

Dunn's Corners Fire District
1 Langworthy Road
Westerly, RI 02891
Minutes
Annual Meeting
July 18, 2018

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 Saturday July 7, 2018 and Sunday July 8, 2018. 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 June 29, 2018.

Safety Protocols – Chief DeGrave 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.

Reading of the Call – District Clerk Steve White read the meeting Call. Thirty-one (31) taxpayers signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

July 19, 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes - Copies of the minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting were printed and available for those in attendance.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the July 19, 2017 Annual Meeting minutes.

Reports

Chief's Report (attached) – Chief DeGrave started his report by thanking his wife and family for their love and support.

The Chief stated that the District finished another successful year and discussed his background as Rhode Island ADA investigator and Deputy Chief within the Kingston Volunteer Fire Department.

He Discussed his open-door policy and the structural changes he has been making at the department which included the restructuring to two deputy chiefs and the addition of a new full time Fire Marshal/Fire Fighter.

He stated over the past year our firefighters conducted over 1500 hours of training.

The membership breaks down as follows: Senior Members 32; Life Members 5; Associate Members 4; Junior Members 3; Probationary Members 6.

Incidents per district were as follows: DCFD 550; Bradford 31; Shelter Harbor 40; Central Beach 23; Shady Harbor 2; Mutual Aide 144.

Project completion included - 7 new sets of personal protective fire gear purchased and fitted; hot water system at station 2 replaced; new security and DVR recorder system installed at station 1, station 2 and the Grange; IT improvements; phase 1 of the new radio project; RISE energy survey; roof and vent leak repairs.

Future projects include improving the communications infrastructure; replacing Squad2 and Squad 3 with one multi-purpose vehicle; acquiring new NFPA compliant SCBA Air Paks; installation of AEDs on all apparatus; HVAC improvements; building efficiency enhancements.

The Chief noted that the Department received a \$2,500 match grant for brush fire gear but unfortunately did receive an AFG grant for SCBA equipment.

The Chief concluded by thanking all the following for their support; retiring Chief Frink; Deputy Chief Carl Johnson; Office manager Mary Rathbun; the Operating Committee; the Department Line Officers; the volunteer member and associates of the department; the local community and taxpayers; and especially is wife Jamie and daughter Cameron.

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 2017 through May 2018.

The 2017-18 financial statements showed a net surplus of 40,793.17. Additionally, he discussed the District's equity position which stood at \$2,216,187, and total District Assets which stood at \$3,294,819.

The Treasurer noted that the collection rate for the fiscal year was approximately 97% and that he expects to recoup the remaining 3% during the current fiscal year through the tax sale process.

The Treasurer anticipates that overall District debt will fall below \$850,000 during the current fiscal year and that most of the debt will be paid off over the next six-years.

He thanked, Bookkeeper Kerry Schreier, Tax Collector Diane Nardone, and Office Manager Mary Rathbun for their support over the past year.

Jim Mara representing the Central Beach Fire District inquired as to when the tax information used for billing will be available, what percentage of the budget does Central Beach represent and when will the billing information be available.

The Treasurer noted that Central Beach assessment data used to calculate bills could be accessed through the Charlestown Tax collector's office.

Jim Mara inquired as to whether the billing figures could be available in three weeks.

The Treasurer stated yes.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclamation to accept the Treasurer's Report and accept the fiscal year end 2017-18 unaudited financial statements.

Moderator's Report – The Moderator stated to the electors that the Operating Committee was very busy over the past year noting that the Committee conducted a search for a new Chief and stating to all in attendance that the he is confident that the District got the right person.

He also informed the taxpayers that the Committee work diligently to resolve the Bradford Industrial Park (BIP) issue. The Moderator turned the meeting over to District Solicitor Mike Cozzolino to provide an update.

The Solicitor provided an overview of the general circumstances of the matter which included the background of how DCFD after contracting with the Bradford Fire District was being toned out for calls to the BIP even though the park was not part of any fire district and was not paying for fire protection services.

He informed the taxpayers that the District was involved in a legal process that went all the way to the State Supreme Court where the Districts position that BIP was not part of a fire district and that DCFD was not bound to provide fire protection services to the facility was upheld. The District continues to communicate regularly with its dispatch provider Westerly Ambulance Corp on how to manage the matter and the issue is 90% resolved.

The Solicitor turned the meeting back over to the Moderator.

The Moderator noted that the Friends of the Quonchontaug Grange (FOTQG) have worked hard to update the Grange facility and improve its profitability and asked its representative Ron Meneo to say a few words.

