

Dunn's Corners Fire District
1 Langworthy Road
Westerly, RI 02891
Minutes
Annual Meeting
July 17, 2019

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 6, 2019 and Sunday, July 7, 2019. 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 5, 2019.

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 Linda Garabedian read the meeting Call. Thirty-five (35) taxpayers signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

July 19, 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes - Copies of the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting were printed and available for those in attendance.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the July 18, 2018 Annual Meeting minutes.

Reports

Chief's Report

Chief DeGrave dedicated his report to Firefighter Eric Kenyon, whom was taken from this life too soon. Eric was brother to Retired Deputy Chief Keith Kenyon.

We have finished another successful year at the Dunn's Corners Fire Department. This year has been a rebuilding year for the department filled with loss, growth, challenges and accomplishments. As the Chief of this department now for over a year and a half, I have always and will continue to provide our residents with unsurpassed fire and emergency medical service while continuously upholding the core values of integrity, trust, excellence, and transparency that

the community deserves. I have work diligently to modernize administrative procedures, streamline operations and expand volunteer participation while supporting personal growth and accomplishment.

In the past year several notable changes within department structure and leadership have occurred including the hiring of a new Deputy Chief Keith Moody and Captain Jeff Thomas. Currently, the department structure is as follows: 2 Deputy Chiefs, 2 Department Captains and 1 Department Lieutenant, whom will be installed later this evening. A process is underway now to hire up to two additional Fire Lieutenants for duties including station 2 support and ems program coordination. The Dunn’s Corners Fire District should take pride in the fact that even under significant internal leadership changes the department has unwaveringly provided exceptional volunteer emergency services to the community. This can only be attributed to the hard work and dedication of my fellow chiefs, officers and firefighters.

Current membership is at 45, which has declined slightly since last year. We did have several new applicants and with the new probationary training program have been able to increase participation while setting achievable benchmarks for our volunteers. We are reinvigorating our marketing, signage and outreach program to meet the increasing challenges of volunteer recruitment.

Membership Breakdown:

Senior Members	28
Life Members	9
Associate Members	5
Probationary Members	3

During the past year, the Dunn’s Corners Fire Department responded to **896 total incidents** including 369 fire and 527 for emergency medical responses. This is an overall increase of 14% of calls for service since last year. The average personnel response per fire call was 7. Our volunteers spent **over 2600 hours** responding and working on the scene of incidents after over **1000hrs of training**. Additionally, our volunteers participated in **over 2100 hours** of volunteer service maintaining the apparatus, station and conducting fire prevention/ community service activities.

Breakdown by Incident Type:

Fire Incident Responses	369
Medical Incident Responses	527

Breakdown of Incidents by District:

<i>District</i>	<i>Number of Incidents</i>
DCFD	625

Bradford	137
Shelter Harbor	52
Central Beach	34
Shady Harbor	8
Mutual Aide Towns/ Departments	40

This year the Fire Marshal’s office conducted 285 inspections and 83 plan reviews for residential and commercial properties located in our coverage area. This is an increase of 20 from last year.

Project Completion Updates:

Throughout the 2018-2019 fiscal year, numerous infrastructure projects were completed to help maintain and/or improve operations. Several pending projects from past fiscal years were also recently completed.

- Sale of outdated unused assets- Bucket 1 & Trailer 1(Wire Spool)
- Sale of Utility 3 and purchase of new 4wd utility pickup vehicle & upfit
- Purchase of new Marine 2 Asset- For Flood/Pond/River Rescues
- Station 2 Gym- Relocation, Day Room Creation & Duty Program
- Station 2 & Grange – Crack Filling, Sealing & Striping Capital Project
- New AED placed on all apparatus and both fire station facilities
- Six (6) new sets of personal protective fire gear purchased and fitted
- HVAC/Heating System at Grange was replaced- AC added to lower level area
- New security camera & DVR recorder system from Valenti Subaru to DCFD for Parking Lot Coverage
- New Training Laptop & DCFD Meeting Room Audio/ Visual
- Kenwood Radio Project Completion- 36 New Portables & Install (Radio for every FF seat)
- Repeater/ Receiver Project Completion- Shelter Harbor Golf Course increasing safety & radio coverage infrastructure
- Building Efficiency & HVAC Projects- Insulated Attic and Office Areas, New AC ducting and vents, new fresh-air system for boiler to increase efficiency and limit freezing

Future Projects:

Over the next several years including this next budget cycle, we will be actively working on several projects to maintain our facility, streamline operations, improve storage and increase efficiency. Those projects include but are not limited to:

- Improving department firefighter safety with new NFPA compliant SCBA Air Packs (AFG Grant Submitted)
- Improving community EMS response with upfitting of all apparatus w/ first responder bags

- Building Efficiency Enhancement- Phase 2- Building Attic Vents & Building Re-Face Painting (RFP now) □ Parking Lot Sealing/ Striping at Station 1
- Engine 5 Acquisition & Upfit from BFD
- Marine Project (phase 2) - Marine 1 sale and acquisition of new Marine 1 vessel for larger ponds and breach ways
- Station 1- Clean-Room/ SCBA Maintenance Area Completion
- Station 2 – Duty Room Build Out w/ Men’s & Women’s Sleeping Quarters

Grant Updates for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year:

- DEM Forestry Grant- DCFD has been awarded a \$2500.00 match grant for the purchase of a new UTV wildland fire skit unit. This new piece of equipment will allow our UTV to be deployed in remote brush, woodland and beach areas for fires that would have not normally been accessible by other department equipment. DCFD has been very successful in this grant opportunity and we will continue to apply for future fund assistance.
- Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) - We are waiting to hear on the 2019 AFG grant for the SCBA equipment. We have applied and have excellent local, state and federal backing. Regardless the district is prepared to move forward with a combined grant/finance/leasing plan as the new SCBA devices are considered essential life safety items. If awarded, the department would be funded over 250,000\$ for SCBA devices.

