

**EAST HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2014**

In accordance with Chapter III, Section 6 of the East Haven Town Charter, the East Haven Town Council Hearing Committee held a public hearing meeting Tuesday, August 5, 2014, at 7:00PM at the East Haven Senior Center, 91 Taylor Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Chairman Richard Anania calls the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**Item #1**

Roll Call for Hearing Committee - 14 present – 1 absent (Riolino).  
A quorum is present.

**Item #2**

To conduct Public Hearing #1 regarding “AN ORDINANCE MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$1,225,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND EQUIPPING OF A PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,225,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE.”

- Mayor Joseph Maturo Jr. addresses the Council- he thanks them for the opportunity to speak. He would like to introduce the people with him tonight and the people who partook in committee meetings to facilitate the dispatch center. He states that the people he will be naming are well respected in the community; they do this for a living and are paid professionals. He names Finance Director Paul Rizza, Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Licata, Fire Chief Doug Jackson, Deputy Police Chief Ed Lennon, Attorney Frank Kolb, Chief Brent Larrabee who is not present, Assistant Director of Administration/Management Frank Gentile and Head of Engineering/Public Works Kevin White. He says he has a prepared statement and hopefully he will be able to answer some of the questions he has been asked publically and by the Town Council members on how we got here, why we got here and why it is so important. He wants to recognize the group of individuals who he named for working tirelessly over the last 6 months at least.
  - **Mayor Maturo's full statement is attached.** In conclusion, he adds that he believes this will be one of the greatest things we do in the next 10-20 years. He says he was on the Fire Department when they brought civilian

dispatchers there and as firemen they thought it was the best thing. They were trained professionals who couldn't wait to do their job; some people grew up wanting to put on the uniform and fight fires as he believes most Police Officers do too. There is nothing worse than sitting in the dispatch center alone while something is happening in Town. There are people on the Council who know this feeling. He assumes that 99% of the officers who are paid/trained professionals feel the same way; they don't want to be sitting and answering the phone and would much rather be out there supporting their brothers and sisters on the streets and protecting the Town of East Haven. He urges the Council to come on board and help support what he believes is the best thing since 24/7 which started saving lives that same day. This could start saving police lives by allowing another person to go along on the emergency situations and also will save any of our lives. He adds that Kevin White did a superb job in helping us save money by designing the new dispatch center. He and the committee team welcome any questions.

Council comment:

- Councilman Nicholas Palladino states that the Mayor's speech was very nice and he agrees with 99% of what was said. The one problem he has is the Police Chief contradicted what the Mayor said that it would guarantee another body on the road. He states that he joined the Police Department in 1980 and retired in 2007. In 1980 there were four cars on the road, when he retired in 2007 there were 4 cars, his son is a police officer in 2014 and there are 4 cars on the road. It's great to have the technology but we need some bodies to dispatch. He thinks this is great but we need cops on the road. The Chief told him this does not guarantee more cops on the road.
- Mayor Maturo states that the Chief is not here and he cannot speak for him. He adds that the Chief never expressed that to him, the Deputy Chief is here if he wants to address it he can. He adds that in approximately 2008 or 2009 there was a professional surveyor who went over our community and said that we have the right amount of officers for the size of our community. Also, publically he can tell everyone that this cures what is being asked for. For the first time that he can recall in probably 20 years, this puts another officer on the beat. We are taking the dispatcher who is now a sworn officer, putting the civilian dispatcher in like the other 189 Towns, and putting the officer in a patrol car. This will do exactly what Mr. Palladino is saying he wants done.
- Councilman Palladino asks Deputy Lennon to expand on it a little.
- Deputy Lennon says that the Mayor answered it pretty clearly in that they are going to take that body and put an officer on the road.

