

62 A motion was duly made, seconded and carried and the meeting moved out of Executive Session. The following votes were recorded.

Mr. Gessert moved authorizing the Town Attorney to settle a claim in favor of the Estate of Edward H. Leonard in the amount of \$1,500.

Mr. Krupp seconded the motion.

Vote: All Council members voted aye and the motion was passed.

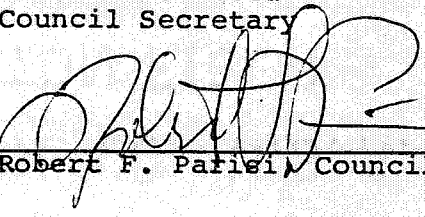
Mr. Krupp moved authorizing the Town Attorney to accept a settlement of \$2,500 in the case of Royce Schoonmaker.

Mrs. Bergamini seconded the motion.

Vote: All Council members voted aye and the motion was passed.

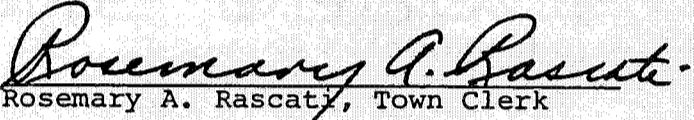
Delores B. Fetta
Council Secretary

Approved


Robert F. Parisi, Council Chairman

2 - 2 - 84

Date


Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

2 - 2 - 84

Date

Special Town Council Meeting

January 27, 1984

5:00 p.m.

A special meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held in Council Chambers for the express purpose of considering authorization to waive the bidding procedure to permit repairs to Engine 1 - 1977 American LaFrance Pumper - Fire Department. Chairman Robert Parisi called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Answering present to the roll called by Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk, were Council members Bergamini, Diana, Gessert, Killen, Parisi, Polanski and Rys. Mayor Dickinson was also present.

Chairman Parisi noted that Councilwoman Papale was attending a wedding and Councilman Krupp has difficulty leaving work early.

Mrs. Bergamini moved authorization to waive the bidding procedure to permit repairs to Engine 1 - 1977 American LaFrance Pumper for the Fire Department. Mr. Polanski seconded the motion.

Fire Chief Jack McElfish and Assistant Chief Steve Hacku were present along with Mr. William Barr, power consultant of Bell Detroit Deisel of Middletown, CT.

Mr. Diana: Are we in an emergency situation right now?

Chief McElfish: The replacement for that vehicle is a 1962 Ford; if that vehicle goes out of service, it reverts to a 1955 American LaFrance. Its been 2 years and 5 months since the original problem in September of 1981.

Mr. Diana: It seems that the problem we're having now is the same kind of problem we had previously, less than 25,000 miles ago. For the money expended, it seems we are not getting the mileage out of it that we should be. Do we have any kind of special requirements for the drivers?

Chief McElfish: Mr. Barr conducts training sessions for the career and volunteer departments on driving properly both the engines and the transmissions. 63

Mr. Killen: No reasons were given for the first failure (letter of 1/23/84 from Steve Hacku); did we ever get a reason for the first failure?

Mr. William Barr, Bell Detroit Diesel: That particular engine has an excellent track record. It is not a problematic engine, especially that type of failure. In September 1981, it was under warranty, parts only, and we removed the engine and installed a new crank shaft and line bored the block. Line boring of the block is a 50/50 type chance that you take. If everything is as its supposed to be and there are no problems in the webbing of the block, which is very, very hard to tell, a problem could occur.

Mr. William Barr (continued)

There are many that are done and last up to 300,000, 400,000 or 500,000 with no problems and there are some that do not.

Last week, Steve called me at home on Sunday and explained his problem. I've made a commitment to the Town of Wallingford and to Jack McElfish because we are thinking of moving one of our facilities to Wallingford and because of our relationship with the Wallingford Fire Department.

From a legal standpoint, that engine is 7 years old and after 2 years, the warranty is up. We decided, due to this relationship, that we would cover a new crankshaft, gasket kits, seals, bearings and so on. We could, at no cost to the Town, reline bore the block, if its acceptable. However, that you would never know until it is checked. However, the minute you start that engine up, you own it and we would not warranty it. My suggestion from experience is for the Town to pay for a new block which we have agreed to give you at our cost to keep the costs down. Its an unfortunate type failure. We may pull this engine out and not be able to pinpoint a prime cause of failure, especially in crankshaft areas. Line boring of blocks is a cheap fix.

In some cases, if a block has just been touched where the bearing spun in the webbing, that's another story. If it has spun heavily, you are taking a chance. Now they have spun #3 and #4 main bearing.

