



# South Worcester County Communications Center

357 Main Street • Webster, MA 01570 • 508-943-1212  
*Serving the Towns of Webster and Dudley, Massachusetts*



*Gregory Lynskey, Communications Center Director*

*SWCCC Board of Directors*

*Meeting Minutes for October 13, 2021 – Regular Session*

Board Members Present: Jonathan Ruda, Greg Balukonis, Randy Becker, Steven Sullivan

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present: Gregory Lynskey, Dean Kochanowski

Meeting Location: Webster Police Community Room

- Meeting called to order by Chairman Ruda at 1:03pm.
- Chairman Ruda led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Chairman Ruda welcomed Webster Interim Town Administrator Greg Balukonis back to the board, having previously been a member of the Board as Dudley's Town Administrator.
- Mr. Becker made a motion to approve the regular session meeting minutes from August 12, 2021. Second by Mr. Sullivan. Vote: 3-0-1 with Mr. Balukonis abstaining.
- Mr. Becker made a motion to approve and release the executive session meeting minutes from August 12, 2021. Second by Mr. Sullivan. Vote: 3-0-1 with Mr. Balukonis abstaining.
- Chairman Ruda asked Director Lynskey to explain the process for electing a vice chairman. Director Lynskey stated typically in the past the Chairman and Vice Chairman have been from opposite towns. Mr. Becker made a motion to appoint Greg Balukonis as Vice Chairman. Second by Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous vote.
- Director Lynskey stated he had no further update regarding additional towns other than Mr. Willardson's last update that Charlton was still interested in learning more but there was really nothing heard from Sturbridge regarding their interest. Mr. Balukonis asked how far out we were interested in reaching as the Blackstone Selectmen had some interest while he was interim administrator to join a regional center. Director Lynskey stated that that is probably pushing the limit of what would make sense plus there is a regional center in their area that is looking to expand and just picked up two of Blackstone's bordering communities. Director Lynskey stated it is becoming noticeable and the state has noticed that there is a gap in regionalization in Central Mass. whereas Western Mass. is almost completely regionalized and Eastern Mass. also has a fair amount of regionalization. Mr. Balukonis noted that this effort has been ongoing in the South County area for years now with little to no buy-in. Mr. Ruda suggested that he and Mr. Balukonis attempt to schedule a meeting with the Charlton Town Administrator to discuss further. Mr. Becker will also attempt again with the Chairman of the Charlton Board of Selectmen who he has reached out to several times.

## **Board of Directors:**

Jonathan Ruda - Chairman  
Doug Willardson - Vice Chairman  
Randy Becker - Member  
Steven Sullivan - Member

## **Operations Board:**

Dean Kochanowski - Chairman  
Michael Shaw - Vice Chairman  
Steven Wojnar - Member  
Brian Hickey - Member  
Gary Milliard - Member

- Director Lynskey gave the board a review of the budget for FY22 through the first quarter. Director Lynskey stated at this point in the year the only concern was with Regular Overtime which was well ahead of pace for the year. He noted that this is due to having had two vacancies for a significant period of time to go along with a long-term medical absence and the summer vacation period. He stated there is a trainee who is nearing completion of training and this will hopefully help to stabilize things. He noted that as a result of the vacancies there will be some surplus in the dispatchers line item that will help with the overtime spending. He also noted that there is a transfer coming at a later agenda item.
- Director Lynskey presented the Board with 3 budget transfers as a result of the settled contract with the Dispatchers. He noted that a salary reserve was budgeted at \$16,500.00 to cover contract costs. He stated with these coming from a reserve line item they will require a vote. The transfers were as follows:
  - \$1,900.00 from Salary Reserve 6421151 519999 to Holiday Pay 6421151 514002 to cover the cost of an additional holiday as well as wage adjustments
  - \$1,500.00 from Salary Reserve 6421151 519999 to Longevity 6421151 514006 to cover increased longevity stipends
  - \$13,100.00 from Salary Reserve 6421151 519999 to Regular Overtime 6421151 513000. He noted that this balance was intended to cover regular salary, however due to the vacancies, the line item is sufficiently covered and these funds will instead be needed towards overtime.

Mr. Balukonis asked what the current status of the overall reserve fund is. Director Lynskey stated that there was a surplus of about \$40,000 last year which put the reserve fund at about \$320,000 however the Board had voted to utilize \$50,000 from that toward operating expenses for this year. Therefore, the reserve will be about \$270,000. Mr. Balukonis noted this is a very impressive reserve fund. Mr. Balukonis asked if the additional holiday was for Juneteenth. Director Lynskey stated it was and that it was required to be observed by municipalities. He noted that it was also paid in FY21 as it was required at that time as well. Mr. Becker made a motion to approve the transfers as presented. Second by Mr. Balukonis. Unanimous vote.

- Director Lynskey informed the board that part of the new contract allows the Board of Directors to provide additional vacation time for prior dispatch service as a means of attracting and retaining trained dispatchers. He stated his recommendation was that the Board consider past full-time municipal service. He reviewed the employees and their based service and two employees are eligible under this clause. He recommends that the Board vote to award additional vacation time to Rebecca Prefontaine (4 days) and Veronica Oleszewski (3 days) for prior service. He noted both had college campus service as well but he did not count that in the calculation. Mr. Becker made a motion to approve. Second by Mr. Balukonis. Unanimous vote.
- Director Lynskey stated that Pedro Jorge, who had previously left full time and returned after a new opportunity didn't work out had submitted his resignation from full time status effective September 25, 2021. He stated that Pedro had offered to stay on per-diem for a period of time to assist with shift coverage while we train new people. Director Lynskey is asking the Board to confirm his appointment effective September 26, 2021. Mr. Becker made a motion to accept

the resignation and confirm his appointment as a per-diem dispatcher. Second by Mr. Balukonis. Unanimous vote.

- Director Lynskey stated this created a vacancy for which the Operations Board had interviewed candidates and following some observation time in dispatch he was recommending the board to confirm the appointment of Abagayle Fournier to be effective October 31, 2021. He noted that none of the candidates have any dispatch experience however Abagayle does have experience in public safety as volunteer fire and EMS in CT. Mr. Becker made a motion to confirm her appointment. Second by Mr. Balukonis. Unanimous vote.
- Director Lynskey informed the Board that he would be away the last week of October for the APCO Atlantic Conference in Vermont and would also be away the first week in February for the Denise Amber Lee Foundation Conference in Myrtle Beach.
- The Board did not yet schedule a next meeting.
- Mr. Sullivan made a motion to adjourn at 1:45pm, second by Mr. Becker. Unanimous vote.