

# Dunn's Corners Fire District

1 Langworthy Road

Westerly, RI 02891

November 13, 2013

Minutes

## Special District Tax Payers' Meeting

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00p.m. Moderator Matt Thomsen presiding.

Meeting was advertised in the Westerly Sun on November 5, 2013. Notice was posted at the Dunn's Corner's Fire Station #1 on Langworthy Road, Westerly Community Credit Union's Dunn's Corners office, Dunn's Corners Market, Exxon Mobil Dunn's Corners, Dunn's Corners Fire Station #2 on Post Road, Charlestown, and at East West Market Post Road, Charlestown. The notice was posted on the Rhode Island Secretary of State's eTown Crier site and on the District's web site.

Safety Protocols – Chief Frink reviewed the fire safety protocols for the meeting's attendees

Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America was conducted.

There was a moment of silence observed for those who have passed on from families of members of the Dunn's Corners Fire Department.

Reading of the Call – The meeting Call was read by District Clerk Steve White. Twenty - one persons signed the attendance roster. From the Operating Committee Matt Thomsen, Tom Algieri, Bob Delaney, Chief Mike Frink and Ken Martin, were present with Jon Schreier excused. A quorum was present.

2. Moderator Thomsen provided an overview of the short term agreement to provide fire protection services on a contractual basis through May 31, 2014 to the Bradford Fire District for an amount equal to the mil rate the Dunn's Corners Fire District bills its Westerly Tax Payers on a prorated basis. Moderator Thomsen also provided an overview of a short term agreement to lease equipment from the Bradford Fire District.

Moderator Thomsen provided a brief history of the Bradford Fire District matter explaining how their department was being evicted from its current location. Additionally, he noted that Bradford Fire District equipment leased will be brought up to code with DCFD being reimbursed by BFD for those expenses. He also informed the taxpayers that BFD was holding a meeting to approve their budget and the short term agreement on November 14, 2013.

The Moderator informed the tax payers the DCFD was looking to negotiate a multi-year deal with BFD which may include a substation which would be paid for by BFD and would be presented to DCFD Taxpayers for consideration at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

Committee member Algieri added that a substation has been continuously stated by the Chief as an important matter to be negotiated in a multiyear agreement.

Chief Frink stated that the department has currently received 5 service calls from BFD and that the average response time to get fire fighting apparatus on site has been between 10 to 12 minutes.

Committee member Delaney added that all of BFD leased equipment list has not been completely developed due to the disagreement between the disbanded Bradford Fire Department and the Bradford Fire District.

Moderator Thomsen discussed the issue of Bradford Dye; it currently has multiple tax liens filed against it; currently does not reside within any fire district; and because of a special arrangement that allowed BFD to house its equipment at a near no expense on site was not charged a fire protection tax. The committee will work to try and resolve Bradford Dye's status if a multi-year deal with BFD is executed.

A taxpayer inquired if DCFD taxes would rise if the short term agreement was approved. Moderator Thomsen informed the attendees they would not.

3. Moderator Thomsen called for a motion to approve a resolution: To enter into a short term agreement to expire May 31, 2014 to provide fire protection services to the Bradford Fire District to be billed at an amount equal to that charged by the District to its Westerly taxpayers prorated for the actual number of months of service is provided and to enter into a short term lease with BFD for the use of that District's equipment.

*A motion was made and seconded,*

Taxpayer, J. Angelo requested that his prepared statement opposed to the agreement be read and entered into the record. (Attached)

*By a show of hands of those in attendance the motion was passed with one opposed.*

4. Moderator Thomsen called for a motion to authorize the Operating Committee to negotiate on behalf of the District a multiyear agreement to provide fire protection services to the Bradford Fire District with such agreement being brought before the District's taxpayers for consideration at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

*A motion was made, seconded and so voted by a show of hands with one opposed.*

5. Moderator Thomsen called for a motion to authorize the Operating Committee to negotiate on behalf of the District a multiyear lease agreement with Bradford Fire District for the use of BFD's equipment with such agreement being brought before the District's taxpayers for consideration at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

*A motion was made, seconded and so voted by a show of hands with one opposed.*

6. Old Business – (None)

7. New Business – (None)

8. *A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to adjourn the Special meeting of the Dunn's Corners Fire District at 7:35pm.*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Steve White*

District Clerk Dunn's Corners Fire District

DRAFT

# Attachment

## Position Paper re: The DCFD Proposed Interim Contract with the BFD

Given the current crisis situation in Bradford I can understand the urgent need for fire protection services in that community. What I don't understand is what the situation in Bradford has to do with the taxpayers in the Dunn's Corners Fire District. More importantly, why does the crisis in Bradford necessitate a "special meeting" of the DCFD taxpayers being called for the purpose of voting on whether or not to accept a proposed contract for which a vote by the taxpayers is not required according to the DCFD Charter. It is not clear at this point what purpose is being served by presenting the proposed contract to the DCFD tax payers, a contract that clearly is for the benefit of the residents of the Bradford Fire District. The only plausible reason for such a vote is for the DCFD taxpayers to provide concurrence with or to ratify a decision that has already been made by both Operating Committees, spread the blame as it were. Even more confusing to me is the unanswered question as to why is the DCFD Operating Committee is spending time, tax payer money and effort to resolve the crisis in Bradford when there is more than enough issues to deal within the DCFD.

1. To date I have not witnessed or been presented with any of the following:
  - (i) A comparative analysis of alternative solutions to the Bradford crisis besides the DCFD proposed remedy
  - (ii) A cost/benefit analysis by either party of any alternative solutions to the BFD crisis
  - (iii) True and accurate costs to both parties based on valid and reliable cost accounting practices and procedures
  - (iv) A impact statement that addresses the total impact of the proposed implementation on both districts
2. To Date what I have personally witnessed has been:
  - (i) Rationalization rather than justification
  - (II) Subjectivity rather than objectivity
  - (iii) Self-interest rather than common interest being served

The proposed contract that is being presented this evening is billed as a short term, interim solution to the BFD crisis. However, in actuality the proposed contract is the first step in a long term progression of stated, intended contracts and association between the DCFD and the BFD as evidenced by the facts listed below:

- (i) that the contract being proposed calls for the BFD to lease to the DCFD personal

property in the form of hose for which the DCFD has not expressed a need. This Proposed interim contract is a place-holder for future contracts

- (ii) The interim contract does not include or address the disposition of the two main BFD fire trucks
- (iii) A follow-on, non-specific, date to be determined, contract between both parties re: the two BFD fire trucks to be negotiated after the proposed interim contract is signed
- (vi) After May 31, 2014 a contract for fire prevention and protection services between the DCFD and the BFD with the duration, terms and conditions to be determined

There are several inescapable facts:

- (i) Bradford cannot afford its own fire department as is and has been demonstrated
- (ii) The DCFD is pandering to the residents of the BFD with the offer of an arbitrary .38 mil rate and the unrealistic hint of a fire station to eventually be located in the BFD
- (iii) The DCFD is avoiding any reference to eventual future costs to all fire districts concerned
- (iv) There is no verifiable or incontrovertible proof that the fire districts that comprise the DCFD consortium will not be subsidizing the BFD
- (v) The proposed interim contract and subsequent contracts will render the BFD just another Home Owner's Association similar to Weekapaug, Shelter Harbor, Shady Harbor and Quonny Central Beach

J.A.A.

11/13/13