

## **Charge to the Ad-Hoc Fire Transition Study Committee on developing an organizational structure and policies to govern one Fire-EMS service known as the Coventry Fire Department**

**Whereas:** The Town of Coventry is currently served by two separate and distinct volunteer Fire Departments which have agreements to provide certain services to the community;

**Whereas:** There have been three independent studies of the fire-EMS services made by outside agencies, which have suggested consideration of some form of merger;

**Whereas:** The Town Council created the position of Fire Administrator in 2015 to facilitate coordination and efficiencies;

**Whereas:** The Town of Coventry assumed the responsibility of first responder and ambulance response in 2017 and does not have an organizational structure to manage EMS operations;

**Whereas:** On July 16, 2018, the Town Council authorized the development of the EMS Division of the Coventry Fire Department by authorizing the development of County Department 18;

**Whereas:** a joint operation could streamline policies, training, purchasing and operational efficiency;

**Whereas:** Both departments have committed to study a possible transition to a merged state and working together to study options of some form of a merged department would be the best way to assure a smooth transition if it is decided to proceed;

**Now, therefore:** The Coventry Town Council establishes a Fire Transition Study Committee to plan and implement an organizational structure and policies to govern one Coventry Fire Department to increase efficiency, accountability, responsibility and improve the quality of service offered to the residents of our town.

**Purpose, Scope and Process:** The Fire Transition Study Committee will develop a comprehensive strategic plan, recommend organizational structure (s) and draft policies required if a decision to proceed with a merger is determined as the best path forward. The work shall be conducted in two phases: 1) Strategic Plan; 2) Implementation. At the conclusion of each phase a report shall be made to the Town Council.

### **Phase 1: Strategic Plan**

Study the pros and cons of a merged state, organizational options and process to successfully proceed.

It is envisioned that this will require:

- Conducting a SWOT analysis of current conditions
- Develop a mission statement and vision for the future
- Develop possible organizational structure including positions, chain of command and outline of job responsibilities
- Discussing future role of current Fire Associations

- Financial implications and possible reallocation of existing resources
- Recommended selection process for proposed positions and term lengths
- Volunteer recruitment and retention program
- Make presentation of findings to Town Council and respective Fire Boards

**Phase 2: (If authorized to proceed by Town Council)**

- Development of final job descriptions
- Development of a policy manual
- Determine dispatch protocols for Fire and EMS calls
- Development of a scheduling system to ensure coverage
- Fine-tune recommendations from Phase 1 as appropriate

**Committee Structure:**

The Fire Transition Study Committee will consist of seven (7) members:

*Two (2) members from CVFA and two (2) members from NCVFD. Members will be recommended by each of the Board of Directors. The Boards shall consider that their appointees fully represent all interests of their department. An additional two members with valid EMS licenses and members of Department 18 shall be recommended by the Board of Fire Officers and shall be recommended to the Steering Committee after reviewing timely applications by interested members. These recommendations will be considered by the Steering Committee and their recommendations forwarded to the Town Council for appointment consideration. These six (6) members shall be resident electors of the Town of Coventry.*

The Fire/EMS Administrator shall be an ex-officio voting member of the committee and need not be a resident elector. The Town Council's LECC representatives and Town Manager shall also serve, as needed, as participating but non-voting members of this study committee.

A quorum will consist of 5 members.

The term of this committee will be until dismissed by the Town Council.

A Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary will be selected by the Fire Transition Study Committee members.

All meetings will adhere to the FOIA requirements for municipal agencies. (see attachment)

**Meetings and Ground Rules:**

Meetings will normally be held not less than monthly. Sub-committees may be used as created by the full committee but may not constitute a quorum of the full committee and may meet more often to accomplish their goals, objectives and tasks. The full committee shall provide progress reports to the Town Council every two months.

Meeting attendance is paramount to the forward progress of the committee. Therefore, any member selected must be committed to the process.

All meetings will start on time.

Members at meetings must be able to speak on behalf of their district and must have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their district. To facilitate this, agendas shall be distributed at least seven (7) days in advance.

Members must be willing to commit to working on sub-committees so a number of issues can be dealt with simultaneously.

Working sub-committees may be used to research and draft reports as authorized by the full committee but will not have independent decision authority. They will report to the full committee with recommendations for committee consideration.

All goals will be recorded and will be identified using the SMART (see attachment) guide to assessing and dealing with our issues. All goals will have identified objectives and will have an assigned subcommittee leader, timeline and recommendation. Each objective may have specific tasks to meet the objectives in order to accomplish the goals. At the conclusion of goal attainment, data collection will be gathered to support goal attainment.

Adopted by the Coventry Town Council: October 1, 2018