- Councilman Joseph Santino asks who will handle the walk in complaints at the Station if the dispatcher is going on the road.
- Deputy Lennon says they will still have someone there, it may be supervisory or it may be a sworn officer. Those logistics have not been worked on yet, they aren't going to shut the door and not have a sworn person there.
- Mayor Maturo says the supervisor will decide at their discretion when they can or cannot leave.
- Councilman Joseph Badamo refers to the figure of \$12,000. He has not been in to see the center but he did see pictures of it and to him, that \$12,000 is a small number. He would like to see the bill. He says they are being asked to vote on something when the money was already spent, the Council was already bypassed.
- Mayor Maturo says he will let Paul Rizza answer the money part but he takes offence to the Council saying that they were bypassed because as he stated, they voted on it in the budget that was just passed.
- Finance Director Paul Rizza states that they expended \$12,000. He adds that he has not seen the pictures but he has been in the building. There are pieces of equipment there but it is not fully functional, not all pieces are there as we speak. More importantly, the Town does have a procedure of not making partial payments for part of a system; we wait until it is fully installed, operational and accepted by the Department that has ordered the system. After the sign off from the Department head, they pay the bill. You see the equipment but it has not been paid for.
- Councilman Badamo says he believes it is more than \$12,000 worth and Mr. Rizza says he knows it is much more than that.

Public comment:

- Bill Richardson- 136 Bennett Road East Haven, CT- Mr. Richardson states that he supports the proposal and the bond package. He believes it is imperative that we improve our emergency dispatch center and bring it up to the standards such as our neighboring towns. Mayor had a very good presentation and he cited many of the benefits, he fully supports what he mentioned tonight. As far as he knows, our Town is the only one in our area that tasks its call center with police officers and not civilian dispatchers. We need state of the art equipment and this proposal will provide exactly that. This proposal solves several critical problems that we face today. We need more officers on the street, we are spending over \$1 million on overtime and if we can cut that down by adding bodies back to the Department it will do just that. By cutting down on overtime costs, we will relieve our budget of fiscal drain. In reading recent newspaper articles- first it was that the officers were overworked with all the overtime they must work, then weeks

later it was that the new civilian dispatchers are taking away work from the officers. He thinks this is just politics that are being played out in the press. He would like to see officers on the street protecting us and making East Haven safer. The new civilian dispatchers will be making less than the police officers which will save the Town even more money for salaries and benefits this year and in the future which the Mayor very eloquently stated. For a reasonable investment today, East Haven citizens and taxpayers will reap the benefits for years to come. This has become a political issue and that is too bad because this proposal helps everyone in the Town regardless of the political affiliation. It has become clear that since a Republican Mayor is presenting this, the Democrats feel they must oppose it. It is his sincere hope that the Democratic Town Council members have the courage to approve this plan because it is good for the Town, and not just oppose it to make a political statement. He encourages everyone on the Council, Republican and Democrat alike to vote yes to the proposal which will benefit the Town of East Haven.

- Bob Nappe- 471 North High Street, East Haven, CT- Mr. Nappe states that he is the President of Local 1662 for the East Haven Police Department and proudly an office for almost 30 years. The East Haven Police Local 1662 has some serious concerns about the new civilian dispatch program that this administration has put forth. These dispatchers were hired and are being trained as we speak; they are getting benefits and are being paid. Who hired these people? The two hiring bodies are the Police Commission and Fire Commission but he guesses the Mayor answered that question. Who's paying for this program- the Mayor answered that question also and he guesses the Police Department was a low priority. Why is there tens of thousands of dollars of electronics and equipment already at the Police Department and being installed when again no vote was taken? Are the citizens aware that millions of dollars are being spent on this program and now this administration wants to bond for money to pay it. The selling propaganda released to the public is that it will put more officers on the street and relieve the overtime issues at the Police Department, this is untrue. The overtime was created by this administration because they did not hire police officers as they left the Department. This is due to years of this administration's neglect of the Police Department. When they are at full staff, overtime will correct itself. A full staff is just replacing what they lost. They have not gained a man since this administration over the last 14 years. He won't state the numbers because the bad guys shouldn't know their numbers. Another untruth is that the civilian dispatch program will put officers on the road, this also is false. When the Union negotiating team asked the Town if that dispatch officer will be on the road the answer he quotes is "we cannot commit to that". The reasons the Town gave to the people of East Haven for this civilian dispatch program are not true. Years