Mayor Dickinson: I did have a lengthy discussion with Chief McElfish, Assistant Chief Hacku and Mr. Barr. First of all, I asked if the recommendation were to buy a new engine--there appears to be a 3 to 4 year cycle on this on breaking down. The recommendation was no because of such low mileage. I asked if there were any other cause for this problem than most probably the block and the answer was no--its probably the block that is causing the problem.

Under this proposal, given the cost that we are paying for the repair, \$2,000, a minimal amount over what we paid for the original repair in 1981, its a better repair. We are appropriating more money because there are other items we can change while its opened up to avoid later costs.

In terms of solving the problem here, I've been informed that the Bell Detroit Diesel engine is generally one of the best with generally no trouble. This is the one that has caused the problem and if the block is the problem, it is the same block now that caused the problem earlier. We're replacing that. I can understand the problem and would ask that this be the remedy.

Mr. Polanski: What kind of warranty will be on this short block?

Mr. Barr: Six months, parts only, standard Detroit Diesel warranty. Because we are giving this to you at cost and we will absorb the labor costs, etc. as a goodwill type gesture, parts only will be warranted. If it has an engine leak due to something we did, we will be out to fix it.

Mr. Barr: Because we are not overhauling this whole engine, all the sub-assemblies, if 6 months later you have a fuel pump, water pump, blower, etc. fail, that will not be covered under warranty. We will clean the existing parts and put them back on. If we get into the engine which will be stripped to bare nuts and bolts and find major problems, we will notify you before we proceed. My guess is there will be no major problems found because of the low mileage.

I've asked to do it at the Town Garage with your lift to remove the engine with one man to help from a safety standpoint. We will bring the engine to our facility and the engine will be returned within a week to ten days.

Mr. Rys noted that the entire obligation would be no more than \$4,155.04 and asked Mr. Barr the cost of a new motor and was told \$12,000.00 without labor which would cost another \$2,000.00. A new engine is not warranted, according to Mr. Barr.

Mr. Barr: The rule of thumb is, if your repair exceeds 60% of the cost of a new engine, then you should look at a new engine. Maybe we can pinpoint the reason for this failure but history tells me no.

Mr. Rys noted that with the previous expenditure and the current estimate, half the cost of a new engine will have been expended.

Mr. Parisi asked Mr. Barr if the problem could be pinpointed and Mr. Barr explained if the crankshaft broke, there would be a better chance of knowing because there are only two types of failure in a crankshaft. When a bearing spins, if the engine comes in to us and there's no oil in it, that is usually the case. In this case, there is oil in the engine and it's not that somebody added it after the fact because we can tell that. It's unfortunate but it does happen.

Mr. Rys asked about a warranty on a new engine and Mr. Barr stated 2 years, same as the original, 5 years on parts.

Mr. Gessert: The Mayor's statements were very convincing. In a memo dated 2/24/83 from Steve Hacku, the following major repairs were listed:

Ladder 2 - 1948 American LaFrance 1965 Ladder Truck #1-35-45 had a new motor put in.
Engine 3 - 1955 American LaFrance Pumper #L-5289 - rebuilt transmission 8/24/82.
Engine 4 - 1962 American LaFrance Pumper #2-1-8811 - new motor 9/13/82.
Engine 8 - 1975 Chevrolet American LaFrance 2-1-4723 - motor overhaul 11/1/82.
Engine 7 - 1975 Chevrolet American LaFrance 2-1-4722 - motor overhaul 11/19/82.
Ambulance 1 - 1980 Chevrolet C-30 CCU33AB131 - short block motor 2/8/83.

40% of the engines within the Fire Department have been replaced within a year.

Mr. Gessert: Taxicabs don't replace their engines this often and I don't know of a single operating truck company who replaces their engines this often.

Chief McElfish: We maintain the vehicles properly and use the best oil and run daily checks. Last year the Council approved engine heaters and we have everything we need to maintain the apparatus.

Mr. Parisi: Mr. Barr, you're the expert on this. Tell us what is wrong.

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Mr. Barr: One of the major parts of our business is working on fire trucks. To this date, we have delivered 216 fire trucks on which we have removed other people's engines and transmissions and put Detroit Diesels and Allison transmissions in. The trucks range from 8,000 miles to upwards of 15,000, 20,000 miles on a vehicle. They are 8, 10, 15 and 20 year old vehicles. This tells you that the fire service does not get the life out of the older engines. The 2 GMC's that Wallingford purchased relates back to "low bid." When the manufacturers of these fire trucks build to be the cheapest on the block, it is done by cheapening the vehicle somewhere. The 6-B-53's, two that you purchased, I wouldn't want unless I were to use them strictly for a brush truck. You are asking heavy duty performance out of a medium vehicle and they are in that vehicle to keep the cost of that vehicle down and still meet a thousand gallon permitted pump.

