on a fourteen hour shift is not a good situation. He suggested that three eight hour shifts be considered. Pertaining to the statement made during the presentation that the private fire alarm companies will report alarms directly to the C-Med center, Mr. Parisi asked, will this result in an increase in cost to the homeowners who own a private alarm system?

Mr. Gustafson responded, I would not think so.

Mr. Parisi asked, do you know?

Mr. Gustafson answered, it would basically be telling them what telephone number to call rather than.....many private alarm companies are actually monitored outside of the State in some

cases.

Mr. Parisi was concerned that there would be a cost incurred either presently or in the future by the homeowners with private alarms each time C-Med reported an alarm at a residence.

Mr. Gustafson answered, that type of public policy issue as far as fees for service from C-Med, is a matter of public policy that would have to be debated by the Mayor's and Selectmen and ultimately brought back to their communities as they saw fit.

Mr. Parisi stated, if C-Med goes down would Wallingford be dispatching for your immediate geographic area which is seven towns?

Mr. Gustafson responded, Wallingford would be responsible for Wallingford's business.

Mr. Parisi asked, at what point does the insurance company deem the back up system not feasible or up to their specifications? At which point then does the Town have to upgrade or does C-Med upgrade it for us because we are your back up?

Mr. Gustafson responded, that is a call of the ISO.

Mr. Parisi stated, that is something that I want to know. If we are close, in fact, to non-conformity now, how soon will it be that we are in total non-conformity? How can they be so selective with the conformance specifications? How can they say for three months it is o.k. but for one year it is not? How does that effect the process? You are going to have twenty people going into the Wallingford Fire Department, Highway Department and Police Department and who knows where else? How is that going to work?

Chief Lefebvre explained that Wallingford will dispatch for itself. We are not going to dispatch for seven communities.

Mr. Parisi asked, when are we not in conformance with your insurance company?

Chief Lefebvre responded, by having the two dispatch centers we are in 100% compliance. You lose quality points if you do not...which we have.

Mr. Parisi stated, at some point if we do no upgrading we are going to be in non-conformance. If C-Med went down how will you be able to act as a back up if it takes months for C-Med to come back on line?

Chief Lefebvre stated that he will check with the insurance company on this matter.

Mr. Parisi stated, C-Med answers approximately 203 calls per day while Wallingford answers approximately 12 per day, is that close? If there are four dispatchers on a shift and there is a major problem one dispatcher stays dedicated to that situation. If we had two major situations, which is possible, two dispatchers will be dedicated to a situation.

Mr. Gustafson responded, that is correct on all accounts. We would bring in additional staff as required to cover the situation as required. It takes approximately one-half hour to get the extra staff in.

Edward Bradley, 2 Hampton Trail stated that the financial aspect of this issue should be a secondary concern, not a primary one. He is concerned that there may be a delay in response time with C-Med. He recalled a personal situation when he found himself in a life and death situation at which time seconds were crucial, not minutes. After six minutes the vital organs of the body begin to experience damage when there is no oxygenated blood in circulation to them. He is concerned that emergency personnel may not respond to a medical emergency within six minutes if an emergency call is routed to New Haven and re-routed back through the system as C-Med dispatches the team. He pointed out that the initial response time is not to exceed sixty seconds. A completed receipt of alarm is within sixty seconds. He asked, is that an additional sixty seconds over and above the initial response time?

Mr. Gustafson answered, you have thirty seconds to answer 95% of the calls. The maximum amount of time allowed to answer a call is sixty seconds. The maximum amount of time allowed to dispatch equipment after determination of the phone call which frankly, in all dispatch centers is longer than a minute after you interrogate the person to find out what is wrong, confirm the address, take control of the situation....I believe the NFPA standard is longer than it should be. We are meeting and exceeding that in our area in most cases and I would expect that the Wallingford Fire Department is meeting that as far as call receipt and dispatch most of the time. That is for the first call. But if you are the second 911 caller that calls in and the dispatcher is alone and they are talking to someone else with just as critical an emergency, your call won't be answered for sixty, seventy or eighty seconds. That is the problem we face with emergency communications. For too long our dispatch centers were manned by one person.

Mr. Bradley pointed out that it could take as long as two minutes for a call to be answered. He was also concerned with the fact that the individuals answering the calls at C-Med are not as familiar with Wallingford as are the local dispatchers.

Mr. Gustafson reminded Mr. Bradley that what is most important is that the drivers of the ambulance or fire apparatus are familiar with the area you are in.

Mr. Bradley urged the Council to thoroughly investigate the matter prior to making a decision.

David Romano, 1459 Tuttle Avenue identified himself as a firefighter, paramedic, 911 dispatcher and citizen of Wallingford. He has worked together with C-Med and Mr. Gustafson for twenty years. He stated that he is concerned with the response time in the Town of Wallingford. He knows that if C-Med picks up the phone from the time Wallingford's tone goes in until we get to the call, is not going to change, that will stay the same. The concern is, in this plan we are adding an extra step to a 911 call. The Police Department has to pick up that call and transfer it to another dispatcher. By this particular point in time someone here picks up the call and dispatches firefighters right away. The time between the original phone call and the time the fire department is going out is going to increase, there is no way it can't. Secondly, all of our calls in Wallingford (4,207) go to a center where there are good people working right now to handle 74,000 calls a year. We are going to be adding our calls to their already increasing volume. Our calls are now going to be pooled in with twenty-one other towns which will decrease our level of service in this town. There was mention of ongoing evaluation of this system. Unfortunately, we deal in a business where an evaluation of something is based on whether something works or doesn't work. How many buildings have to burn and how many people have to die to make this evaluation? He referred to the handout entitled, "The Dispatch Change" (Appendix III) which includes one letter of correspondence. The reason only one letter is included is because it only takes one police officer, one firefighter, one family member; one husband, wife or daughter; to die because of a system like this to make it wrong. I don't want anyone in this town to be that one. (applause)

Richard McBride, 26 Brookvale Drive stated, I served on the Wallingford Fire Department for twenty-nine years and retired as Captain in 1991. I think, in my opinion, this is the biggest joke of the year. The 911 system that has been in operation is satisfactory. In one ten hour day Jerry Kennedy answered over two hundred forty calls during a flood. If that isn't enough to say that the system is working right I don't know what is. He asked Mr. Gustafson if the New Haven Fire Department, whose Chief is the head, belongs to C-Med?

Mr. Gustafson responded, the New Haven Fire Department is a member of the C-Med system, yes.

Mr. McBride asked, do they use you for dispatching?

Mr. Gustafson responded, they do not. They transfer calls to us for pre-routal instructions and for ambulance dispatching.

Mr. McBride stated, perhaps the reason the volunteer firefighters are in attendance tonight is because they, too, have listened to the scanners to see what type of system they have out of C-Med, especially on a Saturday night. It is unbelievable what goes over the air. (applause)

Kenneth Kreed, 71 Lewin Court stated, I am disturbed with the statement that this has been ongoing for two years. This is the first I have ever heard of it and it seems to be the same for the Council. I think that there are many in the audience that heard about it only a week ago. I can't see where making three calls will operate the system better than making two calls. Most of the time it was only one call. If we have a problem with 911 and our system why did it take two years to bring it out now rather than try and upgrade our own system? I am hoping the Council will table this until all the information is obtained. If we have problems what recourse do we have? Will we have a committee to oversee the issue? We had one for the 911 system for we had a lot of problems and through the committee we solved them. We determined what was to be done to solve the problem. It was not to be solved the way the Fire Department nor Police Department wanted it to be run. Can we do that if something happens at C-Med?

Mr. Gustafson responded, C-Med will operate under protocols provided C-Med by the Town. The Town dictates to this day how C-Med operates and the Town will continue to do so.

Mr. Kreed asked, if for any reason it doesn't happen, what will the Town's recourse be?

Mayor Dickinson stated, the problem would be brought to the attention of the community and the Fire Department and we can always look to abandon our use of the service. It would have to be dealt with on a temporary basis if there was not a permanent solution and then move to a permanent solution. The agency that would have first knowledge of the problem would be police or fire.

Mr. Kreed stated, apparently for some reason the 911 system is no sufficient now. It feels as though someone is gaining something from this.

Mayor Dickinson responded, it is not a question of it not working, the community is being served. The issue is, are we functioning in a way that best protects the public safety? That is where there are serious questions. I cannot sit here and say that I feel that a single individual sitting in a dispatch answering 911 calls best protects the public. It does not meet the standards and

raises concerns about "what ifs". We are looking to establish a better system that does not have some of the exposures that we now have.

Mr. Kreed asked, what happens if C-Med made a mistake? If they are going to get sued we are going to also. Are we responsible also?

Mayor Dickinson responded, that would be sorted out in the lawsuit. We would be added to it. C-Med could be sued now in certain circumstances for us as well because they are providing service for us right now.

Mr. Kreed stated, they provide it on a back up status. If we need additional help in medical then we call C-Med. How much equipment will the Police Department have to get to upgrade to go into the system?

Mayor Dickinson responded, approximately \$7,250.

Mr. Kreed stated, if they need that equipment can't the Council give them that money to have something for their own use?