ago the Town and the Union signed a Memorandum of Understanding that states that if the Town does intend to employ civilian dispatchers in the Police Department, that the Union will be provided 180 day notice and will engage in good faith negotiations of the impact of such change and that the Town will be allowed to employ civilian dispatchers pending the resolution of the impact thereof by arbitration. This also has not been done. The reason the Town gave when asked was that they felt there was no impact on the Police Officers so there is nothing to negotiate. He can assure everyone that there are many impacts to the police officers with the implementation of civilian dispatchers. For example, without permission from a ranking officer, officers are not even allowed in their own control room of their own Police Department, it was to minimize contact with the new dispatchers. Officers are not even allowed to talk to the new dispatchers, supervisors are unsure of their role in regards to the civilian dispatchers, officers are not sure what to train the dispatchers even though they are ordered to do so. There is no lesson plan, no guidelines. All of this could have been avoided if the Town negotiated with the Union per the MOU that they signed. He is positive that a settlement would have been agreed upon by both, instead the Town elected to employ forward with no concern of the officers or any input from the citizens. Meetings have been conducted for several months planning this program; the meetings were conducted by high ranking officials from police and fire including town administrators and finance. Not one union official from the Police Department or the Fire Department was invited to any of these meetings. So we have 6 new dispatchers being paid with benefits, currently employed and going through training at the Police Department. We have a new dispatch room with electronics, none of which the cost was known to the citizens. We have an administration that lies to the public and tells them this will all cut overtime at the Police station. The Police Union holds no ill will towards the employees of this dispatch program, it is only the dishonesty and reprehensible way the Town engaged this program. In closing there is the fact that in all the years the East Haven Police Department has been dispatching on their own, never has there been an issue. Why now is there such an urgency to replace them with civilians? The East Haven Police Union and members of the Department have and will always conduct with the best interest of the citizens. Is this the way elected officials should conduct business. They urge the Council to make an informed decision with this put before them, do you want officers at the station when you come there or call or don't you.

- Chairman Anania says in regards to the overtime issue, he sat on the Council along with Councilman Mckay with the previous administration and there was an overtime issue then. This administration did not start the overtime issue, it was in the past and it came to them with the previous administration to approve

overtime in the Police Department. It is an ongoing issue, it has been there and they are trying to correct it.

- Bob Fox- 180 Coe Ave, East Haven CT-Mr. Fox says most of his questions have been answered but he has two questions. The Mayor said the dispatchers will be getting \$23 per hour without benefits, are their benefits going to be the same as the officers?
- Mr. Rizza says the \$23 is their hourly rate, salary only versus \$46 per hour for the police officers. The benefits will average about the same, there will be medical benefits and pension benefits as police and fire have. Some of the pension benefits are based on the dollars per hour. Roughly, for policemen it is 16% of their wage that gets sent to the State as a pension contribution. For the dispatcher, the 16% is at a lower per hour rate so there will be two areas of savings. The medical will basically be the same cost.
- Mr. Fox says his next question is what is going to happen the first time that these dispatchers fumble the ball, something happens and we get hit for a lawsuit. Are we going to bond that out also since we have a number of lawsuits out now that we have to pay for?
- Town Attorney Joseph Zullo states that we have been with civilian dispatch for a number of years in the Fire Department and those civilian dispatchers have performed excellently, we have not had a problem with that. To the extent that litigation comes up, we will vigorously contest it but in the history dating back to Malik Jones we have only had to bond once for a police chase, which did not occur while this administration was here. He does not foresee a problem.
- Mr. Fox says but these are all new dispatchers, we are not using the same ones.
- Attorney Zullo says with all due respect, the four dispatchers currently employed will continue to be employed and now we are bringing in six new dispatchers and they will all now be trained on fire, police and medical at all the state mandated levels.
- Paul Carbo- 10 Nicholas Drive, East Haven, CT- Mr. Carbo states that he sat on the Council for two terms under two different administrations and on both administrations we had the same question about overtime as well as both departments being taxed as far as working. He thinks this would help that and would definitely benefit the Town. As we budget millions of dollars for education, which is necessary for our students, this will benefit the entire Town not just the children. This will benefit our seniors, our middle age and our children. This is something we really need to vote on and pass.
- Ed Sabatino-7 Deerfield Street, East Haven CT- Mr. Sabatino states that there is no question we need new equipment, that is undeniable. He gives credit to our dispatchers there now; we do have some of the fastest response times in the State so they have done a great job with very poor equipment. He states that he

