

Crisis and Strategic Communications Plans Committee
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Room #4
September 21, 2018
Special Meeting Minutes

Members Present: S. Link; L. Bonadies; W. DiCristofaro; J. Rhoades; R. Turner; B. Reas; M. Piscioti;
L. Salicrup
Also Present: D. Tapper (Sullivan & LeShane)

1. Selectman Link called the Crisis and Strategic Communications Plans Committee meeting to order at 8:47 a.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting of September 6, 2018 and September 10, 2018

Committee members reviewed the minutes of special meeting of September 6, 2018. Motion made by Mr. DiCristofaro, seconded by Mr. Salicrup, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 6, 2018. Unanimous aye.

Committee members reviewed the minutes of special meeting of September 10, 2018. Motion made by Mr. Salicrup, seconded by Mr. DiCristofaro, to approve the minutes of the Special meeting of September 10, 2018. Unanimous aye. Ms. Bonadies abstained.

3. Sullivan & LeShane Public Relations Inc. Presentation:

Mr. DiCristofaro introduced Dan Tapper from Sullivan & LeShane Public Relations Inc. As background, Mr. DiCristofaro noted that Ms. Link, First Selectman Lyman and himself all met Mr. Tapper at a CCM meeting last fall and all agreed that the crisis communications plan they presented sounded beneficial to the town of East Haddam and decided to look further at what they offer. Mr. DiCristofaro and Mr. Lyman had a follow up meeting with Sullivan & LeShane and after that meeting Mr. DiCristofaro presented to the Board of Finance a proposal from Sullivan & LeShane to set up a crisis communications plan for \$14,000 and requested the BOF set aside those monies from the contingency fund of the BOF.

Mr. Tapper introduced himself and his company. Sullivan & LeShane puts a plan together that identifies the crisis, addresses the crisis and walks thru the crisis to closure. Identifies what a crisis is and what kind of crisis it is (i.e. public safety, personnel, lawsuit, etc.), establish a crisis team and then builds a plan as to who does what in a crisis. They then put together a table top session to simulate a crisis. There are 3 C's in a crisis; control, care, communicate. Ms. Link inquired if they define what constitutes a crisis. Mr. Tapper noted they do and there are 2 levels, level 1 is a public safety crisis usually with loss of life and level 2 is a non-public safety crisis, i.e. lawsuit, strike, environmental, etc. Mr. Turner inquired if they offer a person and a plan. Sullivan & LeShane are not the spokespeople for the crisis, they let clients speak for themselves. Mr. Salicrup inquired as to how they communicate the plan? Mr. Tapper note that you would need to establish if there is a crisis this is who you contact and it has to be documented if there is something that could elevate to a town level crisis this is who you contact, can be multiple people depending on Town or BOE. That information has to be distributed to all employees, Town and BOE. Mr. Reas expanded on the inquiry of Mr. Salicrup asking what is the value added to the towns people? Mr. Tapper said they will help us sell this plan and how it will help promote East Haddam and help grow revenue for the town. Mr. DiCristofaro noted that we came to the conclusion on this committee that we have great

security measures in town and there must be a way to communicate that we have a great security program but we can't share details. There was much discussion on how to communicate without giving detail. Mr. Piscioti inquired how the crisis communication marries with the Emergency Operations Plan. Mr. Tapper said they marry those 2 plans. Mr. DiCristofaro discussed continuity as most of the leaders are elected. Mr. Tapper said we would create a table top session every 2 years and correlate with election and can also do as needed. Mr. Tapper also said they would help to create a social media policy for employees and for positive communications about the town. Mr. Salicrup asked what the cost of all of this would be. Mr. Tapper noted that it would be \$14,000 for the plan and training. We could then pay on an as needed basis or as a retainer. Mr. DiCristofaro noted we are just looking at this point for the plan. Mr. Reas noted a communications plan would be invaluable.

Committee had discussion on other vendors that would be able to give a quote. Ms. Link inquired to Mr. Reas if he has used other vendors for communications and he noted none he would use again. Mr. Turner noted we would need two quotes but the committee could ask the Selectmen to waive the requirement for two quotes.

Motion made by Mr. DiCristofaro, seconded by Officer Rhoades, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the town hire Sullivan & LeShane to establish a Crisis Communication Plan for the quote of \$14,000 and to recommend we bypass the selection process due to timing issues. Unanimous aye.

4. Audience of Citizens

There were no audience of citizens present.

5. Executive Session – School/Town Security Discussion

Motion made by Mr. Piscioti, seconded by Mr. Reas to enter into executive session at 10:05 a.m. for discussion of School/Town security. Unanimous aye.

Committee returned to regular session at 10:30 a.m. Committee agreed to meet again on Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 8:45 a.m.

6. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Piscioti, seconded by Mr. Turner, to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 a.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Link, Secretary