Douglas Dortenzio, Chief of Police responded, that is determined by where the 911 equipment is located. We have the ability to "read" the subscription information into our system ever since it was first acquired. We have not taken advantage of that because the physical 911 equipment is located at the Fire Department. It needs to be located at the Police Department to realize that efficiency.

Mr. Kreed asked, what is the back up system for 911 now? Don't you have a back up panel at Police Headquarters now?

Chief Dortenzio responded, no we do not.

Mr. Kreed asked, there was supposed to be one, what happened to it?

Chief Lefebvre responded, it was never installed. There are two panels in Fire Headquarters.

Mr. Gustafson pointed out that the 911 equipment is owned and provided by the State of Connecticut and is not the personal property of any town or city in the State. The State determined how much equipment each community would get when initially put out in 1984.

Chief Dortenzio stated, of the 35,000 calls the department is taking, some of them are 911 others are routine calls. We are dependent for all our 911 calls on the one dispatcher at the Fire Department and the equipment that is associated with 911 that is present there.

Mr. Kreed stated, we as a Fire Department now cannot make that call. If someone got in the place and was mad at one of the dispatchers they could blow it up.

Chief Dortenzio stated, if you can't do that then we lose all of the police-oriented 911 calls.

Mr. Kreed answered, that was not how it was supposed to be. It was supposed to be a back up that automatically would switch over if something happened.

Chief Lefebvre responded, the Town of Cheshire is the back up. That is how the telephone company handles it.

Dave Poach, 134 Constitution Street stated, every dispatcher that dispatches at the Wallingford Fire Department is certified by the State either by grandfather clause or they have taken the eighty hour State-required course to be emergency medical dispatchers. Most of us are paramedics, EMTs, MRTs. I want all the people in Wallingford to know that we are highly trained in dispatching fire and ambulance. The Police Department has had the capabilities of a rollover screen since 911's inception. If we pick up 911 and it is for the police we hit a button and it automatically goes to the Police Department and they see what we see. They have never hooked into the system. This is the information that I have been told, if I am incorrect then I apologize. What does the standard dictate for time to answer the phone?

Mr. Gustafson responded, the standard is 95% of the time the call should be answered in 30 seconds or less.

Mr. Poach asked, what is the average time it takes to gain the information needed from a 911 call?

Mr. Gustafson answered, up to one minute.

Mr. Poach asked, when that call is transferred to a different agency is the caller talking to people again?

Mr. Gustafson responded, the way I perceive it working is the same as it works in Bethany and Seymour. As soon as the call is identified as an EMS or fire call, one button transfer is struck and comes down to C-Med for inquiry and interrogation.

Mr. Poach stated, in the Police Department there will be a 911 screen and if it has to be transferred to New Haven will there be another 911 screen?

Mr. Gustafson answered, yes.

Mr. Poach asked, we have the capability to receive the 911 at the Police Department and transfer it where they can see it at C-Med but we don't have the technology that you can have in the Wallingford Fire Department to transfer over to the Police Department? (applause)

Mr. Gustafson responded, yes, I don't know why that is the case.

Mr. Poach concluded, the number one issue is public safety and response times. Collectively, career and volunteer, I can tell you, when you have someone in town answer that phone and we dispatch the units and they are responding to the citizens of this town, we have helped the citizens deliver their babies over 911; we have helped people on respiratory arrest; we have helped people perform CPR; we have the capabilities of high call volume to call in additional dispatchers; it makes it sound as though we have one dispatcher there all the time. That is not true. We do have the capabilities to bring others in. We realize the system needs some help and we have asked in the past for additional manpower in the collective bargaining setting. Those are issues out of our control. There is a need for something better than what we have but the 911 and dispatch should stay in town. (applause)

Clinton Ross, 36 Saw Mill Drive stated, if we go into a secondary dispatch center you are going to increase the response times to calls in Wallingford. By staying where you are you are shortening the time. When the dispatcher gets the call he is in his room and dispatches. Meriden has the same situation. They went to central dispatch, the Fire Department's time decreased by going out the door because only one person handled the call, not two. In Wallingford, if they get a 911 call to the police dispatcher he will get the call...the person says his house is on fire and hangs the phone up to get out. Now the dispatcher has to call up C-Med, tell C-Med the address and asks for assistance to be sent. Now C-Med has to look it up on the C.A.D. system or card and dispatch someone else. We just lost one minute or more. As far as having firefighters as dispatcher, at the time it was a good idea but we should go to civilian dispatching. We should also go to central dispatching. Three people will be on duty twenty-four hours a day. No one will be sleeping. With regards to the dispatcher sleeping in the fire station; that person has to work a fourteen hour shift. His bed is probably located right next to the phone, not in some other room. I don't think anyone sleeps in either dispatch center with all the phone calls they are getting. Going to C-Med is a bad mistake. (applause)

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated, we will be creating another bureaucracy in the Town by approving this action. He asked the Mayor, how would you like to have the Mayor of New

Haven come to Wallingford and make these decisions for you?

Mayor Dickinson responded, I would not like that.

Mr. Melillo stated, we don't want New Haven making any decisions for us. He reminded everyone that computers across the country have malfunctioned and patients have died in hospitals across the country. Too many professional people rely on computers too much. There is no reason why the Fire and Police Departments cannot get the equipment they need to upgrade the system to keep it in Wallingford. He stated that he has read information to the effect that the 911 emergency system is being overloaded on a national, state and local level and that serious thought is being given to adding a 311 number to supplement the 911 system. He asked for comments on the idea.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street asked if Dave Poach was in the audience?

Mr. Poach identified himself to Mr. Wright and asked how he was doing?

Mr. Wright responded, very well.

Mr. Parisi interrupted the conversation informing Mr. Wright that there are people in attendance who want to speak this evening.

Mr. Wright explained, Dave Poach was in the ambulance and took care of me when I went down to St. Raphael's two weeks ago tonight!

Mr. Parisi pointed out that Mr. Poach rides in the ambulance with a lot of other people.

Mr. Wright asked, is it wrong that I should ask Dave to ....

Mr. Parisi reminded Mr. Wright once again that there are other people who are waiting to speak.

Mr. Wright relinquished the microphone.

Frank Frye, 230 Main Street, Yalesville identified himself as volunteer firefighter for the North Farms Volunteer Fire Department for eighteen years. He asked, if C-Med's dispatchers were State certified? Are they also certified as EMTs?

Mr. Gustafson responded yes to both questions.

Mr. Frye then asked, are Wallingford's dispatchers also State-certified and are they of the same State-certification as C-Med's? Do they take the same class?

Chief Lefebvre responded yes to all of the questions.

Mr. Frye asked Chief Dortenzio if his dispatchers were State-certified as well?

Chief Dortenzio responded, they are State-certified, they are not EMTs and he could not say that the certification process that the firefighters go through is the exact same one as the police go through. Most of the police department's dispatchers go through a telecommunicator course which includes access to national criminal databases both in Washington, D.C. and Hartford. It is somewhat different training.

Mr. Frye asked, it is not the same eighty hour course the Fire Department or C-Med goes through?

Chief Dortenzio responded, our courses are measured by the week and not by the day.

Mr. Frye asked, how many weeks would your course be?

Chief Dortenzio responded, eighty hours, two weeks.

Mr. Frye asked, if the Police Department were to answer 911, they would have to ascertain whether it is a police emergency or a medical emergency and without proper training on medical emergencies they may not decipher the right information, is that possible?

Chief Dortenzio responded, under the current scheme they are not going to probe the natures of the emergency beyond the type of service that is desired. The call will be transferred to avoid the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) requirement. As soon as it is determined to be an EMS call the inquiry will stop on the part of our dispatchers and the call will be transferred to C-Med.

Asst. Chief Struble clarified, the people who currently work in the 911 center are trained and qualified to be there. I never meant to represent that they were not. We are here to make a proposal that there are alternate ways to handle this and there are deficiencies that we want to bring our attention to.

Mr. Frye was concerned that a police dispatcher may incorrectly determine whether or not a person needs medical attention. If an individual calls 911 to report that they are bleeding how will the dispatcher know if that person requires medical attention or if they are bleeding as a result of a domestic dispute?

Chief Dortenzio informed Mr. Frye that the department currently performs that operation and has for a long period of time. The majority of the department's calls do not come through 911. The

department frequently gets calls on the non-emergency line for situations such as Mr. Frye described. Also for other sorts of crimes that occur where it is criminal issue and the department will be doing an investigation but there is also an injured party that is going to require an EMS response and our dispatchers do have to make that distinction, make the appropriate notification. There are many configurations for dispatch centers. There are quite a few in CT. as well as through the country that do fire and EMS dispatching all through the police department. Our current dispatchers are trained to meet our present needs. If, in fact configuration should change then the training they need to efficiently protect the interests of the people of this town will certainly be provided.

Mr. Frye asked, is there a possibility that something can be missed?

Chief Dortenzio responded, it is a possibility for either agency under any configuration, that is always a possibility.

Mr. Frye stated, I have been with the department for a good many years and the first I heard about changing the dispatching at the fire department to C-Med was when the budget came out this year with the item in the budget. There was nothing published and distributed to the volunteers. If this has been going on for two years it has been kept quite which is unfair. (applause)

Chief Lefebvre stated, it is not within Mr. Frye's purview to perform long range planning. I attended a union meeting over two years ago and discussed it with the union body. I have discussed everything that is happening with my officers regularly at staff meetings.

