

Dunn's Corners Fire District

1 Langworthy Rd
Westerly, RI 02891

Minutes Operating Committee Meeting May 09, 2017

The Dunn's Corners Fire District Operating Committee (OC) convened on Tuesday, May 09, 2017 at 6:00p.m. at Station #1.

Attendees were comprised of the OC members Matt Thomsen, Bob Delaney, Tom Algieri, Ken Martin and interim Chief Kenyon. A quorum was present.

Additional Attendee(s): District Clerk Steve White.

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

Agenda Items:

Pledge of Allegiance - The meeting started at 6:30pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Operating Committee Seat Appointment – The committee after reviewing potential candidates provided by the Nominating Committee to fill the unexpired term of Jonathan Schreier offered the position to Richard Thomsen.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to appoint Richard Thomsen to fill the unexpired term of Jonathan Schreier until the 2017 Annual Meeting.

Committee member R. Thomsen then joined the meeting.

2015-2016 Fiscal Year Audit – Jason Cote CPA representing the firm of Hoyt, Filipetti and Malaghan, LLC reviewed the report with the Committee. He stated that the firm has provided an “Unmodified Opinion” or clean audit. The general fund at year end had a \$369 thousand General Fund balance representing a 33% surplus, which was better than the 15%-20% benchmark for governmental agencies. He noted actual revenue was \$45,000 better than budget; no management letter was issued; and the firm was happy with the internal controls.

Other items discussed included getting the Department its 501C3 designation; and getting a determination regarding issuing W2's for stipends paid to volunteer firefighters.

Finally he noted that part of the reason the District is in such good financial health is that it offers a defined contribution retirement plan to its eligible employees and not a defined benefit plan. J. Cote stated that typically it is the defined benefit retirement plan programs that put pressure on the financials of fire districts.

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

Labor Attorney Review – Labor attorney Noel Chapman met with committee to discuss the questions raised by the department’s members as to the most appropriate manner for reporting stipend income paid to volunteer firefighters (W2 versus 1099).

She explained to the committee that she would need to research the matter as to how it pertains to IRS rules as well as federal and state labor laws. She noted that the members’ preference was clearly to go with W2s.

The committee also asked N. Chapman to research that if the volunteer members receive W2 income will it change their volunteer status.

Previous Meeting Minutes – *A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the April 11, 2017 and April 17, 2017 meeting minutes as presented.*

Next OC Meeting – The next OC meeting is scheduled to take place at Station #1 on Monday May 15, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

Friends of the Quonochontaug Grange (FOTQG) – Ron Meneo on behalf of the FOTQG provided a verbal and written report to the Committee.

The report noted the following:

Grange revenues to date for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2017 equals \$6,595.10 which represents a 72% increase over the 5-year average of \$3,829. A check for 816.35 was provided to the committee bringing the revenue from Grange rentals to the annual lease amount of \$6,000.

The FOTQG requested that the 2017-2018 capital budget for the Grange be funded at the same level as the 2016-2017 budget and that \$1,500 in additional funding be allotted to cover deferred maintenance items. The group also requested that funds be set aside in the budget to expand the Grange’s parking lot. A plan which included 24 additional spots was provided.

The FOTQG requested approval for a Grange “70th Anniversary Celebration” to be held at the facility on July 8th. The barbeque style event would provide limited beer and wine through a licensed provider and all insurances and certificates would be in place prior to the event.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to allow the group to proceed with the event subject to all necessary insurance policies and certificates being in force prior to July 8, 2017.

The group reported the construction of the Quonnie Historical Society storage area in the Grange has begun. Insurance certificates were provided.

FOTQG informed the committee that multiple electrical items at the facility needed attention which includes a fire alarm and light enunciator in the renovated men’s room; a lock on the electrical breaker box, installation of a junction box; and lighting in the boiler room and attic.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to allow FOTQG to take care of the electrical matters requiring prompt attention.

Plans are being developed to upgrade and renovate the kitchen into a catering kitchen and to upgrade the sound and projection capability on the main level. Quotes are being obtained by qualified contractors.

The group is looking into the possibility of clearing a walkway between the rear yard of Station 2 and St. Andrew's Church. The committee was supportive of this action.

The Treasurer inquired if the group has applied for any grants. A grant is currently out for audio visual equipment.

Member T. Algieri noted that the tree will need to be pulled away from the building,

Treasurer's Report - The Treasurer noted that the financial statements show that the District is tracking well to budget.

He informed the Committee that the tax sale was held and will update the committee as to the final results after consultation with the tax sale attorney.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's report.

Chief's Report - Chief Kenyon informed the Committee the Department responded to 21 calls for the month of April, 12 of which were EMS. He noted that 2-training sessions totaling 82 training hours were conducted during the month. Finally he informed the committee that the upgrades to Squad 3 and Brush 7 were completed.

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

Full Time Firefighter/Fire Marshall – As of the meeting date 2 applications for the position of Fulltime Firefighter/Fire Marshall have been received by the department.

2017-2018 Draft Budget – The committee reviewed a 2017-2018 draft budget of \$987,858 and increase of \$28,324 over the previous year. The committee also suggested that the Chief and Board of Engineers review multiple line items for reasonableness. The line items to be reviewed included; Advertising; Special Legal; Payroll Fees; Consultant Fees; District Tax Contributions; Part Time Admin Support; Insurance; Information Services; and Salaries and Benefits.

The committee will continue its budget review at the June meeting.

Other Business – The moderator informed the committee that a “Summary Judgment” awarding the District relief from rendering services to the Bradford Industrial Park has been granted (see attached). He noted the judgment may be appealed. The moderator provided a proposed “Dispatching Services Agreement” provided by Westerly Ambulance Corp (attached).

Correspondence – None

Public Comments:

Tax payer James Angelo brought up the matter that the dispatch service will still probably call the DCFD to respond to Bradford Industrial Park fire alarms.

The committee noted that the District would only respond to visually verified actual fire events.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.

Steve White - District Clerk