is not adverse to a dispatch center. This is about whether or not the proper procedure was followed. He came for a lot of the budget workshops and he came to the workshop where this came up and never once did he hear a word said about \$1.2 million being bonded. It was done after the fact. Paul Rizza told him that they were taking some money from the police and some from the fire department. He asked Paul if we were going to save money and have a better system and Paul said we will save a little bit. Now we are bonding \$1.2 million. We need a lot of things and he has seen pictures and the room, the thing is done. There are at least 20 screens, carpeting, custom cabinets done, desks; they will probably need special chairs. He says he has bought a lot of computer equipment in his day and he knows the equipment in that room and the custom work that has been done is not \$12,000. The thing the Council has to think about is that they are doing this bonding after the fact. He struggles with this because he wants the dispatchers to have the best. The Town is a business, not a fraternity. The Council does not work for Town Hall, Town Hall works for the Council and the taxpayers are the ones you have to answer to. He tells them to make good decisions, the bonding will go through and the Mayor is here to make sure it happens tonight and it will. Remember if you make a lot of bad decisions, the taxpayers tend to not hire you again.

- Chairman Anania asks Mr. Rizza to reiterate about the money that has been spent.
- Mr. Rizza states that what has been spent, checks cut paid and sent to vendors for paint, carpet, etc. is \$12,000. Are there other expenses that once the system/room have been completed, tested, programs installed, etc. yes there will be other payments. He is not aware of any procedure in any municipality that they pay ahead. It doesn't make sense for the Town to pay a vendor for something that isn't operational today and we don't know when it will be operational. Once we are satisfied and the Police and Fire Chief say it is operational and everything works then the checks will be cut. Will we pay after completion, yes we will and that is the procedure that we use with every bill we pay. We don't pay in advance. All municipalities in Connecticut operate the same way.
- Councilman Santino asks what we owe for the equipment that we already received. He knows we only paid \$12,000 but what do we owe out. Did we receive any bills for all of the monitors, etc.?
- Mr. Rizza says the total project is roughly \$1,200,000. He does not have any bills; we don't pay partials so they have not sent any bills. The monitors are not operational and we have not received any bills.
- Councilman Palladino says that he is not against the dispatch center he thinks it is great. During the budget workshop he asked Mr. Rizza 5 times to explain

where this money was coming from. He says that Mr. Rizza's answer was always the same that they will talk about it at the next meeting. Next thing they know there is a budget in front of them, it was never discussed and every time he asked at workshops it wasn't said that this is the plan, this is how it will be done.