Wes Lube, 15 Montowese Trail stated, I have nothing but the highest regard for the services rendered to my family on three separate occasions when I have had to call 911. The third occasion was for my dad who has now passed away. On that particular occasion there was an ice storm and the dispatcher arranged for a Town highway department truck to precede the police car and ambulance in order that they can make their way to my dad's home in the west hills of Wallingford. The coordination that the dispatcher put together in a very few minutes time was very, very impressive. I don't ever remember hearing of a bad experience with anyone with the 911 system in my thirty years of residing in this town. As politicians I can promise you this, if anyone has trouble with C-Med and you are responsible for the change what ever the problem was, it will be because of C-Med. Some of you on the inside know of some of the flaws, address them for they probably do need to be addressed but do not throw the baby out with the bath water. Currently, 911 calls go directly to the Fire Department. Of those calls 4,200 were fire or medical emergencies during the

past year. If you divide 4,200 by 365 days, we are talking about 11 1/2 calls per day on average. That is slightly less than one call every two hours. These 4,200 calls were dispatched by a member of the Fire Department who knew the exact location, equipment needed and where to find that equipment not by a stranger unfamiliar with our town. The non-fire or med calls that are received are immediately routed to the Police Department. The Fire Department has one man per shift handling an average of one call every two hours. Admittedly, this is an average. There could be more during certain hours of the day than at night. They can come in bunches. It may seem to be inefficient but when we compare that idle manpower with the overload that C-Med is contending with, let's look at their comparison. It is reported that they have 74,000 emergency med calls per year. If we divide that number by 365 days we are talking about 202 calls per day. If we divide that by 24 hours it comes out to 17 calls per hour, 1 call every 3 1/2 minutes. I can hardly say hello to someone and give my name in 3 1/2 minutes particularly if I am terribly distraught because someone that I know needs attention in a hurry. We have heard that they have three dispatchers during the day and two at night. If it is true that means that each dispatcher has a new call every ten minutes. If there are four dispatchers they each receive a new call every thirteen minutes. That is hardly a comparison to one call every two hours. C-Med has 50% more manpower during the day because they experience more volume during the day. We know that during the daytime incoming calls are probably greater than one every ten minutes or thirteen minutes versus Wallingford's one every two hours. I think it is important for you to ask yourselves these questions and get the answers before you approve the change. Will the ability to serve the public be improved? What is the final upstart cost? What is C-Med's commitment to increase personnel to reflect the addition of Wallingford and reportedly, East Haven?

How many people will they have? What will the ratio be? What is the ratio that they intend to maintain? What kind of commitment are they making to you? What will be C-Med's future charges? How long are they going to continue to work and is the fee based on the number of calls? How does the charge reflect what may be a rapidly increasing volume? Will Wallingford achieve a labor savings in the process? It has been said that the three dispatchers we now have are going to be transferred to operations and therefore there will be no reduction in labor savings. As managers, do you consider the benefit gained to be cost-efficient? Does the benefit gain more than offset any increase cost or does it erase a cost-savings?  
(applause)

Steve Pollack, 47 Mellor Road, East Wallingford Volunteer Fire Department asked, how many police dispatchers are on each shift?

Chief Dortenzio responded, we have six civilian dispatchers, two on days, two on evenings and one police officer on midnights.

Mr. Pollack asked, how are they going to handle the additional workload of calls?

Chief Dortenzio responded, it is only 11 fire or EMS calls per day divided out through three shifts. I don't anticipate that the increased dispatching load will adversely effect the existing labor pool in the Police Department.

Mr. Pollack asked, who will relieve the dispatchers during their shifts? Other trained personnel?

Chief Dortenzio answered, other trainer personnel, as well as they relieve each other. They are paid for their meals for they eat in the building.

Gene Letourneau, 98 Durham Road stated, this not a "bashing" of C-Med. We recognize C-Med as a body and the job they do and we appreciate that. The way Wallingford operates with C-Med is, when the Fire Department gets a medical call we operate the ambulance. Our dispatcher sends out the ambulance to the address. When we roll out of the station we sign on with our dispatcher that we are going to that address. After that we call C-Med by another walkie-type radio in the ambulance to let them know where we are going and why. They acknowledge that. If they don't and we have time we repeat it. When we arrive we tell C-Med and our dispatcher that we have arrived at the address. When we leave for the hospital with the patient we tell our dispatcher we are going to the hospital and which hospital. We do the same to C-Med. The time that C-Med comes into play mostly for us is when the paramedic in the back with the patient has to talk to the hospital. C-Med is our link that enables us to talk to the hospital directly. That is what they really do for us. They are also a tracking service where they can keep track of where all the ambulances are, not only Wallingford but Hunter's units, American Medical Response's units out of New Haven as well. When we leave the hospital we do not talk to C-Med any longer. We talk to our dispatcher to tell him we are coming back to the station house. The big difference with this is that C-Med will be your dispatcher. If C-Med doesn't dispatch us we don't go because we won't know there is an emergency in this town. Right now if C-Med does not hear us when I tell them over the radio where I am going and I say it again and they still don't hear me, that is not a big deal to us because our dispatcher knows for they know where we are at all times. That is important to know. Yes, the system in Wallingford is not broken, but it could use a little help. We acknowledge that. Chief Lefebvre is right, I remember a couple of years ago during a chit chat he mentioned this issue to us. I do remember him saying that they were thinking of doing things with the dispatch. After that I remember another chat about remodeling and an addition was proposed for the fire house. Part of that remodeling campaign was to take the dispatch center and move it partially incorporating it into his (Chief Lefebvre's) present day office. That gave the

impression that it may be changed in location and possibly upgraded but will stay where it is (Fire Headquarters). The paid firefighters found out when the Chief held a meeting with the captains and lieutenants to hand out a copy of the proposed budget for the department. That was approximately one month ago. I thought the volunteers already knew. The only time the dispatcher is really on his own is when the station house is empty. If a call for the east side of town comes in Engine 2 which is the other pumper at Central Fire Headquarters is usually in house. If the dispatcher is in trouble he calls over and someone will run over and help him out. If we are all out of the station house during the daytime I have even heard some of the chief officers go in and help him out. We do what we have to do to help each other out. We have two consoles and we have telephones and radios. We could have four people in there if we had to. There is a lot more to it than just answering 4,200 calls per year. There are 911 hangups. When we get them we call the police to send a cruiser to verify that there is no problem. We receive administrative calls during the day at times as well even though there is a designated administrative line, we just transfer the call. It is not a problem, simply more activity. There is substantially more going on than just answering the 4,200 calls. The difference between East Haven's proposition and ours is that East Haven will lose their 911 center whereas Wallingford will assign it to the Police Department. If we tie up one of C-Med's dispatchers for our fire scene, and they have three dispatchers from which we just robbed one, they are back to where they are right now and they are still pulling all of East Haven's work in. We feel that C-Med is going to be overwhelmed and who will lose? C-Med has a CAD system, it will show more information on the screen. Why can't Wallingford have one? Is there going to be any capabilities of C-Med with regards to the fire ground?

Deputy Chief Struble responded, yes there will. If you look at the current system the fire ground or simplex frequency will be our old radio system. We have a base station in headquarters that is on the same frequency that we don't use but just monitor off of it. If you listen with your scanner it is difficult sometimes to pick up those portable radios in the field but yet if you stand in our dispatch center you can hear those portable radios. With that in mind, take that transmission which would go via phone line down to the C-Med center, you would get the same transmission in New Haven. It is not a matter of reaching New Haven with the radio transmission, it is a matter of reaching headquarters with it. They would be able to talk and be monitored.

Mr. Letourneau stated, one problem that I have with losing 911 to the police department is a delay on the Fire Department's part to respond, not because C-Med didn't send us. What I fear is something like a call coming in for a car accident. The dispatcher asks, "Is anyone hurt?" The caller responds, "I don't know." I am afraid that a police car will be dispatched to the scene to see if

someone is hurt and then calling back into headquarters upon discovering that someone is. I don't want that delay. The reason that I bring that up is because it happens. Less than two weeks ago this happened; on I-91 Southbound there is a rest area between exits fourteen and fifteen, there is a trucker that is ill. The trucker calls his place of business to say he is ill. A call comes in, not on 911 but on a seven digit number at the Wallingford Police Department. The caller announces that there is a sick person in the rest area. That is not Wallingford Police Department's jurisdiction that is State Police. We transfer it to State Police who, in turn, dispatches a cruiser to the rest area. The trooper verifies someone is sick and calls for an ambulance. Twenty minutes later the telephone rings at the Fire Department asking for an ambulance at the rest area. I realize things happen and mistakes are made but it was a mistake that should not have been made. Some people don't like seeing big red trucks with lights and sirens going down the road for it ties up traffic and creates problems in that respect. I would rather send them all and bring them back if you don't need them. I just don't want the delay. It is just one added delay.

