

Dunn's Corners Fire District
1 Langworthy Road
Westerly, RI 02891
Minutes
Annual Meeting
July 20, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, Moderator Matt Thomsen presiding.

Legal Notices - The meeting was advertised in the Westerly Sun on Monday July 11, 2016. Notice was posted at the Westerly Community Credit Union's Dunn's Corners Office; Dunn's Corners Market, Dunn's Corners Fire Station #1 on Langworthy Road, Dunn's Corners Mobil, East West Market, Charlestown and Dunn's Corners Fire Station #2 on Post Road, Charlestown. The notice was posted on the district's website and the Rhode Island Secretary of State's e-Town Crier site on July 9, 2016.

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

Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was conducted.

Moment of Silence – There was a moment of silence observed for those who have passed on from families of members of the Dunn's Corners Fire Department including but not limited to Chief Richard Champlin, Deputy Chief Joe Popiolek, Lieutenant Larry Pendleton and Fire Police/Secretary William Brennan.

Reading of the Call – District Clerk Steve White read the meeting Call. Thirty-three (33) taxpayers signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

July 15, 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes - Copies of the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting were printed and available for those in attendance.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the July 15, 2015 Annual Meeting minutes.

Reports

Chief's Report – Chief Frink provided an update on the following items.

The Fire Department responded to 795 calls over the past 12 months an increase of 78 over the previous year.

He informed the taxpayers that the state of the department is very good. The membership totals 41, with 27 active firefighters, 3 fire police, 4 probationary firefighters, 4 junior fire fighters and 4 admin/life members. The Chief discussed the success of the first "Honored Members" night and went on to recognize the passing of former members: Richard "Cappy" Champlin, Deputy

Chief Joseph Popiolek, Lieutenant Larry Pendleton and Fire Police and Secretary Bill Brennan.

The department had scheduled 123 training classes, drills and work parties amounting to 1575 man-hours of training. The goal is to have 100% of the department's firefighters trained to National Fire Protection Association Firefighter I level. The Chief noted that the department responded to 399 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) calls and that 4 additional department members have obtained or are in the process of obtaining their EMS-B level certifications.

The Chief stated that the District received \$29,152 in grants last year for turnout gear, wild land Personal Protection Equipment, and communication equipment upgrades. He noted that the District applied for \$58,000 in grants from the RI EMA to upgrade the District's communication system of which \$23,000 was awarded and by sharpening our pencils and being creative we were able to install a repeater on the town water tower in Bradford and replace our mobile apparatus radios. The Chief noted that he had worked diligently on a regional Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the replacement of all of the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) in all four Westerly departments. The replacement is mandatory after the SCBA's reach the end of their life expectancy. The estimated total replacement is just under \$800,000. The Chief recognized Watch Hill Fire Department Chief Bob Peacock for his assistance in writing the narratives for the grant. The Chief informed the taxpayers that the grants are very competitive and we did not receive one this year, however he will be reapplying over the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

The Chief informed the tax payers that during the past year he completed his service as President of the R.I. Association of Fire Chief's and went on to explain that his goal during the time was to shine a better light on the fire service and counteract the negative press. He noted that during his tenure as President the association began running TV spots on Holiday Cooking Safety, Christmas Tree Safety, as well as stories of the men and women who make up the fire service.

The District completed a number of capital improvements which included improving radio communications, replacement of the apparatus bay doors at Station 1, purchasing and outfitting Marine 1, and upgrading the telephone system. These projects were completed from the proceeds from the sale of Engine 2 and came in \$92,504.00 under budget. Additionally, the Chief noted that the new business fire alarm system switch over from wired to wireless was on target to be completed by July 31, 2016.

For fiscal year 2016-2017 the capital expenses included in the budget are; the replacement of the Chief's car, upgraded LED exterior lighting at both Stations 1 and 2, upgraded security systems at Stations 1 and 2, replacing the hot water system at Station 2, and Station 1 interior painting. The projects totaling \$29,000 would be paid from the General Fund with unexpended money from the previous year's capital expense budget.