- Mr. Rizza says this is a very simple answer he hopes everyone listens to. In April, he did not have the budget of \$1.2 million. The group spent 6 months talking to vendors that are all on the State bid list, which is why it wasn't bid out. The State went out and bid this at least a year ago so all of the vendors are ready to be discussed with. It took up until about the beginning of May until he finally had a number, which totaled this \$1.2 million. We had a number of vendors; we spoke to a number of people. Our Town Engineer Kevin White did all of the engineering there which saved us at least \$100,000 because usually the engineering is at least 10% of the total project. It was a long drawn out process because there were a lot of unknowns; we didn't know if the electrical in the department needed an upgrade, new antenna, etc. Finally all of the numbers were put together.
- Councilman Palladino says so during the budget workshops, we did not have the numbers.
- Mr. Rizza says he did not know the \$1.2 million but he did know the \$518,000.
- Councilman Santino asks what if by some chance the Council voted this down, what happens to all of the equipment.
- Mr. Rizza says then it goes back.
- Mayor Maturo says if it doesn't go, the Police Chief and Fire Chief put together a bonding package for approximately \$500,000 from police and approximately \$500,000 from fire which is almost the \$1.2 million to upgrade the two centers.
- Ron Andrade- 452 Silver Sands Road, East Haven, CT- Mr. Andrade asks how much equipment is in that room in our possession. What is the dollar amount right now?
- Mr. Rizza says it would go back.
- Mr. Andrade says custom furniture would go back? Mr. Rizza says it is custom dispatch furniture.
- Mr. Andrade says so every piece of equipment would go back, except for the \$12,000 already spent, Mr. Rizza says yes.
- Dan McCann- 147 Mansfield Grove Road, East Haven, CT- Mr. McCann addresses Bob Parente, Rich Anania, Ken Mckay and Fred Parlato- he says they were his fellow Councilmembers when he was on the Council and he asked questions about overtime every budget session. He and Chief Gallo went back and forth over spending half a million dollars on overtime, and it happened every budget year. What he heard all the time from Chief Gallo was that the overtime comes from injuries, retirements, worker's comp and other functions around

town. He does not believe that the civilian dispatchers will relieve any overtime. He thinks it is a smokescreen from the Maturo administration, which is not surprising. When we talk about overtime, the truth is that officers get injured they retire and go on worker's comp. We live next to one of the most violent cities in America and we have the same resources since 1980 today. He doesn't buy that the cop coming out of the dispatch center is going to do anything more to protect the citizens of East Haven. He thinks its time we talk about the real truths of what this is all about which he is still trying to figure out. He is not against the dispatch center, he is a volunteer fireman in Town, he knows the condition of the dispatch center and they do need an upgrade. He does think the situation between the Police Department and the dispatcher's needs to be worked out. But he thinks we have to have an honest conversation with the tax payers of East Haven and the administration has to have an honest conversation with the Council because the shenanigans about overtime is garbage and nonsense. He asks the Council to think about this long and hard because there will be officers out on injury or worker's comp or who will retire. He asks Deputy Chief Lennon, in the next 12 months how many officers are going to retire from the Town of East Haven.

- Deputy Chief Lennon asks how he could know that answer.
- Councilman Palladino says to Mr. McCann that it was before 1980 that we had four cars. He says Mayor Maturo said a study was done and that the study said we were the proper size. He has not seen that; the two he saw said that we should be at 65. He would love to see the one Mayor Maturo is talking about, he has seen the other two; one done under the Maturo administration and one done under the last administration and they all had a number of 65 sworn personnel which seems about right- we have 52 or 53. The Town has grown.
- Mr. McCann says he was here in 1995 and the population has grown by at least 9,000 since then.
- Cathy Fleurant- 26 Elm Street, East Haven, CT- Ms. Fleurant says she believes under the Council's duties if the Town enters into a contract/agreement that they must approve it.
- Attorney Zullo states that contracts for professional services do not have to be approved by the Council, they can be entered into through the course of business by the Administration. Contracts involving appropriations or expenditures of sums that exceed those appropriated by the Council need to come to the Council because they need to be appropriated. It is a sometimes yes sometimes no situation.
- Ms. Fleurant says well in this situation, has the Town entered into a contract or agreement with the hardware or software agent for the equipment, which is

already in the dispatch center. Since we don't actually own it and have not received a bill for it.