He asked the Council to look closely at the handout from the Administration of the Wallingford Fire Department, particularly the page entitled, "CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING". Yes, it looks like this is a good thing for there are a lot of communities that signed on to it however, if you really look close you will see that they are all small towns. During the past union negotiating sessions the issue of dispatching was brought up. The Mayor mentioned that there is a bed in dispatch. Yes there is. It is right near the phone. The union did propose...we acknowledge that dispatch needs to be fixed, it could sue some fixing. The union proposed to take the bed out. The suggestion was made to set up a 911 committee to study this issue, come up with recommendations, implement something. The committee should be jointly manned with Councilmembers, Fire Department members, private citizens, Mayor's Office; get people from different facets for input. That didn't go so we dropped our proposal and they dropped their proposal. The firefighters want something done with dispatching too, but I don't think this is the answer. Let's set up a committee to study the issue. For this to be a budget item that will be acted upon in a matter of a few weeks does not leave enough time to do so. This is something that should not be rushed into. (applause)

Mr. Parisi asked that the members of the audience who were waiting to speak please bring forward new information for we are repeating a lot of the same points.

John Andrews, 1394 Durham Road, identified himself as a Wallingford Fire Department member for twenty-five years, presently holding the position of Captain. He is also a member of the labor organization representing the firefighters and a resident of Wallingford. He

has been involved throughout the years in discussions with the original 911 committee which was set up to establish guidelines for what was felt to be an extremely important issue, how the 911 system was in Wallingford. That was disbanded approximately ten to thirteen years ago under the previous administration of the Fire Department and there has been no input from that committee since that time. One of the charges put to the 911 committee was where to place that 911 center. After a great deal of research and talking with other communities it was decided to place it in the Fire Department. Those reasons were because of the Fire Department's perception of emergencies. Our emergencies are immediate, we respond to them immediately. We do not "stack" calls. The Police Department, because of their call volume, must "stack" calls. If you listen to the radio you can hear them responding to one after the other. This was well thought out and worked for approximately twenty years. We started out with the Fire Department manning it with one man. The set up was that the individual could, if there were no call volume, sleep at night. We had a tape system to record the calls. We had a PBX board initially, graduated to a Horizon system and now have a NEC telephone system. We have a tape recall system that has been updated. Our dispatching system is card files, indexing cards, exactly as they were twenty years ago. E911 was mandated by the State, was put in place with two computerized displays, Allie and Annie as they are called, and there was a third one that was supposed to go to the Wallingford Police Department when they were actually installing the advanced 911. That was cut out by a previous administration, the officers within the fire service department and the Police Department was not interested in it at that time. Two union contracts ago it was presented that we cannot operate this system with one man in 911. It is ridiculous, we do not have the coverage. That was denied at that time, we did not reach an agreement to that. The issue was revisited while negotiating the contract after that. Nothing has happened. Mr. Gustafson's system was originally set to assist in EMS dispatching. C-Med's yearly calls total 74,000 and to that they want to not only add Wallingford's 4,200 but East Haven's 911 calls which number 8,913.

Mr. Gustafson pointed out that Wallingford's 911 calls for the year number 9,979.

Mr. Andrews stated, just looking at those numbers C-Med will experience a 400% increase in the available dispatching. If you have four dispatchers as opposed to one....

Mr. Gustafson responded, a 25% increase in dispatchers, we have three on duty now.

Mr. Andrews stated, compared to our system where we have one dispatcher you have 400% more personnel than we have. With 80,000

calls a year you have a 2,000% increase in call volume running through that office. It does not work out. Their call volume will be increasing 2,000% or 500% to 1. Our call ratio is better than C-Med's ever thought of being because of the call volume. When we are figuring our increase in cost for our 911 center, we do see that Chief Dortenzio's budget is increasing \$80,000 for the two persons being added for dispatching. In the Central Fire upgrade, if you look down the Operating line it shows two firefighters, 24 hours a day a total of 8.4 firefighters. That is not actually 8.4 firefighters. It is a total increase of 4 firefighters. You will have two men on duty at each point. The total cost they show under operating line is \$297,780. That is for 8 firefighters. We are talking 4 so it should actually be \$140,000. When you put that together the Central Fire Upgrade Total including personnel and dispatch improvements itself is \$327,501 as opposed to \$177,000 for the relocation over to C-Med.

Mr. Gustafson reminded Mr. Andrews that the Fire Department's proposal is based on civilian dispatchers not on firefighter FTEs. The salaries are based on civilians.

Mr Andrews apologized for the misinterpretation. He went on to say that we have a \$10,000 increase in cost for benefits over that amount. He concluded that the primary concern is not specifically the change to C-Med or other changes for we realize that changes must be made but we are running into a problem here that we are extremely concerned over public safety and the safety of our fellow firefighters. We cannot take it lightly and have never in the past. You have a six week window by which you are being asked to fund this or not. Please look at it extremely carefully. (applause)

Timothy S. Wall, Main Street, Yalesville, you have six weeks to do your homework before making a determination. You have to understand what an incident commander is, what an MRT is, an EMT is. I know Chief Lefebvre has addressed this to you that you can go to C-Med and tour it. I highly encourage you to do so. I will offer my services to bring you there. Through the coordination of Chief Lefebvre I also encourage you to go over to 75 Masonic Avenue and be there, not just to say hello and say hi and walk through the door but to actually see a call come through and what a dispatcher has to do. I am not saying that this proposal is correct, I am endorsing saying something has to be done. (applause)

Ms. Papale asked, what the "CSP Troop" letters meant that were listed on the CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING sheet?

Chief Lefebvre responded, those are State Police troop designations. It is not information that is relevant to you.

Ms. Papale asked, do all these towns that have troop designations listed have their own police departments?

Mr. Gustafson responded, they do not. Most of the towns are served by State police resident troopers.

Ms. Papale asked, is this problem not with C-Med but with the dispatchers not wanting to see 911 go through the Police Department? Is that what this whole thing might be about? Did I misunderstand?

An unidentified dispatcher responded, our concern right now is that the Fire Department picks up 911 and dispatches the Fire Department. What is proposed is the Police Department is going to pick up 911, transfer it to another agency to, in fact, dispatch the Fire Department. There is going to be time there that is going to be increased that is not there now. It is the extra step in the loop. It is not anything about the police or C-Med picking up the phone.

Ms. Papale thanked Mr. Letourneau for bringing forth a lot of information which cleared up some of the issues for her.

Mr. Zappala stated, I am glad that we still have 911 in effect and it still works very well however, we still have someone who sleeps on the job and we must do something about that.

Mr. Parisi stated, the department heads and administration have an obligation to constantly be putting new processes and new procedures before the Council and before the public. I commend the administration; I commend the chiefs of Fire and Police and all the assistants for making what I consider a fine presentation. I want the people to understand that this is your job and this is what you are supposed to do and our job will be that we have to make a decision as to which way we want to go. It was an excellent presentation. Mr. Gustafson you have served us well in your capacity. I also want to commend the public because it was a very orderly, well-presented case for you on your side. All of you handled yourselves nicely, there was no one making any unfair accusations or throwing stones. I want to commend the public for that. It was a long session but very pleasant and very informative. It makes you proud to see that you have people who do things in a dignified, well-meaning way.

No action was taken.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Move Agenda Item #9 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

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Motion was made by Mr. Farrell to Move Agenda Items #8 & 9 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #8 Report Out by the Department of Law on all Litigation Involving the Town of Wallingford with Special Attention to Litigation Involving the Department of Police Services as Requested by Councilor David J. Doherty

Motion was made by Mr. Doherty to Hear the Report, seconded by Ms. Papale.

Mr. Doherty referred to the Department of Law Annual Report for a report out on various types of cases handled through the department.

Town Attorney, Janis M. Small first reviewed litigation pertaining to foreclosures involving the town, some of which are brought by other parties in which the Town is named as a defendant because it is either owed taxes or water/sewer, possibly even welfare liens. The cases are handled inhouse, there is no expenditure of attorneys fees outside of the Law Department. Since the Town is not the moving party, there should not be any cost incurred by the Town.

Mr. Doherty asked Atty. Small to next explain how tax appeals are handled by the Town.

Atty. Small responded, they are handled exclusively by the Law Department. They are handled by myself. The primary expense incurred in handling a tax appeal case is the hiring of an appraiser. Other administrative appeals are handled inhouse by Atty. Small as well.

Mr. Doherty asked, how are sidewalk fall downs handled?

Atty. Small responded, that would be insurance coverage and that is the general liability insurance carrier. Those matters, when put in litigation, are turned over to our insurance carrier.

Mr. Doherty asked about other personal injury matters.

Atty. Small responded, those cases would also fall within insurance coverage and are assigned outside counsel by the appropriate insurance company.

Mr. Doherty asked about property damage litigation.

Atty. Small answered, it is a general liability claim handled by insurance with no deductible.

Mr. Doherty next asked about workers compensation cases.

Atty. Small explained, such matters are handled in part by the Law Department and sometimes they are handled by...for the Board of Education sometimes they handle them themselves and sometimes Risk Management is involved...and we have, in a few cases, hired outside counsel for that.

The section of the report pertaining to closed litigation was reviewed next followed by a overview of Legal Opinions rendered by the department.

Mr. Doherty asked if the filing of 195 claims in 1996 was representative of a typical year for the Department?

Atty. Small responded that she has not compared the figures to other towns. A notice of claim is simply a letter that is required if you are going to sue us to be filed in the Town Clerk's Office.

