

OCTOBER 24, 2016
SPECIAL/EMERGENCY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

The October 24, 2016 Special Town Council Meeting was called to order by John L. Lewis, Jr., President of the Foster Town Council, at the Town House, Foster, Rhode Island, at 6:36 p.m.

The following members were present:
John L. Lewis, Jr., President
Denise DiFranco, Vice President,
Gordon Rogers, and
Jon Restivo.
Cheryl Hawes, excused

Also present:
Kelli Russ, Treasurer
Police Chief William Ziehl
Tom Walden, Engineering Board

Clerk’s Note: the recording device stopped functioning at the beginning of the meeting. There are no sound files available for this meeting.

**I. OPEN
SESSION
PLEDGE OF
ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II. ANNOUNCE-
MENTS**

John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that the notice of the meeting was properly posted on the Secretary of State’s web site. Mr. Lewis also stated that this special meeting was due to new problems with the police station communications system.

**III. NEW
BUSINESS
a.) Declaration
of Emergency,
Police
Station
Communi-
cation
System:
Repair/
Funding**

Mr. Lewis stated that the first order of business would be for a majority of the Council to agree that this constituted an emergency meeting, in order for the meeting to proceed.

Chief Ziehl explained that the primary radio frequency was down at the police station, and they were operating on backup – with no backup to the backup. The Council voted unanimously that the emergency meeting was warranted.

Chief Ziehl further outlined that although the phone line issue from September had been resolved, the underground wiring for the radios had not yet been repaired. An RFP for a bid for microwave dishes was in process, as one possible solution.

Heavy rains on the previous Saturday (10/22) had seeped into the underground wires again, initially causing heavy static and subsequent failure. Officers could hear dispatch on the radio but could not return communications to dispatch or to one another.

The Chief was informed of the situation on Monday morning. Radio checks showed that on open microphones there was humming and static. At one point nothing was working. The Cybercom technician reported that the comparitor had faulted; a reset was done over the phone, and the issue cleared up – the backup system working at the present time.

The Chief’s concern was with public safety if another issue came up.

Denise DiFranco asked if this situation was different from the last time. Chief Ziehl stated that the current symptoms were new ones. He believed the wires were shorting due to mud and water in the conduit, which had been found in different areas. The radio communication systems in town could not be trusted to work consistently.

Denise DiFranco asked if the bid for the microwave system would solve the problem. Mr. Ziehl responded in the affirmative.

Options for quick solutions were as follows:

- Run an above ground wire between the fire station and the police station.
- Dig a new trench with new conduit and wiring run between the stations. However, the underground infrastructure was in question. A sewer pipe, septic system and leach field are in that area, and possible underground electrical wires. The integrity of the existing pipe was in question. Estimated distances were discussed and potential costs.
- Overnight ship a microwave system

Gordon Rogers offered to take a day off during the week to dig the trench himself.

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NEW

BUSINESS, cont. Solicitor Bevilacqua stated that it was her obligation to inform Mr. Rogers he could be subject to an ethics violation if he did the work himself. Treasurer Russ questioned whether Mr. Rogers would be covered by the town’s insurance if he operated town equipment.

After further discussion, Denise DiFranco moved, Jon Restivo seconded, that the Council allow the DPW to dig the trench, install new conduit and wire, in a straight line between the fire station and police building.

John L. Lewis, Jr, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; Jon Restivo, aye; and Gordon Rogers, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

IV. ADJOURN-
MENT

Jon Restivo moved, Denise DiFranco seconded, and it was so moved to adjourn the meeting.

John L. Lewis, Jr, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; Jon Restivo, aye; and Gordon Rogers, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

A digital sound file is made a part of the record for a complete account of the council meeting.

Submitted by,

Jane H. Christopher
Town Clerk