The Chief spent time discussing some of the short comings of Station 1, primarily that it had been cited for no second means of egress from the upstairs, additionally it is no longer ADA compliant, and is running out of room. He also noted the need to make it a more business friendly environment. He noted renovating Station 1 will need to be addressed. He gave an update on the required replacement of all SCBA equipment in 2019 at a cost of \$300,000.

The Chief informed the taxpayers about the Department's Community outreach which included and Open House; collaborating with the Town and the American Red Cross to install smoke detectors in homes lacking them; participating in the Fight for Air Climb in Providence; working in preschools during Fire Prevention week; sponsoring the Karl Kenyon Smokey Bear Parade as well as coordinating with other government agencies.

In conclusion the Chief thanked the Operating Committee, Clerk, Tax Collector, Office Mmanager, his officers and firefighters and, all the families and significant others of the firefighters who allow them to take the time to be away from them. He also thanked his wife and children who have been understanding of his absences.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the Chief's Report.

Treasurer's Report – The Treasurer reviewed the financial statements for the period of June 2015 through May 2016.

The 2015-2016 financial statements showed a net loss of (\$122,038.73) a result of using the gain on sale proceeds of Engine 2 (recorded in the 2014-2015 financial statements) to fund capital expenses and hold the tax rate steady during fiscal year 2015-2016. Additionally, he discussed the District's equity position which stood at 1,865,035.14 and that the District was able to make an additional \$35,000 in principal debt reduction payments on Station 2 during the year.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to accept the Treasurer's Report and accept the fiscal year end 2015-2016 financial statements.

Moderator's Report –

The Moderator introduced Ron Meneo from the Friends of the Quonochontaug Grange (FOTQG) who gave an update on the progress made over the past year. Mr. Meneo thanked the Dunn's Corners Fire District for its support and it Operating Committee for working collaboratively with the group. He reminded the attendees that the facility is an asset to the community for events as well as an emergency meeting place.

Mr. Meneo went on to cover the accomplishes achieved in rehabbing the facility over that past year which included, re-grading to resolve basement flooding, poison ivy removal, exterior trim painting, window repairs, flag pole repairs, updated signage, women's bathroom renovation, cleaning of the well, electrical repairs and a thorough kitchen cleaning.

He informed the attendees of an Open House event for the facility in September, that FOTQG currently has about 100 members and went on to thank the District and the group's supporters.

The Moderator then asked Solicitor Attorney Cozzolino to report on the status of the law suit regarding the dispatcher. The Solicitor noted that he and the Chief have been working with Attorney Patrick McKinney to resolve the matter of the DCFD being the first responders dispatched to the Bradford Industrial Park(BIP) even though the park is not within the DCFD or

any of the its contracted districts . He noted that while the dispute is going on, DCFD is legally obligated to respond and that all sides are looking for a reasonable agreement.

Taxpayer G. Laudone inquired as to what district BIP belonged to. The response was that BIP is not part of any district, which has created this issue.

Taxpayer J Angelo inquired who the parties of the suit were. The response being the Westerly Ambulance Corp and the Dunn's Corners Fire District are the parties involved.

The Moderator informed the taxpayers that the District has entered into contracts with both the Shady and Sheleter Harbor Fire Districts, the contracts to be posted to the District website soon. He stated that the Bradford Fire District contract was in its final form and he expected it to be signed soon and the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District is on extension.

The moderator stated that the ad hoc Charter Review Committee did not meet because of the amount of other business which had to be acted upon during the year and if anyone is interested in serving on the committee to please contact him.

Finally, the Moderator thanked the Operating Committee of (Chief Mike Frink, Bob Delaney, Tom Algieri, Ken Martin and Jon Schreier); the officers, employees and volunteer members of the department. He went on to offer special thanks to Treasurer Bob Delaney, Tax Collector Diane Nardone, Administrative Assistant Mary Rathbun and District Clerk Steve White for their efforts.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to accept the Moderator's Report.