Mr. Doherty asked for an explanation of the procedure one must follow to file a claim against the Town.

Atty. Small answered, there are statutory requirements that a person must file in order to sue the town. There are time limits required as well as specific information that must be included in the notice of claim. State statutes also set forth where the information must be filed. In order for it to be an effective claim it must be filed with the Town Clerk's Office.

Mr. Doherty next reviewed the section of the report dealing with ordinances. He asked if the Law Department researches other towns for similar ordinances?

Atty. Small responded, I ask my staff to call other towns to see if there exists a similar ordinance. If so, they request a copy of the ordinance to be sent to us. That is one of the primary tools we start from. We also have some books that have model ordinances in them.

Mr. Doherty next discussed the section of the report dealing with miscellaneous litigation followed by a review of litigation involving the Police Department.

Mr. Farrell commented, in his opinion Atty. Small does a very good job for the Town. There are other communities that have a dismal law department. We are very lucky to have a Law Department that is very on top of everything.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville requested a written report from Atty. Small listing the total dollar amount spent for outside counsel for 1996.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street asked Atty. Small to explain her position with the Town within the Law Department and whether

or not she works a specific number of hours for the Town each week. Atty. Small responded that she is the department head of the Law Department who has oversight over all attorneys of the Town. She does not work a specific amount of hours per week.

ITEM #9 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$3,000 from Professional Services/Specialists Acct. to Self-Insurance Claim Acct. - Town Attorney

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #7 Status Report Out by the Traffic Maintenance Officer on the Traffic Improvements to Hartford Turnpike, Cook Hill Road and the Wilbur Cross Highway - Areas Relating to the Oakdale Theatre Expansion Project as Requested by Councilor David J. Doherty

Since the item is a report out there was no motion made.

Mr. Doherty asked for a report out on the Quinnipiac Street Bridge project.

Richard Doll, Traffic Maintenance Officer explained that the Quinnipiac Street bridge project is almost complete at this point. The State is awaiting the opening of the asphalt plants to finish the paving work. The work should be completed by the end of April. With regards to the ramps for the Merit Parkway, that project is taking place in three phases; phase one is the road-widening, phase two is the upgrade of the traffic signals and phase three is the widening of the parkway and the bridge along with the installation of the new ramps. They have already started work out there. This project was originally a two year project when first contracted. The State now has given the contractor a much more aggressive schedule and they are expected to be out of there, 100% done by the end of November. The only thing that may hold this up and one of the problems which we are having is the moving of a few of the utility poles. The major problem is with S.N.E.T. They have gone through a major downsizing and it has been relatively hard to try and get a lot of these poles and lines moved.

Mr. Doherty asked if the highway ramp will be tied into Masonic Avenue?

Officer Doll responded, both the off and on ramps will come into alignment with Masonic Avenue at which point there will be a twenty-four hour operational traffic signal.

Traffic signalization was the next topic of discussion. An agreement has been reached with the State for the Town to take over the three intersections that will have the signalization to operate them at our advantage. Changes can be made to the signalization

from Washington Street on through the master controller in the system. The signalization is all part of the ramp project. They will be done towards the end of November. The Cook Hill Road intersection is scheduled to be completed by May 15th.

Mr. Doherty asked, what is the status of the parking lot at Oakdale?

Officer Doll answered, we have been addressing and working with Oakdale on some problems they have internally on their lot. Any impact we have on the road network starts on site. If we are not able to bring cars in and park them quick enough, that is when the traffic begins to back up. We are still working with them to resolve any remaining issues we may have.

Mr. Doherty stated that a good number of complaints have come forward regarding the pedestrian traffic on S. Turnpike Road, some walking from the restaurant, some walking down Cook Hill Road and some walking from the gravel parking lot to Oakdale. Is there some negotiations dealing with that issue?

Officer Doll responded, yes. We have made comments to Planning & Zoning that we want to see either pedestrian access on the bridge spanning Oakdale Brook or we want to see a cantilever installed on the culvert deck and a sidewalk installed on the west side of the roadway so we would mitigate anyone walking along roadside.

The topics of the flashing light on Cook Hill Road and illumination at the main entrance of the theatre were discussed next. The flashing light has been in place for thirty or more years but no one is sure how it came into existence. There seems to be a lack of adequate illumination at the entrance of the property on S. Turnpike Road.

Officer Doll next explained what relation the work had to the Quinipiac Corridor Project at Mr. Doherty's request.

No action was taken.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Move Agenda Items #11 & 12 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #11 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$15,000 from Engineering Salaries Acct. to Consulting Engineer Acct. - Engineering Department

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE: Farrell, no; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

ITEM #12 SET A PUBLIC HEARING on a Proposed Ordinance Entitled, "Demolition of Older Buildings or Structures"

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Set a Public Hearing for April 8, 1997 at 7:45 P.M., seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #10 Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(4) of the CT. General Statutes With Respect to the Purchase of Real Estate - Mayor's Office

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Enter into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Mr. Farrell.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

Present in Executive Session were all Councilors and Mayor Dickinson.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Exit the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Centner.

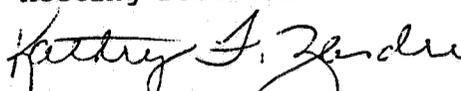
VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Mr. Knight.

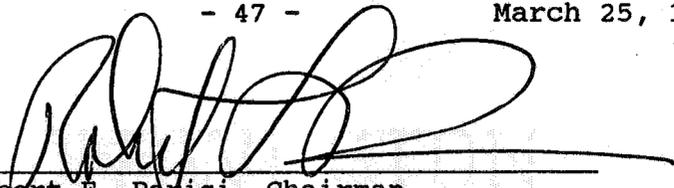
VOTE: Zappala, no; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:36 A.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

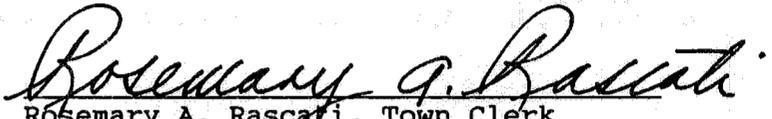
  
Kathryn F. Zandri  
Town Council Secretary

Approved by:

  
Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

5-13-97

Date

  
Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

5-13-97

Date

**WALLINGFORD FIRE  
DEPARTMENT**

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Appendix I  
Handed out  
3/25/97  
7:30 p.m.

## **911 EMERGENCY**

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Answers To Questions About Moving Fire &  
Emergency Dispatching To C-MED

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**Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency  
Dispatching To C-MED**

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the past two years there have been discussions concerning 911 dispatch issues. A proposal has been made to combine dispatch functions utilizing C-MED as the primary dispatch center for fire and emergency medical services. This proposal has raised many questions. This booklet will answer many of the commonly asked questions concerning this consolidation.

The proposed change reflects an adherence to nationally recognized standards. The following agencies were used to provide an industry standard benchmark in planning for this move:

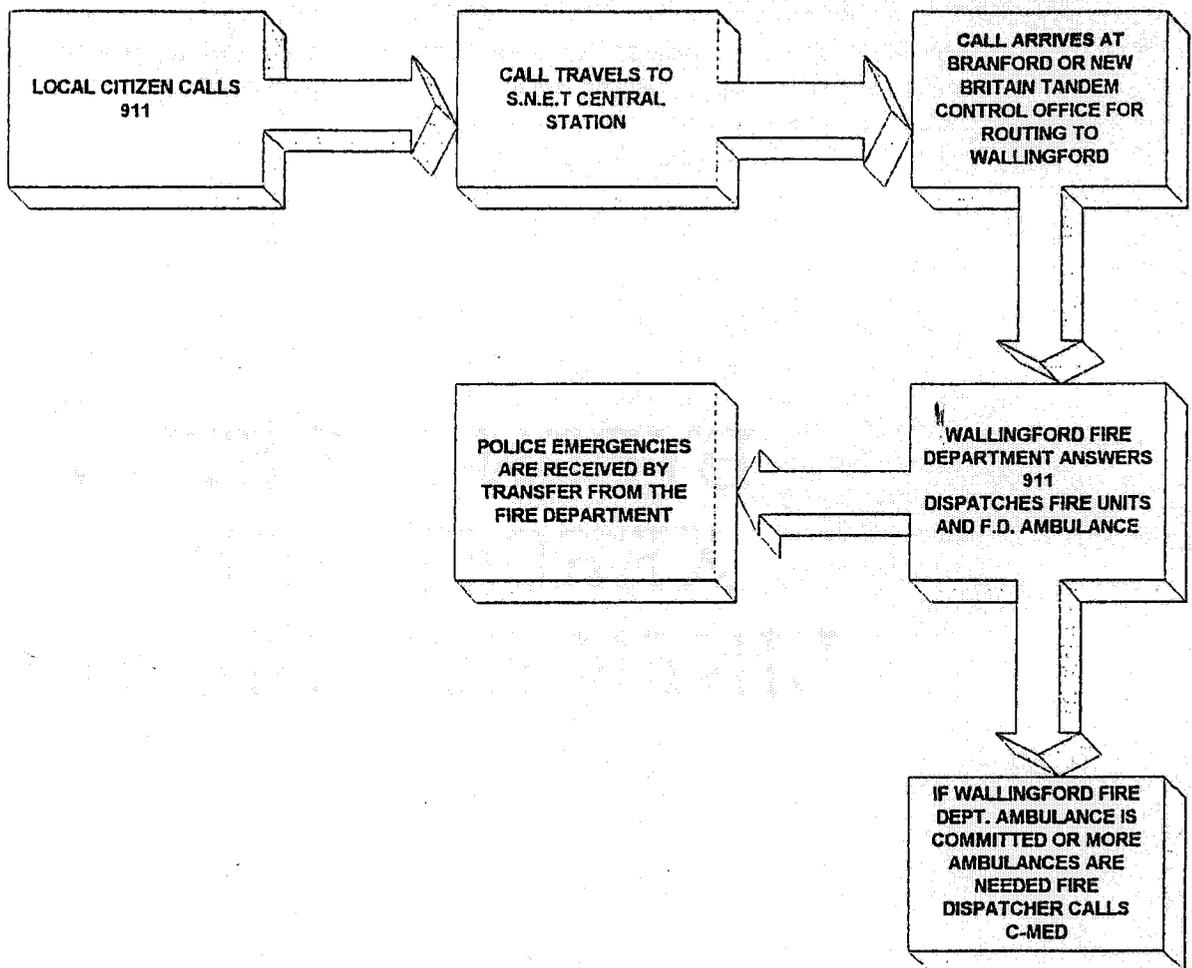
- National Fire Protection Association
- American Society For Testing And Materials
- ISO Commercial Risk Services, Inc.