Mr. Meneo stated that FOTQG was a 501c3 organization and reviewed some of the group's activities in revitalizing the Grange which celebrated its 70th anniversary on July 17. Mr. Meneo noted that the group has been able to upgrade the facility's audio visual capabilities, has painted the main level, improved the restrooms, expanded the parking area and has worked with the Quonchontaug Historical Society to establish space which it sublets for its historical records preservation.

Mr. Meneo thanked the Operating Committee for its support of the FOTQG and the facility.

The Moderator thanked Mr. Meneo for the fantastic job the group has been doing.

The Moderator concluded his report by thanking the following: the volunteers; officers; Operating Committee members Bob Delaney, Ken Martin, Jeff Thomas, and Rich Thomsen, Chief DeGrave; and the District's administrative support group of Mary Rathbun, Diane Nardone, and Kerry Schreier.

Finally, he thanked the taxpayers for their support of the Department.

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 2017–18 that property within the town of Westerly had an assessed value of \$912,392,900 and was taxed at a rate of .45 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$410,744. Of that total, the District collected 95% or \$389,252.86 plus an additional \$885.38 in interest payments on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 98% factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2014 thru 2016, bringing the total to \$400,639.95. For the town of Charlestown property had an assessed value of \$699,418,700 and was taxed at a rate of \$.45 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$314,632.71. The District collected 95% or \$298,650.25 in principal and \$386.39 in interest on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 96% or \$303,537.06 factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2014 thru 2016.

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

Financial Plan and Operating Budget 2018/2019 – 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 \$1,084,269, which is an increase of \$37,658.34 or 3.59% over the 2017/18 budget.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the proposed 2018/2019 budget.

Swearing in of Officers – Chief DeGrave started by announcing the promotion of Captain Keith Moody to the rank of Deputy Chief of Personnel & Administration.

The Chief swore in the following officers:

- Deputy Chief Carl Johnson – Car2
- Deputy Chief Keith Moody – Car3
- Captain Dan Schilke (excused) - Car4
- Lieutenant Jeff Thomas – Car6
- Lieutenant Nick Schilke – Car7

Resolutions

Squad 2 & 3 Vehicle Replacements - Resolved to sell or trade in the existing vehicles Squad 2, Squad 3 and the bucket truck and to use the proceeds and up to \$44,000.00 from the restricted truck fund to purchase new vehicle(s) inclusive of a snow plow. If interest rates are favorable

compared to the District's highest interest rate loan then the Treasurer is authorized to borrow against the new vehicle and pay down the highest rate loan, a comparable amount.

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

Building Repairs Stations 1 & 2 - Resolved to use up to \$20,000 from the restricted building fund account for necessary repairs.

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

Automated External Defibrillators (AED) - Resolved to use up to \$14,000 from the restricted equipment fund account for AED's for all apparatus.

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

Radio System Equipment- Resolved to use up to \$85,000 from the unrestricted general fund for the purchase of radio equipment.

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

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs) - Resolved to use up to \$95,000 from the restricted equipment fund account for the purchase of SCBAs.

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 \$20,000 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.

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 18th day of July, A.D., 2018, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property in the sum of not less than \$777,996 nor more than \$793,555 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, 2017, 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. 2018. 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, 2018, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2018, 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 acclimation 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 2017-2018, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2019, 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, 2017.

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, 2018, and ending May 31, 2019, 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 acclamation to approve the resolution as presented.

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 be voted on to serve on the Operating Committee for a two-year term to expire at the 2020 annual meeting:

- Robert J. Delaney (incumbent)
- Matthew Manni
- Louis Misto
- Richard E, Thomsen (incumbent)

Ballots were provided to the taxpayers in attendance and a vote was conducted. After the tabulation of the ballots Robert Delaney and Richard Thomsen were elected to serve two-year terms as at-large members of the Operating Committee expiring at the end of the 2020 Annual meeting.

The Nominating Committee thanked both Mr. Manni and Mr. Misto for their willingness to serve.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Nominating Committee report.

Old Business – No old business.

New Business

Appointment of a Tax Collector – *A motion was made, seconded and so voted to reappoint Diane Nardone as Tax Collector until the September Operating Committee meeting where Ms. Nardone will be reappointed as Tax Collector for the remainder of the fiscal year.*

Smokey the Bear Parade – The annual Karl E. Kenyon Smokey the Bear Parade will be held on Thursday July 19, 2018.

75th Anniversary – The Department will hosting an Open House event on September 22, 2018 to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Dunn’s Corners Fire Department. More information on the event will be posted to the District’s website www.dunnscornersfire.com.

Election of the Nominating Committee

A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the 2018-19 Nominating Committee of Andy Schilke, Gina Laudone, and Art Ganz.

Public Comments – None

Adjournment:

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to adjourn the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Dunn’s Corners Fire District.

Meeting adjourned at 8.09 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve White
District Clerk