- Mr. Rizza says what we did do was give them a copy of a purchase order, they were on the State contract which means the State authorities entered into a master contract which municipalities can utilize without going into their own contract.
- Ms. Fleurant says so they essentially bypassed the conditional format of signing an agreement.
- Mr. Rizza says no, the Charter allows us to utilize State contracts, ones that the State has entered into.
- Ms. Fleurant asks why we had \$518,000 in the budget to work with and yet they forged ahead hoping that somewhere along the line someone was going to pick up the tab for this dispatch center.
- Mr. Rizza says the \$518,000 was the cost of a new Department, the Department of Public Safety/Communications center. That included in the \$518,000 the salaries for dispatchers, a small amount of training and some office supplies. As he explained earlier, at the time when the budget was put together which was passed around April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the committee did not have all final figures on the cost of the equipment. Once we verified all the numbers it came out.
- Donna Richo-67 Charnes Drive, East Haven, CT- Ms. Richo states that she is not fond of central dispatch, going on her own experience having dispatched for fire in Hamden which was converted to a central dispatch. One difference she noticed is that there are two types of calls. There is the fire call where someone needs help and then there are police calls which are either a complaint or someone is in danger. She would never want to see a dispatch center that did not have PD on site. Dispatch is generally located at headquarters, its important to both Police and Fire Departments. She knows it has already been decided to have a central dispatch. The legislative Council has failed the taxpayers of East Haven when they approved that budget, every year we fail them because we increase spending but we don't go and remove something from our budgets and that has to stop. We cannot continue to spend money. There is nobody there at budget hearings, she expects to see all of these folks at the next meeting not just when it gets to the head and something is already committed to. She hopes or would like to see the \$800,000 spent on separate dispatch centers.
- Frank Gentilesco-Assistant Director of Administration/Management Town of East Haven- Mr. Gentilesco states that he was part of the planning committee who worked on putting this together for over a year now; they started meeting on combined dispatching back in last June. One thing that Officer Nappe addressed in terms of negotiations, he is correct that an MOU was created when they were in office last time which gives them the right to create civilian dispatching in the

Police Department. However he mentioned that they have not had impact negotiations. Himself, Frank Kolb and Paul Rizza are on the negotiating team for the contract as well as the Chief and Deputy Chief. They agreed to negotiate the impact of civilian dispatchers; they had a meeting along with the Union's attorney. Basically their stance at that meeting was that overtime is not a mandatory subject of bargaining. That means that in impact negotiations they can't put on the table the fact that they are losing overtime and that is why they don't want civilian dispatching. That is not a subject of bargaining. At the meetings each and every time, he asked the question, other than the loss of overtime give us one impact that this is going to have by bringing in civilian dispatch and taking the officer out of the dispatch center. They were not able to give the answer. They then separately met with their Attorney who said they could not convince the Union that there is no impact here. The only impact that Local 1662 could show is that their members are losing overtime; there is no other impact to them. Therefore it is not a subject of bargaining. The Attorney in the first session with them is no longer employed by Council 15 which represents Local 1662, he is not drawing a conclusion to that but that is the reason they won't be able to reach an agreement; there is no other impact aside from the loss of overtime. The other point he wants to make is he is kind of perplexed that no one here bothered to ask Mr. Rizza if the Town could afford this and will it have a positive or negative effect on the financial future of the Town of East Haven. He thinks there isn't anyone in the room who can't admit that under Paul Rizza the Town has done tremendously in terms of its fiscal health, just by the fact that we had an increase in our bond rate after quite a few bad years in the past. This shows he has a good handle on the finances and has the finances of the Town of East Haven at heart. When they started this dispatch planning committee, Mr. Rizza became the most integral part of this committee because they needed to know if this is something we could afford. Nobody has bothered to ask this question tonight because everyone in here, including the opposition is saying they are in favor of the dispatch center. If everyone is in favor of it and the Town can afford it, then vote it. He hasn't heard one person ask Mr. Rizza, in his opinion, if this is the right thing for the Town, could they afford it and should they make this expenditure.