These agencies do not make or enforce any laws. The standards they produce are voluntary consensus standards. These standards, however, are used to provide the standard of care in dispatching emergency services. In addition to these standards the public has come to expect a *certain level of care*. This includes pre-arrival instructions for medical emergencies and quick access to the 911 system

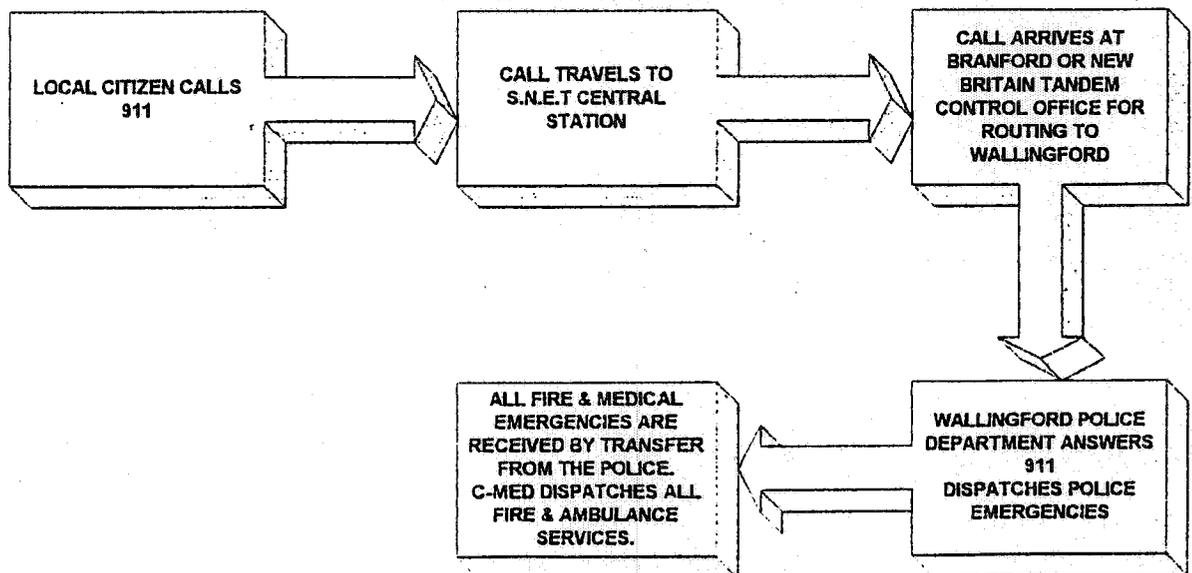
**INDEX OF ANSWERS**

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Can C-MED handle the added calls of Wallingford Fire Department ?.....	5
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**CURRENT FLOW OF A 911 CALL MADE IN WALLINGFORD**



**PROPOSED 911 CALL FLOW USING C-MED**



## Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency Dispatching To C-MED

### Will there be any delay when I call for help ?

The National Fire Protection Association Standard 1221 Public Fire Service Communication Systems requires that dispatch centers be staffed at a level to affect the prompt receipt and processing of and other requests for fire department services as follows:

1. Ninety-five percent of alarms shall be answered within 30 seconds and, in no case shall the initial operator's response to an alarm exceed 60 seconds.
2. The dispatch of the appropriate fire services shall be made within 60 seconds after the completed receipt of an emergency alarm.

The C-MED Dispatch center meets and in many cases exceeds this standard. The C-MED Center will continue to add staffing as necessary to maintain this standard. C-MED continually monitors its performance to this standard by recording its activity on computer databases. The use of computer aided dispatch at C-MED allows the dispatcher to promptly dispatch the appropriate units and provide those units with detailed locations and instructions. Volunteer units will be notified using the computer aided dispatch system. This will reduce the time it takes to notify volunteer personnel that their response is needed to the stations. Backup and additional ambulances will be dispatched faster with the C-MED center doing all dispatching.

Wallingford currently has one firefighter handling 9,958 Emergency 911 calls annually in addition to dispatching fire and emergency medical services. It is not possible at this time to meet the performance standards of N.F.P.A. 1221 without adding personnel to the dispatch center. This was documented in 1994 when ISO Commercial Risk Services evaluated Wallingford for the purposes of setting its fire insurance classification. ISO stated that for Wallingford to obtain maximum credit for dispatch services it would need to have two dispatchers on duty at all times. ISO recognizes the N.F.P.A. 1221 standard in its classification.

### Will Police Dispatchers be able to handle fire and emergency medical calls ?

The National Fire Protection Associations 1221 Public Fire Service Communication Systems Standard requires the following:

- In cases where the communication center is not the primary answering agency for fire calls, the answering agency shall transfer the call directly to the fire alarm operator and remain on the line until assured that the transfer is effected. This transfer procedure shall be used instead of relaying the information to the operator.

Wallingford Police Dispatchers are professional dispatchers. When a 911 caller requests fire or medical services, dispatchers will promptly transfer such calls directly to C-MED. To ensure quality in call handling an on-going calibration of both fire and police consistent with current practices and the use of recording equipment will be employed.

## **Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency Dispatching To C-MED**

**Will someone stay on the phone with me until help arrives ?**

C-MED follows the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard F 1258 - 90 Standard Practice for Emergency Medical Dispatch. Section 7.3.1 requires the following:

- Provide information and pre-arrival instructions to the caller. The Emergency Medical Dispatcher is in contact with the emergency response agency and must be prepared to provide emergency care instructions to callers waiting for an emergency medical response. These instructions should enable the caller to prevent or reduce further injury to a victim and to do as much as possible under the circumstances to intervene in any life threatening situation that exists.

Emergency Medical Care should begin the moment 911 is called. C-MED staff are all State of Connecticut Certified Emergency Medical Technicians trained as emergency dispatchers. Clear, concise, and accurate directions will be given to callers when required to deal with life threatening emergencies such as a child not breathing or a spouse having a heart attack. While Wallingford Fire Department maintains an average response time of 5 minutes or less, this can seem like an hour if you do not know what to do.

Currently in Wallingford, dispatchers have great difficulties staying on the line with a caller. Many times the fire dispatcher is alone and must turn his attention to other calls. The Fire Department has looked at several systems for providing this service on a regular basis, however this service cannot be provided on a routine basis without more staff in the dispatch center. This proposal will eliminate this situation.

**Can C-MED handle the added calls of Wallingford Fire Department ?**

C-MED staffs to the performance standards of N.F.P.A. 1221 Section 2-1.8.1.1 People familiar with C-MED know that the primary C-MED radio channel is very busy. C-MED managers have said for some time that they would like to expand or alter their primary radio channel to reduce the congestion, however, this has not been financially possible to this point. Wallingford Fire Department would maintain its own licensed radio channel, therefore, not competing for time on the traditional C-MED channels. No other agency would share Wallingford's radio channel. Regardless of the activity levels on the traditional C-MED channels, Wallingford would gain access to the dispatchers when calling. This would also eliminate the current requirement for the fire department ambulance to communicate both with C-MED and the Wallingford Fire Dept. dispatchers.

## Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency Dispatching To C-MED

### How will people in New Haven know where anything is in Wallingford ?

Computer Aided Dispatching will allow dispatchers to determine the appropriate units to respond and provide critical points of reference for those units such as:

- Closest intersections
- Street numbering changes
- Closed streets
- Fire Hydrant locations
- Special occupancy circumstances

The C-MED computer aided dispatch system will be kept up to date with timely information forwarded from the fire department. A manual system will be kept as a back up in the event of a computer failure. Fire Department units are under the supervision of a Shift Commander who has worked in this community for many years. Shift Commanders will monitor dispatching and have the authority to give dispatchers specific directions when necessary. A Chief Fire Officer is also on call 24 hours per day to provide direction to the dispatchers should questions arise.