Tax Assessor's Report – Tax Assessor Diane Nardone reported for the fiscal year 2015 – 2016 property within the town of Westerly had an assessed value of \$924,308,000 and was taxed at a rate of .428 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$395,765.37. Of that total the District collected 96.3% or \$381,022.54 plus an additional \$907.95 in interest payments on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 98.7% factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2013 thru 2014, bringing the total to \$390,877.55. For the town of Charlestown property had an assessed value of \$639,039,500 and was taxed at a rate of \$.428 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$273,421.60. The District collected 97.2% or \$265,812.45 in principal and \$497.38 in interest on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 99.2% or \$271,332.72 factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2012 thru 2014.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to accept the Tax Assessor's Report.

Financial Plan and Operating Budget 2016/2017 – The Chief reviewed the proposed expense budget recommended to the taxpayers by the Operating Committee and developed by the Chief and the Board of Engineers with input from the Operating Committee. The draft budget totals \$959,533.00, which is an increase of \$15,561 or 1.65% over the 2015/2016 budget

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the proposed 2016/2017 budget.

Resolutions:

Chief's Vehicle - Resolved to allow the District to spend up to \$65,000 to replace Car 1 (vehicle) and to allow the Operating Committee the discretion to purchase the vehicle with funds from the Restricted Truck Fund or a combination of Restricted Truck Funds and financing not to exceed a period of 60 months. It is further resolved that if any portion of the vehicle is financed at a lower rate than the Station 2 loan rate, that the Operating Committee is authorized to use funds from the Restricted Truck Fund up to the amount financed for the vehicle to reduce the outstanding principal balance on the Station 2 loan. And it is further resolved that financing expenses including principal and interest if any for the vehicle be paid from the unrestricted General Fund for fiscal year 2016-2017.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Upgrades to Security and Information Systems for Stations 1 & 2 - Resolved to use up to \$10,000 from the unrestricted General fund to add additional cameras to improve security and new cat 6 cables to upgrade information system processing at both Stations 1 & 2.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Painting Station 1 - Resolved to use up to \$9,000 from the Buildings and Grounds restricted fund to paint the main entrance, meeting room and stairwells at Station 1.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Hot Water System Station 2- Resolved to use up to \$6,000 from the unrestricted General Fund to purchase and install a new hot water system at Station 2.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

LED Security Lighting Stations 1 & 2 - Resolved to use up to \$5,000 from the unrestricted General Fund to purchase and install exterior LED lighting at both Stations 1 & 2 for security and general safety purposes.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Funeral Fund – Resolved to establish a \$5,000 Restricted Funeral Fund the monies to come from unexpended Leadership Dollars in the 2015-2016 budget, to be used by the Department for expenses related to future commemoration ceremonies of current and past members of the Dunn's Corners Fire Department.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Pay down on Station 2 Loan - Resolved to leave it to the OC's discretion to pay down up to \$25,000 on the principal owed on the Station 2 loan from the general fund.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Authority To Access Restricted Funds for Unanticipated Repairs - Resolved that the Operating Committee be given the authority to access the Restricted Truck Fund for up to \$10,000.00 to mitigate unanticipated truck repairs and the Restricted Equipment Fund for up to \$5,000.00 to mitigate unanticipated equipment repairs that may occur between Annual Meetings.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Authority to Lease the Grange Facility – Resolved to authorize the Operating Committee to enter into a multi-year lease agreement with the Friends of the Quonochontaug Grange organization.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Ratification and Approval of Acts of Officers - Resolved that each and all of the resolutions, acts and proceedings of the District Officers, as shown by the records of the respective officers in carrying out and promoting the purposes, objects and interests of the Dunn's Corners Fire District, be and the same approved, ratified and hereby made the acts and deeds of the Dunn's Corners Fire District.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Authorization of Representation - Resolved that the moderator, or such person or persons as the Operating Committee or the Moderator shall designate, be and hereby are fully authorized and empowered to enter objections or legal actions on behalf of the Dunn's Corners Fire District in reference to any zoning matters, liquor licenses, legislative matters, or any other subject affecting the Dunn's Corners Fire District.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Tax Resolution – Resolved that the taxable inhabitants of said District qualified to vote on any proposition to impose tax, in District meeting legally assembled on the 20th day of July, A.D., 2016, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property

