

Dunn's Corners Fire District

1 Langworthy Rd
Westerly, RI 02891

Minutes Operating Committee Meeting July 7, 2014

The Dunn's Corners Fire District Operating Committee (OC) convened on Monday July 7, 2014 at 6:00 PM, in Fire Station #1.

Attendees were comprised of OC members Matt Thomsen, Tom Algieri, Ken Martin, Chief Mike Frink, and Bob Delaney. Jon Schreier was excused.

Additional attendees: From VFIS of Southern New England Regional Director Brad Preston, District Solicitor Vin Naccarato and District Clerk Steve White.

Actions of the OC (all votes unanimous unless otherwise noted):

Agenda Items

VFIS Insurance Update – Brad Preston of VFIS met with the Committee at Chief Frink's request to review the District's coverage for Injuries on Duty and Disability Retirement. Mr. Preston informed the Committee that Rhode Island and Massachusetts are the only two states that do not allow for workers compensation insurance for firefighters, EMS and police officers. In Rhode Island it is codified under RI General Law 45-19-1 and the District bears the responsibility.

Mr. Preston reviewed how the coverage works differently for Full Time fire fighters and Volunteers. Both Full Time fire fighters and volunteers are covered up to a lifetime maximum of \$200,000 with no time limit for injuries or medical issues arising due to the performance of their duties.

For disability coverage Full Time employees are covered up to a \$1,000.00 per week for a maximum 5year period or to retirement which ever occurs first. Volunteers are covered up to \$1,000.00 per week until retirement.

There was talk on adding long-term disability and or catastrophic coverage to exiting policies because the district is not part of the State Retirement System, which would pay a disability retirement pension in the event of a permanent and long-term disability.

The committee discussed exploring the State Retirement System in greater detail and working with the Southern league whom the District participates with in buying group insurance coverage to increase the levels of coverage potentially to a \$1.00 million.

It was noted that the general rule of thumb for a firefighter to be considered full time or primarily a fire fighter is 25 hours per week.

Bradford Fire District Insurance Coverage - Brad Preston informed the Committee that the District's property and casualty coverage includes all contracted and mutual aid activities as well as all equipment leased from other districts.

Bradford Printing – The Committee reviewed with the Solicitor Vin Naccarato the status of Bradford Printing which was denied inclusion into the Bradford Fire District. Bradford Printing has applied to join the Ashaway Fire District. The Committee requested that if Bradford Printing is denied inclusion into the Ashaway District that the Solicitor send a letter to the Westerly Dispatch informing them that the Dunn's Corners Fire Department will no longer be responding to calls at Bradford Printing.

Previous Meeting Minutes – *A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2014 meeting.*

Next Operating Committee Meeting - The next regular meeting of the Operating Committee is TBD.

Financial Statements - Review of the June Financial Statements was tabled until the next Operating Committee meeting.

Proposed 2014-2015 Draft Budget – Committee member T. Algieri wanted to go on record as stating that he abstains on voting on the section of the budget that deals with incentives and stipends for the Deputy Chiefs.

The Chief requested the Committee amend the draft budget to include a salary increase for the Administrative Assistant to \$17.00 per hour given the increased level of responsibilities of the position.

A motion was made, seconded and defeated by a vote of 3 to 2 on increasing the draft budget to allow for an increase in the Administrative Assistant's salary to \$17.00 per hour.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve increasing the draft budget to allow for an increase in the Administrative Assistant's salary to \$16.75 per hour.

Full Time Firefighter/Facilities Manager – The Chief reviewed why he believed that from an operational and insurance stand point it would be better for the department that the additional staff to be hired in the draft 2014/2015 budget be classified as primarily a firefighter who in addition to having firefighting responsibilities will manage the District's facilities.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to allow the Chief if the budget is approved by the taxpayers to recruit a full time Firefighter/Facilities Manager.

Split mil Rate – The Committee discussed the necessity of maintaining a split mil rate for the Westerly and Charlestown Taxpayers of the District especially given the addition

of the Bradford contract and to going back to the practice of applying a single mil rate to all taxpayers.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to return to a single mil rate for all District Tax Payers.

Rescue Pumper Financing – The Treasurer informed the Committee that he was informed that the original rate quoted for financing the Rescue Pumper and approved by the Committee at its January meeting was no longer available and a higher rate was quoted. The Treasurer obtained a competing quote from another institution that offered two options; a variable rate term product and a fixed rate term product. The Committee found the quotes, especially the variable, to be very competitive and authorized the Treasurer to explore negotiating terms and conditions more favorable to the District.

Resolutions – The Committee reviewed the resolutions to be presented to the taxpayers. It was agreed that the Moderator would get the Solicitor to draft the Bradford Fire District Contract resolution and that the Chief would provide the Clerk with the language necessary to complete a resolution to switch from a wired business fire alarm service to a wireless business fire alarm service.

New Business – No new business.

Public Comments – Taxpayer James Angelo brought to the Committee's attention the potential benefit in group insurance and catastrophic insurance purchases. He additionally discussed his thoughts on making the tax collection process more efficient.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve White
District Clerk