Currently Wallingford Fire Department performs all dispatching using a manual card system. Computer Aided Dispatching systems automatically look up the callers address when a 911 call is received. This will save precious time when a call is received. To add this feature in Wallingford, a Computer Aided Dispatch system would have to be purchased. The Wallingford Police currently use computer aided dispatch for police services.

### Is any other community using C-MED to dispatch fire units ?

Yes, there are currently a total five agencies using C-MED for primary dispatching services:

- Seymour FD- Ambulance
- Ansonia Ambulance
- Valley Emergency Medical Services
- Madison Ambulance
- Bethany Fire Department

C-MED has demonstrated on several occasions, its ability to dispatch and handle large scale fires. Bethany has been utilizing this service since 1986 with no significant complaints to C-MED concerning service.

In addition, there are currently seven regional dispatch centers in the State of Connecticut serving seventy-one communities. (list attached)

## **Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency Dispatching To C-MED**

### **What happens if I call the fire department non-emergency number ?**

During business hours this number will be answered at the fire department. At night or on weekends C-MED will answer the phone and direct the call to the appropriate location. If an emergency call is made to this number there will always be someone there to transfer the call to the dispatch center. The Shift Commander will have an office phone that firefighters can call directly for routine scheduling and other business. Private fire alarm companies will report alarms directly to the C-MED Center.

### **How will the fire department radios reach to New Haven ?**

All communications equipment will be in compliance with N.F.P.A. 1221 Public Fire Service Communication Systems and N.F.P.A. 297 Principle and Practices for Communications Systems. A comprehensive diagram has been attached at the end of this document to explain the communications system. The communication system will utilize existing radio equipment at Fire Headquarters. This equipment will remain at Fire Headquarters and will be connected to C-MED utilizing supervised phone lines. This will allow C-MED to broadcast and receive radio transmissions of the same quality we currently have in place. These phone lines will be backed up with radio transmitters in the event of a phone line failure or main radio failure. C-MED also has the ability to talk statewide with other emergency dispatch centers.

### **What happens if the C-MED Dispatch Center burns down ?**

N.F.P.A. 1221 requires that alternate communication facilities be maintained. This standard requires such facilities to be geographically separated from the primary communication center at a distance satisfactory to ensure the viability of the alternate facility concept. The current dispatch area in Wallingford will serve as an alternate communication facility in the unlikely event C-MED cannot provide service. This can be accomplished with minimal expense since it will only serve as a temporary backup site. Wallingford currently does not have this capability.

### **Why don't we just hire more dispatchers in Wallingford ?**

The additional annual cost of adding dispatchers to the fire department is \$297,780 while the additional annual C-MED cost \$23,420. Because the C-MED dispatchers are used for providing services to other communities Wallingford does not have to pay their full cost. We only incur the direct cost of equipment and personnel used to provide service to Wallingford. We also reduce our capital liabilities because C-MED has the dispatching hardware already in place. Capital estimates to bring Wallingford's dispatch center up to standard would be \$187,501 while C-MED can provide the same standard for a capital cost of \$66,421.

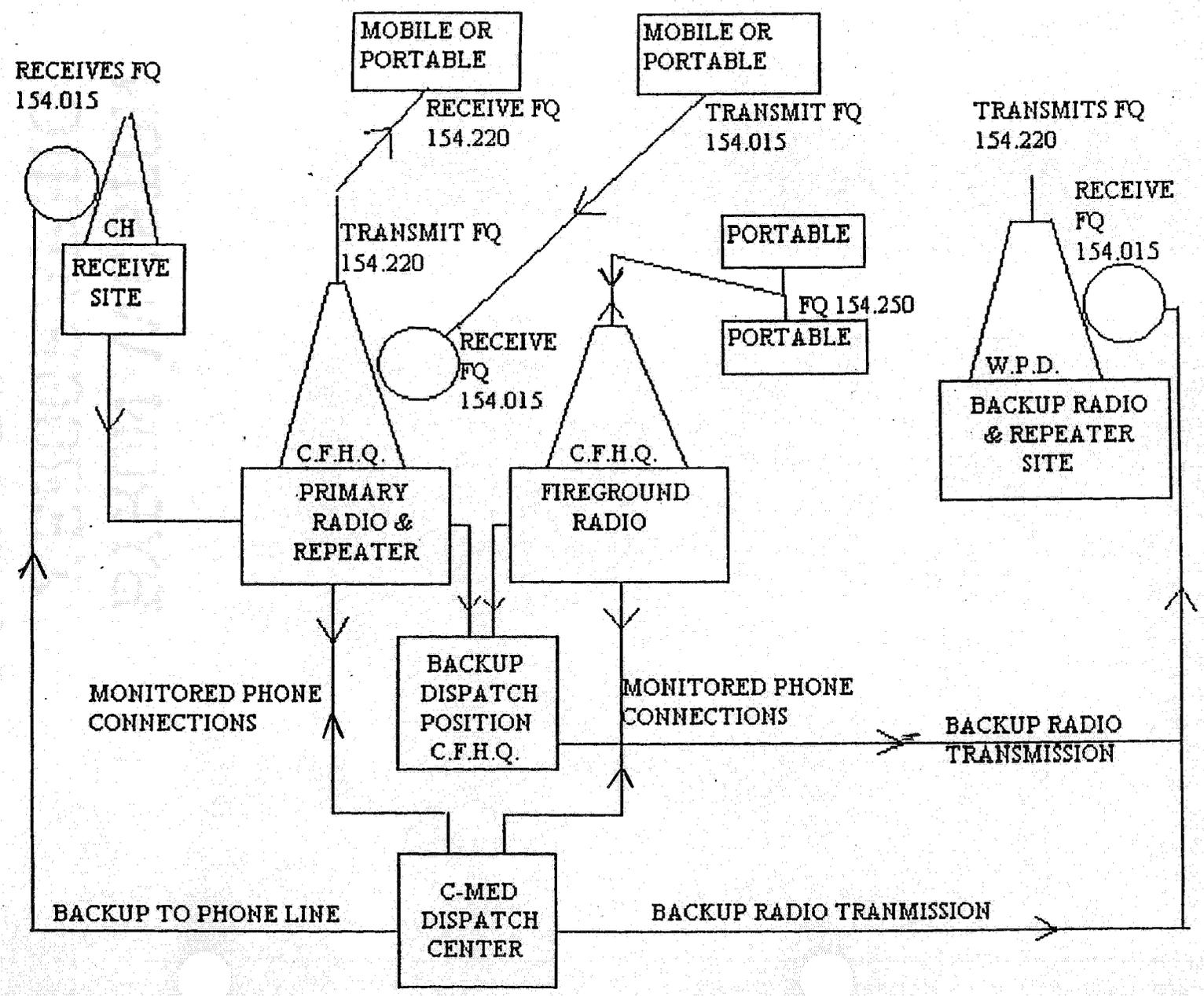
**Answers To Questions About Moving Fire & Emergency  
Dispatching To C-MED**

**Will our firefighters be at risk without their own dispatch center ?**

C-MED will have four dispatchers on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> shift and two on the 3<sup>rd</sup> shift. This will result in an increase in firefighter safety through added support from dispatchers to assist in tactical operations. During structure fires or priority incidents, C-MED will assign one dispatcher to the Incident Commander until such incident is stabilized. This dispatcher will monitor all Wallingford radio frequencies and make phone calls as needed for the Incident Commander. C-MED has procedures in place to increase staffing when call volume requires more personnel. Currently in Wallingford the dispatcher must assist the Incident Commander, answer 911, answer routine calls, and listen to the Wallingford radio frequencies alone.

**Are four firefighters going to be laid off?**

No, the Fire Chief has maintained for several years that an additional firefighter is needed on the ladder truck. This move would simply allow the Chief to put these highly trained firefighters in a position where they will now fight fires instead of staying back to dispatch. The Mayor has agreed to this concept and will budget all current positions for the fire department.