in the sum of not less than \$700,138 nor more than \$707,140 credited to. Said tax is for ordinary expenses of interest and charges, for the payment of interest and indebtedness in whole or in part of said District and for other purposes authorized by law. The Board of Assessors shall assess and apportion said tax on the inhabitants and ratable property of said District of the 31st day of December, 2015, at 12:00 o'clock Noon, according to law, and shall, on completion of said assessment, date, certify, and sign the same and deliver to and deposit the same in the office of the District Clerk on or before the 15th day of August, A.D. 2016. The District Clerk, on receipt of said assessment, shall forthwith make a copy of the same and deliver it to the District Treasurer, who shall forthwith issue and affix to said copy a warrant under his/her hand, directed to the Collector of Taxes of said District commanding him/her to proceed and collect said tax on the persons and estates liable therefore. Said tax shall be due and payable on and between the first day of September next and the 30th day of September, 2016, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2016, shall carry, until collected, a penalty at the rate of twelve per centum (12%) per annum upon such unpaid tax. A \$2.00 handling fee will be imposed on reissued tax bills sent for collection purposes. No tax bill sent out shall be less than five and 00/100 (5.00) dollars.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the resolution as presented.

Special Appropriation - Resolved that the Treasurer be directed to deposit in the Unrestricted General Fund Surplus the total of the unexpended appropriations as shown by the records of the Treasurer for the fiscal year 2015-2016, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2017, the Treasurer is authorized to use such portion of said sum of unexpended appropriations and other monies not otherwise appropriated as he or she deems necessary in anticipation of receipt of taxes assessed December 31, 2015.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the resolution as presented.

Tax Anticipation Note - Resolved that the District Treasurer be and hereby is authorized and empowered during the current fiscal year of the District, commencing June 1, 2016, and ending May 31, 2017, to borrow such sum or sums of money as shall be necessary for the payment of the current liabilities and expenses of the District, but not to exceed in the whole the sum of Fifty thousand AND NO/100 (\$50,000) DOLLARS and to issue negotiable promissory note or notes of the District therefore, which shall be made payable not later than one (1) year from the respective date or dates thereof. Negotiable notes issued pursuant to the authority hereof shall be signed by the District Treasurer and countersigned by the District Clerk, and such countersignatures shall be conclusive evidence to all holders of such note or notes of the approval and consent of the District and the District Officers to the loan or loans evidenced thereby. All terms and conditions of said note or notes and the method of sale thereof not fixed herein or by the provisions of law or the charter of the District may be fixed by the District Treasurer. The District Treasurer is hereby authorized and empowered to renew any of said notes from time to time, but any such renewal note shall be due not later than one (1) year of the original note so renewed.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the resolution as presented.

Awards and Recognition

A. **Swearing in of Line Officers** - The Chief swore in the following line officers at the meeting:

Deputy Chiefs: Keith Kenyon, Carl Johnson, Tom Algieri
Capt: Dan Schilke
Lieutenants: Jeff Thomas, Station 2 Keith Moody, Nick Schilke
Fire Police Capt. Bob Delaney

Nominating Committee Report: Andy Schilke, Art Ganz, and Gina Laudone submitted The Nominating Committee report. Committee Member Andy Schilke presented the report.

The Nominating Committee of the Dunn's Corners Fire District submitted to the Electors of the Dunn's Corners Fire District the following Slate of Candidates to serve on the Operating Committee:

- Bob Delaney – Term to expire 2018
- Jon Schreier – Term to expire 2018

There were no further nominations and a motion was made to have the clerk cast one ballot to elect the proposed slate as members at large of the Operating Committee.

Old Business – No old business.

New Business

Election of the Nominating Committee

A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the 2016-17 Nominating Committee of Andy Schilke, Gina Laudone, and Art Ganz.

Public Comments – None

Adjournment:

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the Dunn's Corners Fire District at 8:10 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve White
District Clerk

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