- Councilman Henry Butler III says that he doesn't think there is anybody in this room against civilian dispatch. He just thinks they should have been having this discussion before the dispatchers were hired and all of the equipment was put in. He thinks that is the key point; we are in favor of it but had questions as to why this was not all done ahead. We would have approved it then. He thinks everyone is in favor of it but they don't like the way it was done.

- Councilman Palladino says his only concern is when he asked the Police Chief and Fire Chief who these dispatchers work for, who they answer to, who their supervisors are- the answer he got from the Police Chief was that the Council has more questions now than he has answers for. That doesn't seem practical if you are doing something you should have all the answers. Those answers should have been available during the budget hearings and they weren't. It's a great idea, the Police Department has been neglected and it's time to move forward. But we also have to put more cops on the road and get better cars. He hopes this is just the beginning of what is going to be done.
- Frank Kolb- 8 Erico Drive, East Haven CT- He had no intentions of speaking tonight but he has a couple areas that need to be corrected. Councilman Butler and Councilman Palladino addressed the fact that they didn't know. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither will this whole plan. He states that they had a meeting this afternoon and he has been involved in this honestly and truly without compensation, but as a citizen. In the meeting today Fire Chief Jackson explained that this week he was on top of the mountain with a tree cutter because there is a tower of some sort, a microwave tower that beams from the police station where the center will be located up to the top of the mountain where it sends out the signals. Just this week, he got permission from the Water Company through their appointed tree warden for us to cut the trees to make this work. That is an unexpected item that was not foreseen. There were many other items that originally started out at one price and reverted to another price. When we looked at the radios, the police and fire department have two different radio systems and they can't communicate with each other. If you asked any member of this planning committee two weeks ago, how much, you wouldn't have gotten an answer because it was a work in progress. He must say that the Council did approve the \$518,000 for the hiring which was the beginning. As you heard from the Mayor, we have used equipment from 20 years ago that C-MED was throwing out. If everybody says they are in favor of it, why are we just looking at the allegation that it wasn't done properly? For some things we just didn't have the figures. Talking about overtime, there is only one officer out injured now and that is not something we can control. We can certainly control overtime in dispatch by having civilian dispatchers do the dispatching because they are not subject to the perils of being on the street as our officers are. The Union contract with the dispatchers has been negotiated and it has been ratified by the Union and has to come before the Town Council for approval. He can assure them, as Mr. Rizza said, their wages and benefits will be less. We have these people already in place in the Fire Department in New Haven, Branford revamped their center at a cost of \$1.5 million and that was just for an upgrade not to start from scratch. You must show concern for the safety of the taxpayers as well as our

first responder's safety by voting in favor of this. Maybe it wasn't approach properly yet everyone is in favor of it, so let's be in favor of it with the vote and not have a nay vote because you may have thought along party lines that it proceeded improperly. As an attorney he can tell them, you know what we are currently dealing with is woefully, for a number of reasons, inadequate. Having heard it and stated it, he asks them to realize what the Town's liability exposure is if something happens in the future due to a break down of equipment or we have a dispatcher that has to leave the room for relief or something of that nature. Reliability and public safety, forget everything else.

