A meeting of the Mendon Citizens Advisory Committee for Town of Mendon Fire Service was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at the Mendon Community Center, 167 North Main Street, Honeoye Falls, NY 14472.

PRESENT: Muffy Meisenzahl; Mendon Supervisor, John Moffitt; Peter Kester; Mike Arman; Karen Jenkins; David Smith; Robin Stewart Ha; Gerald Lonthair; Anothony Militello

ABSENT: Chief Cory Trewer; Chief Steve Tschiderer; Ryan Wilsey

OTHERS: Danny Bassette, IT support.

Minutes were taken by Bonnie Toomey

Ms. Meisenzahl opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Militello led the Pledge of Allegiance.

HOUSEKEEPING

Ms. Meisenzahl pointed out the exits and restrooms.

INTRODUCTONS

Ms. Meisenzahl noted there were no guests and no one on Zoom.

MINUTES for the January 25, 2023 meeting will be available at our next meeting.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

Ms. Meisenzahl stated all the materials for the meeting are posted at least 24 hours before the meeting and are on the Town website. There were some edits that didn’t make the website but were incidental and did not affect the content. There are no new materials for the notebooks, all new information has been shared electronically.

Communication

Ms. Meisenzahl stated that she received the corporation papers for the Mendon Fire Department from Mr. Arman. These papers will be in the appendix so the Town Board is aware that both departments do have corporation status and that would not need to be changed.

Mr. Moffitt shared that the next Town Board meeting is March 13th at which time Ms. Meisenzahl will present the report. The Town Board Members will have the report shortly after March 1st to look over and prepare any questions they may have for Ms. Meisenzahl. Anyone who would like to attend are welcome, it is 7:00 at the Mendon Town Hall.

Ms. Meisenzahl added that after the next meeting on February 22nd, she will finalize the report and make five copies for the Town Board Members as requested by Mr. Moffitt. At the March 13th meeting she will present like an executive summary highlighting what they need to know to move forward.

Mr. Lonthair asked Mr. Moffitt if the Village Board would be invited to this meeting. Mr. Moffitt stated he hadn’t planned on it as the Town Board asked for the Committee and the report and wanted the overview presented to them and if they decide to proceed, then look to a joint meeting with the Village and Mendon Fire District. He stated if there is a different way of doing it, he is open to suggestions. Mr. Lonthair stated that the Village is an important part of the process and should be at the presentation. Ms. Meisenzahl added that there might be considerations for quorums and meeting law requirements. Mr. Moffit stated he would email Mayor Milne and Mendon Fire Department Chair Wilsey. If it were to be a joint meeting there needs to be time for a legal notice and location change to accommodate the number of people.

Ms. Stewart Ha and Mr. Moffitt will not be present at the February 22nd meeting.

There were no questions.

Ms. Meisenzahl moved on to the report, it is 298 pages. She wants the Committee to look at the narrative, check for typos and accuracy.

Reviewing the Report:

Chapter 1 – Introduction including the resolution creating the Committee, meeting schedule with extensions and legal notices.

The Committee Charge:

Task#1

Chapter 2 – Draft with figures; the Authority that runs through the State statute with the ability to create a fire district, fire protection district, municipal department and what they are all about; description of joint fire district. There were no concerns on the narrative.

Chapter 3 – Fire Department Operations reviewed. Mr. Militello offered some suggestions and they were discussed, considered or shown to be addressed in another area of the report. There was some discussion on keeping objective.

Mr. Smith asked about adding recruitment practices. Bullets will be added on some of these: social media, carnival booth, schools, explorers, Recruit NY Week, fund drives, open houses, community drills, community events and member word of mouth.

Mr. Militello commented on page 11, stating the bulk of ongoing training falls to the Departments. The addition of the word “extensive” to the sentence including “Department-led training” was agreed upon.

Mr. Kester stated that Red Alert should be changed to REDNMX.

There were no other comments.

Task#2

Chapter 4 – Demographics piece with Natural Features & Target Features, identifies features and equipment, call types, agency, emergency response and staff. It justifies what is on the tables and speaks to needs.

There were no questions or comments.

The Supervisor sent a Freedom of Information request to New York State Department of Transportation for the number of crashes. The letter and table are in the report.

In 2017 the County did an update to their Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Village and the Town, there is about thirty pages for each with everything you ever wanted to know about natural features and the problems they cause and exposure to the communities. They are about to start an update. Ms. Meisenzahl wanted the officials to be aware of it.

Chapter 5 – Resource Considerations, takes the data and puts together to tell the story of what the problems are and what it means.

There were no questions or comments.

Ms. Meisenzahl talked about rural character and what it means to fire protection needs. The Comprehensive Plans do not address the needs.

Chapter 6 – Trends & Projections, took a lot of information out of the Rockefeller Report because it deals a lot with Towns around us. This is a universal problem.

There were no questions or comments.

Chapter 7 – Modeling for Sustainable Fire Protection Services

Ms. Meisenzahl clarified the term “Joint Fire District”. She went on to review the Figures 3 & 4 and stated these are very important for the Town Board presentation.

The narrative expresses the administration, delivery and financial considerations which is a summary of what is up front that led you to this recommendation. It basically says why this format for governance gives the most opportunity for advancement of fire protection in the community on a short term basis. In the long term, it give the governing persons the opportunity to make decisions for fire protection as its single focus.

Ms. Meisenzahl asked for any other edits or additions. It was made clear that any other input should be made during this meeting. Mr. Militello asked if there will be an opportunity for those not present or other Committee Members who need more time to digest the information to communicate suggestions. Ms. Meisenzahl responded positively with the direction to email Ms. Zimmermann by Tuesday, February 14th. She will update with the edits and get the chapters and appendices out to the Committee Members. She will also provide the chapters in printed form for those who prefer that. After some discussion on wording and clarification of meanings, “fire service delivery” was added to the recommendation.

Ms. Meisenzahl stated that once the report is delivered to the Town, the Committee’s work is done. She will put an executive summary together for a presentation where and when the Town decides upon. If another committee is created going forward that is up to the governing authorities and if they can ask for your involvement, but our piece is finished. She stated that this has never been done before to this extent, it was a huge undertaking and the Committee has done extremely well in providing the information to substantiate the story. The formats that have been developed can be updated in the future so there is value in going forward as part of the sustainability. She added that this was a great project that took a lot of effort and the Committee Members should be very proud and congratulated.

Mr. Moffitt thanked everyone for their participation; eight months; two meetings a month; and the active research that was done is appreciated. Mr. Kester thanked Mr. Moffitt for listening to Chief Trewer and himself. He said that at the very least this will be a vessel for educating the community that we have never had. Mr. Moffitt added that he has learned a tremendous amount listening and absorbing the information from the those in the Fire Service, Ms. Jenkins echoed his comments.

Mr. Lonthair thanked Ms. Meisenzahl for her knowledge and drive. She stated it is her community too, she’s had a long relationship with the fire department and professional work with the County and is happy to do it. She once again pointed out that this has not been done before. Ms. Meisenzahl added that an important part of the report is the historic story, important documents are now in the proper archives.

There was no Public Comment.

The next meeting is February 22, 2023

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 pm.