CENTRALIZED DISPATCHING

TOLLAND COUNTY MUTUAL AID

Andover	CSP Troop K
Ashford	CSP Troop C
Bolton	CSP Troop K
Coventry	CSP Troop K
Ellington	CSP Troop C
Mansfield	CSP Troop C
Somers	CSP Troop C
Stafford	CSP Troop C
Tolland	CSP Troop C
Union	CSP Troop C
Willington	CSP Troop C

Total: 11

VALLEY SHORE ECC

Durham	CSP Troop F
Haddam	CSP Troop F
Essex	CSP Troop F
Killingworth	CSP Troop F
Lyme	CSP Troop F
Middlefield	CSP Troop F
Old Lyme	CSP Troop F
Westbrook	CSP Troop F

Total: 8

NORTHWEST CT PUBLIC SAFETY

Beason Falls	CSP Troop I
Bethlehem	CSP Troop L
Oxford	CSP Troop A
Prospect	CSP Troop I
Woodbury	CSP Troop L

Total: 5

QUINEBAUG VALLEY ECC

Brooklyn	CSP Troop D
Canterbury	CSP Troop D
Eastford	CSP Troop D
Griswold	CSP Troop E
Killingly	CSP Troop D
Plainfield	CSP Troop D
Pomfret	CSP Troop D
Sterling	CSP Troop D
Thompson	CSP Troop D
Voluntown	CSP Troop E
Woodstock	CSP Troop D

Total: 11

LITCHFIELD COUNTY DISPATCH

Barkhamsted	CSP Troop B
Bridgewater	CSP Troop A
Canaan	CSP Troop B
Colebrook	CSP Troop B
Cornwall	CSP Troop B
Harwinton	CSP Troop L
Goshen	CSP Troop B
Kent	CSP Troop L
Litchfield	CSP Troop L
Morris	CSP Troop L
New Hartford	CSP Troop B
Norfolk	CSP Troop B
No. Canaan	CSP Troop B
Roxbury	CSP Troop A
Salisbury	CSP Troop B
Sharon	CSP Troop B
Warren	CSP Troop L
Washington	CSP Troop L
Hartland (West)	CSP Troop B

Total: 19

COLCHESTER ECC

Salem	CSP Troop K
Colchester	CSP Troop K
East Haddam	CSP Troop K
East Hampton	CSP Troop K
Haddam Neck	CSP Troop K
Hebron	CSP Troop K
Marlborough	CSP Troop K

Total: 7

WILLIMANTIC SWITCHBOARD

Chaplin	CSP Troop D
Columbia	CSP Troop K
Franklin	CSP Troop K
Lebanon	CSP Troop K
Lisbon	CSP Troop E
Scotland	CSP Troop D
Hampton	CSP Troop D
Sprague	CSP Troop D
Windham	CSP Troop K
Bozrah	CSP Troop K

Total: 10

**1997-98 BUDGET COMPARISON  
FIRE DEPARTMENT DISPATCHING**

**CENTRAL FIRE  
UPGRADE**

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**  
 2 POSITION CONSOLE  
     \$120,501  
 ELECTRICAL WORK      \$ 5,000  
 CONSTRUCTION         \$ 20,000  
 VOICE/RADIO RECORDER \$ 20,000  
 UNINTERRUPTED POWER \$ 9,000  
 COMPUTER AIDED        \$ 13,000  
 DISPATCH               \$187,501

**OPERATING LINE**  
 2- FTE's 24HRS/DAY = A TOTAL OF  
 8.4 FTE's NEEDED. ANNUAL COST  
 OF FTE IS \$35,450<sup>1</sup>

**TOTAL COST                   \$297,780**

**1ST YEAR TOTAL COST  
CAPITAL AND LINE:         \$485,281**

**RELOCATION TO C-MED  
NEW HAVEN**

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**  
 FIRE DEPT WATCH AREA \$ 5,000  
 PHONE LINE INSTALLATION:  
     RADIO                 \$ 1,221  
     ALARM                \$ 1,000  
 C-MED EQUIPMENT  
     ANTENNA COMBINER \$ 8,000  
     COMPARITER         \$ 8,000  
     CONTROLLER         \$ 5,000  
 E-911:  
     PSAP RELOCATION     \$ 3,700  
     TANDEM UPGRADE    \$15,000  
 RADIO ALARM             \$14,500  
 DATA MANAGEMENT     \$ 5,000  
                               \$66,421

**OPERATING LINE**  
 PHONE CIRCUITS:  
     RADIO                 \$ 4,716  
     ALARM                \$ 4,704  
 C-MED OPERATING        \$14,000  
                               \$23,420

**POLICE**  
  
**CAPITAL**  
 E-911                     \$ 7,250

**OPERATING**  
 2 DISPATCHERS WITH  
 BENEFITS APPROX  
 \$40,000 EACH            \$80,000

**1ST YEAR TOTAL COST  
CAPITAL AND LINE:         \$177,091**

<sup>1</sup> FIGURE BASED ON CIVILIAN  
DISPATCHERS USED AT C-MED

<b>1997-98 BUDGET COMPARISON FIRE DEPARTMENT DISPATCHING</b>
--

**CENTRAL FIRE  
UPGRADE**

<u>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</u>	
2 POSITION CONSOLE	\$120,501
ELECTRICAL WORK	\$ 5,000
CONSTRUCTION	\$ 20,000
VOICE/RADIO RECORDER	\$ 20,000
UNINTERRUPTED POWER	\$ 9,000
COMPUTER AIDED DISPATCH	\$ 13,000
	<u>\$187,501</u>

OPERATING LINE

2- FTE's 24HRS/DAY = A TOTAL OF 8.4  
FTE's NEEDED. ANNUAL COST OF FTE  
IS \$35,450<sup>1</sup>

TOTAL COST	\$297,780
------------	-----------

1ST YEAR TOTAL COST CAPITAL AND LINE:	\$485,281
--	-----------

<sup>1</sup> FIGURE BASED ON CIVILIAN  
DISPATCHERS USED AT C-MED

**RELOCATION TO C-MED  
NEW HAVEN**

<u>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS</u>	
FIRE DEPT WATCH AREA	\$ 5,000
PHONE LINE INSTALLATION:	
RADIO	\$ 1,221
ALARM	\$ 1,000
C-MED EQUIPMENT	
ANTENNA COMBINER	\$ 8,000
COMPARITER	\$ 8,000
CONTROLLER	\$ 5,000
E-911:	
PSAP RELOCATION	\$ 3,700
TANDEM UPGRADE	\$ 15,000
RADIO ALARM	\$14,500
DATA MANAGEMENT	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
	\$66,421

OPERATING LINE

PHONE CIRCUITS:	
RADIO	\$ 4,716
ALARM	\$ 4,704
C-MED OPERATING	<u>\$ 14,000</u>
	\$ 23,420

POLICE

CAPITAL

E-911	\$ 7,250
-------	----------

OPERATING

2 DISPATCHERS WITH BENEFITS APPROX \$40,000 EACH	\$ 80,000
--	-----------

1ST YEAR TOTAL COST CAPITAL AND LINE:	\$177,091
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## The Dispatch Change Consider This...

WALLINGFORD's Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are now dispatched from Central Fire Headquarters in Wallingford. *The Change* will move this operation to CMED in New Haven.

Now, a Career Firefighter, trained to at least the State standards of Firefighter; Emergency Dispatch Communications; MRT, EMT, or Paramedic; and Hazardous Materials Operations, handles all 911 calls and dispatches Fire and EMS units. *The Change* will leave the dispatching of *your* Fire and EMS to dispatchers trained as EMTs and in Emergency Dispatch Communications.

WALLINGFORD Fire Department Dispatchers, deploy Fire and EMS units *specifically* for Wallingford. *The Change* would incorporate the Fire and EMS needs for *our* community with those of 21 other communities serviced by CMED.

WALLINGFORD Fire Department Dispatchers handle call backs when extra personnel are needed at fires and other emergencies, notification of other emergency response resources, monitor *ALL* Fire and EMS communications for Wallingford, there is a great deal of interaction at an emergency call.

# The Dispatch Change

## Consider This...

**WALLINGFORD's current Call Volume is 4207 Fire and EMS calls per year – 12 per day average.**

**CMED's current Call Volume is 74,199 calls per year – 203 per day average.**

**WALLINGFORD's Fire and EMS Response time from receipt of a 911 call, to assistance arriving on scene is under 10 minutes average. Consider the increase response time from *The Change*.**

**WALLINGFORD will only have 1 vote out of 21 with the governing council at CMED.**

**There is no mandated cap on how large a *regional* dispatch center like CMED, can grow.**

**WALLINGFORD has the ability to *upgrade* the Fire Department 911 Center, and is eligible for State Funds. State funding for 911 centers from the telephone charge will end after 5 years.**

**CMED has made documented errors.**

**If you have a scanner... listen for yourself...**

**CMED – 462.975**

**Wallingford Fire – 154.220**

*Wallingford Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 1326  
Concerned for a Safer Wallingford*



**AMERICAN MEDICAL RESPONSE OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

New Haven Ambulance Service

Bridgeport Ambulance Service

April 24, 1995

John Gustafson, Supervisor  
CMED - New Haven  
P. O. Box 374  
New Haven, CT 06502

I am in receipt of your letter dated April 17, 1995 regarding the transmission of "animal sounds" over the Med 10, West Rock Tower. While I understand C-MED's position, I also support the concern of the crews regarding the disabling of the repeater. I will be following up the incident with our personnel in an attempt to identify the parties involved (although I am not overly confident we will be able to identify the person(s) involved in the transmission). I have advised our Supervisory personnel of the situation and have asked for their assistance. Please be advised that this is not an AMR-CT issue only.

I anxiously look forward to the day that this will no longer be an issue, as I know you do.

On a separate matter:

Would you please look into a call at 111 Concord Street in the City of New Haven that occurred on April 19, 1995 at approximately 0752 hours. The call was for shortness of breath/difficulty breathing. From all indications there appears to have been a significant delay in AMR-CT receiving the request to send an ambulance.

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the delays that are occurring in notifying AMR-CT of requests for service. This issue directly effects public safety and the EMS community/public perception of ambulance response time reliability and what bothers me more is that I cannot control the relay of this information.

Thank you for your help in this matter, and if you have any questions feel free to give me a call.

Sincerely,



Daniel W. O'Brien  
Vice President of Operations

cc: Robert P. LaTorraca  
Phil Coco

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