- Councilman Anthony Mansi states that just like with review of the Education Department, we said we will give it this year but we want to make sure that even without a plan that things will change. First of all, when is this going to be up and running, he hasn't heard that tonight.
- Mayor Maturo says if it is approved, it will be up and running within a month.
- Councilman Mansi says good and number two is that it was mentioned that with this we will have the best-equipped department and he agrees as long as we are doing what the DOJ/Government wants us to do, we should. Now we are back to overtime, periodically it seems we are getting request for more and more approvals. What's the number on that? With this up and running in a month and dispatchers going on the road, when does that number start coming down.
- Mayor Maturo says that the Chief is not here and he has a good number on it. With the people coming out of the academy along with this, overtime should come time. He's been Mayor 13 years, Ms. Capone was here 4 years, and every year the Council discusses overtime at the Police Department. Every budget/finance session this is talked about, this should not be a surprise to the Council. We are trying to do our best, we've had problems in the Department and we are addressing those problems, we have the Department of Justice behind us trying to help us. We are doing the best we can with the best officers that we have on the street. As soon as they get out of the academy which costs about \$100,000 to train them it will help. We've had officers come in, stay six months then leave which we now get them to sign a form that they have to stay for 3 years. This is not new to us. But this is about a dispatch center that is going to be as good as 24/7 paramedic services and it should be approved tonight and should be a unanimous vote.
- Councilman Mansi says there is no argument about the dispatch center. With this new and improved program, we were told it is going to change but how many more overtime transfers will there be.
- Mayor Maturo adds that back in the early 90's, we paid \$90,000 for pensions. This didn't just happen in the time he has been here, there has been overtime in

this Department since 1997 and there are officers leaving with \$80,000-90,000 pensions.

- Chairman Anania says that what he thinks Councilman Mansi is saying is as far as moving forward; we can't say we will save \$10,000 in a month because it is hard to say. The center has to be up and running, dispatchers have to be working and nobody has the prediction as far as injuries and those things. '
- Councilman Mani says he is not saying things will change drastically over night, he is just looking for a time frame.
- Chairman Anania says once this program is up and running under ideal situations maybe in a month we will see savings.
- Mr. Rizza says that the discussion is centering on overtime. Unofficially, in the last fiscal year that ended June 30<sup>th</sup>, police spent close to \$1.3 million in overtime, which did not include dispatch. What he can say is that over the last month or two it costs us between \$25,000-\$30,000 a month, for dispatch only, because he tacks their expenditures bi-weekly. If the dispatch is not done by sworn officers and is done in the dispatch center that \$25,00-\$30,000 will not be spent by the Police Department. When he made the budget for the Public Safety Communications Center he took money from Fire for dispatch and roughly \$200,000 out of Police Department for the dispatch end of it. Was it a conservative number? Yes it was. He didn't expect this dispatch center to be operational on July 1, which it would have had to be in order to leave money in Police for dispatch. The Police Department will have three months of \$25,000-\$30,000 per month for July, August and September but it won't be \$300,000 or more- will there be a savings yes because we are taking something out of the Department and filling some vacancies which is not an overnight job.
- Councilman Fred Parlato states that he has two children on the Fire Department and he is proud of them as well as the Department itself but he is amazed they can function as well as they do. His son Frederick in his shift is responsible for saving four lives and his daughter Eileen is a Battalion Chief. He visits the Department almost every day. The system is so antiquated and it is an embarrassment. This is his 19<sup>th</sup> year on the Council and he takes pride in being re-elected but he would take more pride when this center is up and running than anything he has done in 19 years because it will benefit every citizen whether they be democrat, republican or independent. This is one of the best things we can do, put aside all political ramifications or that procedure wasn't followed but what is going to come out is something we will be proud of. We need to get together and say what is best for everybody not a particular group, administration or person. The common good should prevail.
- Councilman Santino says this is a good project for the Town and the taxpayers will benefit from this project. The only thing he asks the administration is there

are 15 members on the Council, the next time something gets done like this that they take one and put them on to sit in on it so they are not in the dark.

**Item #3**

Adjournment of Public Hearing #1.

Councilman Ken Mckay makes a motion.

Councilman Palladino seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor- none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

**Item #4**

Hearing Committee report to the full Town Council and recommendation of action on Public Hearing #1.

Vice Chairman Robert Parente makes a motion.

Councilman Palladino seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

**Item #5**

Adjournment of Hearing Committee.

Councilman Mckay makes a motion.

Councilman Parlato seconds the motion.

Voice vote: all in favor-none oppose-none abstain. Motion carries.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:51PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danelle Feeley, Clerk, East Haven Legislative Town Council