

**TOWN OF CROMWELL - TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
41 WEST STREET, CROMWELL, CT 06416
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor S. Fortenbach, Deputy Mayor J. Henahan, Councilman Demetriades, Councilwoman J. Donohue, Councilwoman P. Luna, Councilman J. Polke, Councilman A. Waters

Also present: Town Manager Salvatore, Sondra Hathaway and Sachin Goradia of BerryDunn

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fortenbach called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. BerryDunn to provide Update/Briefing on the Climate Culture Study. Possible Discussion.

Sondra Hathaway and Sachin Goradia of BerryDunn were in attendance to give an update on the Climate Culture Study.

Ms. Hathaway informed the Council of the following:

- 84 surveys were received via online and mail by the deadline. She explained that there was an excellent return rate of about 75% and the average return rate is usually 25%.
- The questions on the survey were general questions and there were some that were opened ended.
- Several employees had long responses to the open-ended questions which was helpful and representative of individual experiences.
- They have conducted approximately several dozen in-person interviews and will remain onsite this week for one-on-one interviews. In addition, they will be conducting phone interviews next week.
- She explained that with the input they receive, they are looking for themes and multiple responses with feedback on a specific area. This is what will be in the current state assessment.
- They plan to submit a report of their findings to the Town Council within three weeks.

Ms. Hathaway clarified the decision not to include former employees. She expressed that this was her decision and she stands by it. She continued, the reason behind her decision is because the current employees have a horse in the race. Whereas, contacting people that have left employment, whatever perspective they have, they no longer have an interest in how the Town of Cromwell behaves as an employer.

She also clarified that no surveys submitted by mail or online are being omitted. She has no way of knowing if a person put in more than one survey as this was conducted anonymously. Therefore, every survey submitted online or via mail is reflected in the data.

Ms. Hathaway explained that they are building relationships with all employees and will continue working with the town to implement priorities. She stated that the priorities will be up to the Town Council. She asked the Town Council how they would like to see the next phase of the study happen.

There was discussion regarding whether or not the draft/report can be submitted and discussed in Executive Session.

Councilman Polke asked if this report will be based on facts. Concern was also expressed about the anonymity and that one person could submit several surveys with the same information. Ms. Hathaway explained that this report will not have specific examples and the information provided to the Council would be particular issues identified based on several examples provided to BerryDunn.

With that response, Councilman Polke stated that this cannot be done publicly and should be in executive session because if something looks out of place to the Town Council, it should be reviewed first. He explained he likes the public forum better than executive session, but if there is something in the report that is not true and the Council knows it is untrue, then it should be discussed privately not publicly.

Mayor Fortenbach suggested that we should first find out if a draft is suitable to provide to the Council via email. A special meeting will then be called when a final draft is prepared. BerryDunn can attend the special meeting and an item will be on the agenda to discuss the results. There will also be an item on the agenda for Town Council to review preliminary recommendations and determine how to prioritize them.

Town Manager Salvatore said he would check to see if the draft report can be provided in executive session and he will notify the Town Council and BerryDunn.

Councilwoman Donohue suggested that the Councilmen and the staff who were involved in the RFP Selection Process could review the draft if it is determined that it cannot be provided to the Town Council as a whole under Executive Session.

The Town Council thanked Ms. Hathaway and Mr. Goradia for attending the meeting.

C. ADJOURN

MOTION made by J. Donohue and **SECONDED** by J. Henehan to adjourn.
All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amanda Calve".

Amanda Calve
Secretary