

Dunn's Corners Fire District

1 Langworthy Road

Westerly, RI 02891

Minutes

Annual Meeting

July 21, 2010

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm, Moderator Steve White presiding.

Meeting was advertised in the Westerly Sun on Wednesday, July 14, 2010. 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, Michael's Shell 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 14, 2010.

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.

The meeting call was read by District Clerk Bob Delaney. Twenty-one persons signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

2. Copies of the minutes of the 2009 annual meeting were printed and available for those in attendance. A motion was made seconded and so voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes.
3. Reports

Moderator Steve White distributed the Annual Report for tax year 2009 – 2010, Tax Collector's Report, Balance Sheet, Income Statement, Restricted Funds Report, Chief's Report, 2010-2011 Budget, and Schedule of Fees.

Chief's Report

Chief Frink reviewed the fire department's activities for the year which showed 367 calls, 238 plan reviews and inspections, 165 training classes and 2664 training hours. The Chief went on to thank the officers and firefighters under his command during the year for all their hard work and efforts especially during the "Great Flood of March". "This year was an extraordinary year for the department to say the least. Last August at East Beach, we actively participated in one of the largest (and successful) beach cave-in rescues ever in this area. March brought with it the "great floods of 2010" and the loss of Deputy Chief Karl Kenyon. More recently, the community also suffered the loss of retired Assistant Chief John S. "Jack" Champlin in June. The men

and women of this department have persevered again and again, through hard work, service and dedication. They have also shown compassion and respect, honoring those we have lost but not forgotten. I believe they have displayed the strength and courage this department was formed upon.

During the past year the Department's call volume increased by more than 60 runs an increase of 20%. This is a significant jump from our average, which usually runs a little under the 300 mark. The reason for this increase was due to the severe weather we faced this past March. This increased call volume, most of which took place within a few days, not only taxed our members, but tested our resources as well. We manned multiple response teams with a dispatch crew at the station and a roving assessment team prioritizing calls. We pumped as many homes as possible and were able to keep the Dunn's Corners Church from flooding. Utilizing our rescue boat and rescue suits, we worked with the National Guard and other local emergency providers to assist with and effect evacuations and rescues in our own district as well as in several neighboring districts on mutual aid calls.

As for the state of the department, we remain strong with 46 active members consisting of interior firefighters, drivers, and fire police. Training, as always, is one of the top priorities in the department, as shown on the table below. This past year, we received our report from ISO (Insurance Services Office) in regard to our fire department's PPC (Public Protection Classification) rating, which is based on their Fire Suppression Rating Schedule. This report is posted on our web site and shows that we maintained the same rating in Westerly (4) and upgraded from a 9 to an 8B in Charlestown. The change in Charlestown reflects improvement in our fire protection. The major limitation to further improvement there is the lack of a municipal water supply for fire suppression. Our overall score improved from 60.5 to 65.20, with the addition of our tower ladder as a key factor. We have also improved our response capabilities with the addition of MDT's (mobile data terminals) and software. These computers are linked with our dispatch and can furnish us with a host of important information before we even arrive at the scene of a call. This includes a map with the location of the call, location of hydrants or water source, building information, and aerial view of the building/structure you're responding to. These are only a couple of the high points in the many things that happened or were done over the past year.

Moving forward a major concern for us is the health and safety of the men and women of the department. One thing we need to do is install exhaust removal systems in the stations. With the carcinogens produced from diesel emissions we are putting our members at risk every day. In our budget this year we are proposing the installation of one at Station 2 and have applied for a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant to do the same at Station 1. We are also looking at purchasing a new brush unit to replace Engine 7, the 1996 Chevy 1- ton 4X4 truck. It is currently the most used truck we have in our fleet and the first truck we start training our up and coming drivers on. It is used to tow trailers, operate off-road and plow snow. It has been loaded to maximum capacity for its whole life. As you may or may not know, about 6 years ago it was in a head-on accident. The front of the truck was

destroyed, but not quite enough to total the vehicle. Though the truck was repaired and put back in service, it has never been quite the same. Now as it is aging, it is starting to incur more than normal maintenance expenses. More importantly, issues are developing with the way the vehicle handles, which can be a safety issue for fire department personnel and the motoring public, as well as a possible liability to the Fire District. Engine 7 is getting old and tired. Its new replacement truck will have a higher GVW rating and will handle the load properly. This equates to a better and safer situation for all with a vehicle better designed to meet its needs and uses. We have also secured a \$5000 grant toward the cost of this vehicle through a program administered by the Department of Environmental Management Forestry Division.

Now “consolidation” is the new big catch word from our leaders upstate. Even though we have the lowest fire district taxes in the state, I have been working with our neighboring departments for the last year on ways to save monies by cutting costs through cooperative efforts. For example several departments are working together on purchasing services for pump testing, hose testing and ladder testing. We now purchase our vehicle fuel from the town of Charlestown at better rates. We acquired a small boat, motor and trailer from another district in exchange for them using our gear washer for their turnout gear. I will continue to pursue this more in the future in an effort to save our taxpayers further monies while maintaining the quality and capability of our department.

