

APPROVED 6.28.16 & RELEASED 5.5.20

EXECUTIVE SESSION (ES) CONFIDENTIAL

Essex County Regional Emergency Communications Center

The ES was part of the Wenham Board of Selectmen (BOS) **March 15, 2016** posted meeting.

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 22 (f) the minutes of any ES, the notes, recordings or other materials used in the preparation of such minutes and all documents and exhibits used at the session, may be withheld from disclosure to the public in their entirety under sub clause (a) of clause Twenty-sixth of Section 7 of Chapter 4, as long as publication may defeat the lawful purposes of the ES, but no longer; provided, however, that the ES was held in compliance with Section 21. These minutes will not be released until approved for release by the Selectmen and notice of such approval has been entered into the regular minutes.

In open session the Board voted to enter into executive session under M.G.L. Ch. 30A, § 2 (4.) *To discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto; and to include Fire Chief Bob Blanchard, Police Chief Tom Perkins, and RECC Staff* and to return to open session.

Selectmen Present: Chair Catherine Harrison; Jack Wilhelm (participating remotely); John Clemenzi

Also Present: Peter Lombardi, Town Administrator; Fire chief Bob Blanchard; Police Chief Tom Perkins

Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Present for RECC: Shad Ahmed Executive Director of RECC; Alyson Dell Isola, Assistant Director of Administration for the RECC; Dave Spinosa, Director of Communications

The meeting began with a brief historic overview since July 2012 when Wenham originally joined the RECC and signed a five-year agreement. This agreement can be exited at this point without penalty, but with a two-year minimum notice.

The Fire Chief and Police Chief briefly talked about the issues that occurred in the beginning, saying they were “shabby at best”, suggesting RECC was not ready or prepared with appropriate equipment or properly trained staff. They said RECC worked to resolve issues and things are better than when it started.

A discussion followed regarding some of the present concerns.

One of the concerns discussed was the City of Beverly withdrawing from the RECC and the potential financial ramifications to the remaining towns.

The selectmen have been told the RECC is subsidized by the Sheriff's Department and will continue to be regardless of what the City of Beverly ultimately chooses to do. It was noted however that one way to improve cost effectiveness is to share radio frequencies across fire departments and police departments of those towns participating. A shared frequency may be initiated once the financial impact is fully known to reduce costs. It is also possible that RECC staff could be reduced in the future with better training and a streamlined communications system.

One observation made of significant importance is that this is an election year for the Sherriff. Sheriff Cousins is not running for reelection and a new sheriff could mean that the level of state funding and support that has historically existed could change, creating uncertainty in how much the town would have to pay for this service in the future.

An analysis of the RECC administration and finances will be done over the next few months.

RECC was asked to report back with the results of the analysis and any plans going forward.

It is also possible that other communities will join the RECC.

The RECC is on the meeting agenda to give an update during open session.

VOTE: Mr. Clemenzi moved, and it was seconded, to return to open session. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley

5.11.16