

**PUBLIC HEALTH and SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2014**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: MAC PATRICK, LAURA MOSHER,  
BILL PETERS, BRIAN RAYHILL, GARY SWENSON, JEFF  
MARSTEN**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: CASSANDRA HEGARTY, MONICA  
MCNALLY, NOELLE HENDERSON, BOB GEORGE**

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 7:15

The minutes from the meeting on January 27, 2014 were approved.

A broad discussion was held about budget items tied to town departments that are under the scope of PH&S.

The Police Department:

We discussed the Police department's request for a civilian dispatch position. A question was raised regarding how police departments in other Fairfield County towns staff their dispatch positions?

The question of the current crime rate in Darien was also raised. Has there been a significant increase in crime? A concern was raised about an increase in domestic violence.

A request will be made to tour the new police station before the budget vote. The committee hopes to have a discussion with the Police Chief at that time.

The Fire Department:

We discussed recent media reports regarding firefighters ability to manage fires in buildings equipped with solar panels. We would like to ask Marc McEwan about this issue.

It was reported that a vessel used for shallow water rescue called “Sea Legs” was recently donated to the Fire Department. It has yet to be determined which department will house this vessel.

#### The Health Department:

It was reported that the Health Director would like to conduct a town health needs assessment. The last health needs assessment revealed that fewer people in Darien were taking advantage of the opportunity to receive a flu vaccine from the town. Water testing around the Sound was also discussed.

#### Tree Work:

Discussion was held about the cutting back of trees to prevent power outages. There is a sense that many in town feel that this has been overdone.

#### Announcement:

A mental health first aid class is being offered at Post 53 on 4/3 and 4/10. The cost is \$100. It is open to the general public.

#### Sidewalks:

Should homeowners have the responsibility of shoveling the sidewalk in front of their home? It was suggested, that the town may want to explore the idea of providing a slight tax rebates to homeowners that shovel sidewalks. Another idea was perhaps the town should take responsibility to clear the sidewalks.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Mosher