Mr. Gessert: When those vehicles were purchased, we were told that the reason we were buying those rather than something less expensive is that we were paying an extra \$10,000 to get top quality to last 20 years.

Mr. Barr: Gasoline engines and standard shift transmissions in fire trucks are a thing of the past. 95% of all fire trucks being manufactured today have Detroit Diesel engines and Allison automatics. Of the remaining 5%, 3% are Detroit Diesel standard shift, leaving 2% for other diesels. There is nobody buying gasoline powered fire trucks. Brush trucks, ambulance, or rescue trucks are another story. You are asking too much of a 6-B-53 engine in a 1,000 gallon fire truck. Its put in there strictly from a dollars and cents viewpoint.

Mr. Gessert: Last year, it was decided to undertake a monthly oil analysis. What were the readings on Engine 1 for the last few months?

Chief McElfish: No unusual wear on the readings. We did have a reading on a recent engine and discovered a bad injector which was repaired for \$200 and this potentially saved an engine.

Mr. Barr: There are 4 things to look for when oil samples are sent to a lab--fuel content, water content, silicon and metal content. A lub oil analysis is a good insurance check.

Mr. Barr: One of the failures on the 6-B-53 was not the engine's fault that it failed.

Mr. Hacku: On 1/20/84, the problem with Engine I was suspected to be a fuel problem because of the cold weather but I had it towed by Plunske's back to Central. When the oil pan was removed, metal chips were found in it.

Chief McElfish: Bell Detroit Diesel had a mechanic at Central by noon on 1/23/84 and since approximately \$200 had been spent on this service call, I wouldn't authorize any additional monies. Again, it can be line bored and have a new crank installed to get the unit back in service with Bill Barr's offer to pay the labor. Perhaps it would run for 2 or 5 or 20 years.

Mr. Barr: History tells me that is a very poor move.

Mr. Diana: Chief, I'm totally in favor of the Fire Department but I have some questions. If we don't waive the bidding procedure, what is the next option?

Chief McElfish: We can have the unit repaired with Bill Barr's offer to pay for labor. We have a price from Plunske without looking at the engine to be repaired for around \$8,500, not a new block, just repaired.

Mr. Diana: I haven't had the benefit of sitting on the Council before now but the track record for motor work disturbs me. I want to be sure we are doing the right thing.

Chief McElfish: The Mayor has discussed this with the Purchasing Director and if this were put out to bid, Bell Detroit Diesel would not bid on it.

Mr. Gessert: The bid process would be time consuming if each vendor were to look at it.

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Mayor Dickinson: During the course of our discussions, we had Don Dunleavy come in and he indicated that this price is less than what would be out there. I can understand the concern about the number of engines which have failed. The Assistant Chief has a record of maintenance.

Mr. Hacku: You must also take the age of the trucks into consideration.

Mrs. Bergamini: Chief, just for the record, we will never buy another LaFrance, will we? Where is the money for repair coming from?

Chief McElfish: We have the money in our own line items.

Mr. Killen: How many years can we anticipate getting out of this truck?

Mr. Barr: 10 to 15 years with the proper maintenance. If there is a mechanical problem, it could fail within 6 months. History says that we don't have that many failures with this particular engine. It has a super track record. That engine is the same engine used in every single city bus, thousands of them. Over the last 5 years, we've been trying to get fire chiefs to spec trucks like Roadway, PIE and so on so that it will last for 15 years. Sometimes, bidding causes these problems and I know in this case it caused it. Quality is cut to lower the bid.

This particular engine is not undersized by any means. When we put that engine together, all readings and dial indicators will be as they should be. The block will be changed, the crank, all bearings--the only thing we will use from your engine is the blower and sub-assemblies.

Mr. Killen: We don't know whether it was a major or miniscule problem that caused this.

Mr. Rys: If you find what caused the problem, will we get a report?

Mr. Barr: Certainly.

Vote: Council members Bergamini, Diana, Gessert, Killen, Parisi, Polanski and Rys voted aye and the motion was passed.

Mr. Gessert: Before we leave, I would like you folks to do some research and find out what happened for us.

A motion was duly made, seconded and carried and the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Delores B. Fetta
Council Secretary

Approved


Robert F. Parisi, Council Chairman

Date

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Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

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