TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD

BOARD OF SELECTMEN Meeting

Monday, December 15, 2025 – 6:30 PM

West Brookfield Town Hall, 2 East Main Street, Town Administrator's Office (LL1)

MINUTES

STAFF PRESENT: Catherine Lamica, Vice Chair; Brad Merkel, Clerk (virtually); Theresa Cofske, Town Administrator; Beth Gobeille, Exec. Asst. to TA/BOS; Fire Dept. personnel: Interim Fire Chief Dennis Letendre, Jonathan Bonin/firefighter, John Gagnon/Lieutenant, Charles Reardon/Lieutenant.

GUESTS: Fire Chief Lavoie/Warren; Fire Chief Brookfield/Peter Martell.

ABSENT: Roland Sickenberger, Chair.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER IN OPEN SESSION

6:30pm: Meeting called to order.

DISCUSSION OF THE INTERIM FIRE CHIEF OPTION – Possible Votes

Mr. Merkel asked for a recap of the previous meeting at 6pm in the Fire Department meeting room. Ms. Lamica indicated they had good conversations. 11 fire personnel are still on board and they have received 3 new applicants, who are experienced. Chief Letendre indicated he would be happy to do the Interim Fire Chief position part time.

Chief Letendre will be the one point of contact to coordinate inspections, directing other personnel to take classes required for inspections to be done. Other functions of the Dept. will be broken out to individuals.

Lieutenant Gagnon indicated that (following the 6pm meeting previously held) the body of the fire department would like to recommend having Chief Letendre as the Interim Fire Chief with Brookfield and Warren as mutual aid partners.

Regarding Inspections, Chief Letendre explained that there is a Fire Prevention Office Basic online program. A Level 1 in inspections would require 40 hours of training and Level 2 would require 80 hours. J. Bonin has completed the Basic online program. Fire reports need to be caught up on. 2-3 individuals will work on them, but Chief Letendre would like to see all firefighters be able to complete reports upon returning from a call. Lieutenant Reardon is working on truck fleet maintenance.

It was stated that the Job Description had been approved for posting at the last Select Board (December 9th). It was also suggested that there should be an outside search committee for the Fire Chief position. District 7 representative Chief Coleman can help put this together. It is understood that Chief Letendre will help out in West Brookfield for some time, although the search for a new Fire Chief should begin soon and we would like a transition period of training once a new Fire Chief has been approved.

Motion to allow Chief Letendre's responsibilities as West Brookfield's Interim Fire Chief as such and at the same salary of $27.85 per hour, up to 19 hours per week until a thorough and vetted process of finding a new Fire Chief has been conducted made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye. (2 yes).

Questions raised for the next period of Payroll. This will be worked out prior to the next payroll date of January 8th. Expenses are being submitted on the Fire Department's behalf by the Select Board's office. Chief Letendre would like a year's worth of bills with budget breakdowns.

Ms. Cofske also indicated that there will be a new email for Chief Letendre.

Questions about lockbox keys (for Town-owned businesses) and new locks/codes to be installed or coded on Fire Dept. doors. Fire Chief's office has already been taken care of. Ms. Cofske will look into a potential keypad/swipe key system for the building as well.

It was noted that 2 vehicles owned by the Fire Dept. would need to be started each day.

Chief Letendre to make sure New Braintree is all set with mutual aid needs for West Brookfield for 6am-6pm, 7 days a week.

7:22pm - Motion to adjourn meeting made by Mr. Merkel. Second by Ms. Lamica. All in favor – aye (2 yes).

Respectfully submitted,

_____ _____

Authorized Party for the BOS Date BOS Clerk Date