Other notable improvements of the past year:

Approximately 90% of our firefighters trained to FF1 or FF2 level

We had 4 members receive their EMT licenses

Acquired a small boat to meet emergency needs in ponds and during flooding

Item we are working towards in the future:

Recruitment and retention program for the department”

Financial Report

The District achieved good financial results in 2009-10:

Operating Expenses - Expenses overall were under budget by \$11,416.00. Taxes –

The tax collection rate came in at 93% approximately 7% below the previous year.

The District will work to collect the past due tax amounts during the next fiscal year.

Reserves – The Operating Committee believes cash reserves are adequate for the District. At the close of the fiscal year the district had cash reserves equivalent to 3 months of cash expenses.

The proposed 2010-11 Financial Plan and Operating Budget was reviewed. The budget of \$683,452 reflected a very minor increase of only \$142.00 over the previous year’s budget.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the 2010-11 Financial Plan and Operating Budget as presented.

Restricted Fund Activity

Excellent Progress was made on projects approved by the voters to be funded out of Restricted Funds:

- Car 1 purchase, authorized in 2009 out of Truck Restricted Fund, was completed in the fall of 2009.
- Station 1 Heating and Air conditioning upgrades, authorized in 2010 out of Building and Grounds Restricted, was fully completed in spring of 2009.
- Turn Out Gear testing and replacement, authorized in 2010 out of Equipment Fund Restricted, was fully completed in spring of 2009.
- SCBA testing and replacement, authorized in 2009 out Equipment Fund Restricted, was fully completed in Fall of 2009.

Coverage Fire Districts

Quonochontaug Central Beach (QCB) – The Operating Committee negotiated with representatives of QCB through September of 2009 culminating in a seven-year contract that was approved by the Dunn’s Corners District electors at a Special Meeting held on January 21, 2010. The contract as with the Shady and Shelter Harbor Fire District contracts discontinues fee calculations based on property assessments. The QCB contract differs from the other two contracts primarily in that it has a longer duration 7 years as opposed to 5 years and a maximum annual rate increase cap of 6 percent as opposed to 7 percent.

With the signing of the agreement DCFD now have all of the districts it provides fire protection services for under contract.

Resolutions: The following all passed with no dissenters:

EXHAUST REMOVAL SYSTEM – Resolved to appropriate the amount of \$37,000.00 from the restricted Building and Grounds Fund for the purchase and installation of an Exhaust Removal System for Station 2.

BRUSH TRUCK - Resolved to appropriate the sum of \$78,000.00 from the restricted Truck Fund to purchase a Brush Truck to replace Engine 7. \$28K of the amount will be transferred in from the general reserve to the truck-restricted fund.

2009/2010 UNBUDGETED REVENUE FROM CENTRAL BEACH – Resolved that the unbudgeted revenue in the sum of \$65,000 received from the Central Beach Fire District in 2009/2010 be used to provide tax relief to the Dunn’s Corners Fire District’s taxpayers in the 2010/2011 tax year.

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 21st day of July, A.D., 2010, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property in the sum of not less than \$484,026 nor more than \$520,458. 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, 2009, 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. 2010. 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 hand, directed to the Collector of Taxes of said District commanding him 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, 2010, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2010, shall carry, until collected, a penalty at the rate of twelve per centum (12%) per annum upon such unpaid tax. No tax bill sent out shall be less than five and 00/100 (\$5.00) dollars.

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 2009-2010, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2011, 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, 2009.

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, 2010, and ending May 31, 2011, 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.

Nominating Committee Report: Submitted by Elaine Martin and Ed Schilke

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:

- Jonathan Schreier – Term to expire 2012
- Robert Delaney – Term to Expire 2012
- Matthew Thomsen – To fill the unexpired term of John Merkel term to expire 2011

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.

Awards and Recognition: Chief Frink and Moderator White

The Chief presented Certificates of Excellence to department members present who had given valuable contributions of time and effort during the "Great Flood of 2010".

The Chief awarded a certificate of appreciation to Gina and Bob Laudone who unselfishly opened their home to another family who was unable to get to their own home on Pound Rd. due to the flooding.

Moderator White recognized the numerous contributions of former Moderator John Merkel.

New Business

Election of Nominating Committee

A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the 2010-11 Nomination Committee of Edward Schilke, Gina Laudone, and Art Ganz.

Ratification of Operating Committee Decisions 2009/10

A motion was made seconded and so voted to ratify the decisions made by the Operating Committee for the year 2009/10.

Adjournment:

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the Dunn's Corners Fire District at 7:52 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob Delaney
District Clerk, DCFD