Acknowledgements:

At this time I would like to thank the following people for helping to make this past year a successful one for the Dunn’s Corners Fire District.

- Mary Rathbun, for her continued commitment to this department as the Office Manager even while undergoing several family medical struggles.
- Gretchen Riggins our part-time office assistant for jumping in head-first to assist when Mary was unavailable.
- Marshal Jim Bobola for his above and beyond hours of service to the community in fire prevention and to this department.
- The countless hours the Operating Committee has volunteered to help the Dunn’s Corners Fire District prosper and also for their supportive guidance over the last year.
- To the Department Line Officers, for their continued dedication. These folks provide the core leadership and guidance of the department. I appreciate the work that they do on and off the fire ground tremendously. I couldn’t do this job without them.
- Congrats to Captain Jeff Thomas on the promotion tonight. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.
- To the volunteer members and associates of the department, I thank you for all that you do. We will continue to grow and succeed together.
- I would like to thank my wife, Jamie and daughter Cameron for the love, support and patience you show me every time I am away from you to do what is right for our community in which we live.

- And finally to the local community and taxpayers... I am... and I know this department is honored and extremely proud to serve you. I thank you for your trust and continued support. Within the community if we can help you, improve our response or be of service, please contact us at any time. As a department, we welcome your concerns, input and feedback. I look forward to continuing to serve you as the District and Department Chief.

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 2018 through May 2019.

The 2018-2019 financial statements showed a net income of \$83,121.00 and total District Assets which stood at \$3,211,163.00 .

The Treasurer noted that there was strong progress being made on the open loans.

He indicated that the Dunn's Corners Fire District tax rate of .467% is the lowest rate in the State of Rhode Island. He appreciates all of the taxpayers' support.

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

He indicated that the Quonochontaug Grange is making improvements and doing a lot of hard work.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to accept the Treasurer's Report and accept the fiscal year end 2018- 2019 unaudited financial statements.

Moderator's Report – The Moderator stated that thanks to Chief DeGrave, the Operating Committee has had little to do since last year. Chief DeGrave has performed as we had hoped, providing leadership to the Department and taking on the administrative duties as our District Chief of Operations.

With regard to the Bradford Dye Property, the Moderator indicated that there is still no resolution yet on the table as to which District will be responsible for this property. He believes this will be an issue to be determined with the Rhode Island government. The Chief, the Operating Committee Members and the Solicitor will monitor this issue daily and are ready to act on behalf of the District at any time. This is still a legal case, however there is rumor that someone is going to purchase.

The Moderator states that the Operating Committee expects that it will have to plan to rehabilitate Station One which is now over thirty years old, to bring it up to a facility that helps our volunteers be better firemen.

Finally, he indicated that Dunn's Corners Fire Department has shown that it is ready to handle any fire, automobile or water based issues in an instant and we all should feel proud of our Chief, the executive Chiefs, the officers, and most important, our rank and file volunteers, all of who give up

their free time to provide safety to our District and our contracted Districts, and deserve all our accolades.

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 2018 – 2019 that property within the town of Westerly had an assessed value of \$921,495,600 and was taxed at a rate of .479 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$441,544.02. Of that total, the District collected \$458,361.12 with interest. The overall collection rate of 103% factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2015 thru 2018, bringing the total to \$452,502.24.

For the Town of Charlestown property had an assessed value of \$703,712,299.00 and was taxed at a rate of \$.479 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$337,108.65. The District collected \$352,314.16 with interest. The overall collection rate of 104% or \$348,234.22 factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2015 thru 2018.

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 \$1,121,943.23.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the proposed 2019/2020 budget.

Swearing in of Officers – Chief DeGrave started by announcing the promotion of Jeffrey Thomas to Captain.

The Chief swore in the following officers:

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

Proposed Resolution – RESOLVED that the DCFD agrees to cede 29 Dowd Drive, Charlestown, Rhode Island (AP2 Lot 54) to QCBFD so that 29 Dowd Drive becomes part of QCBFD and appoints its Operating Committee to take the necessary steps to make this happen, including but not limited to Amending the Charter.

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the owners of 29 Dowd Drive shall further provide the work and/or funds necessary to amend the DCFD Charter.

FURTHER RESOLVED: This Resolution shall be effective up through July 10, 2020.

Motion was made to approve Resolution as Read. Matthew Thomsen and Richard Thomsen are not voting.

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

Resolutions

Building Repairs Stations 1

Resolved to use up to \$75,000.00 from the restricted building fund account for necessary facility repairs.

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

Building Upgrades Station 2 - Resolved to use up to \$7500.00 from the restricted building fund account for necessary facility upgrades to facilitate the DCFD duty program.

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

Marine 1 Rescue Boat – Resolved to use up to \$25,000 from the restricted equipment fund account as well as the proceeds from the sale of marine 1 for the purchase of a new rescue boat.

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

Engine 5/UTV – Resolved to use up to \$75,000 from the restricted truck fund in combination with any grant opportunities for the purchase of Engine 5 & UTV from the Bradford Fire District.

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 \$125,000 from the restricted equipment fund account for the purchase of SCBAs and borrow/lease up to a total of \$175,000.

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 \$35,000.00 to mitigate unanticipated truck repairs and the Restricted Equipment Fund for up to \$10,000.00 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 17th day of July, A.D., 2019, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property in the sum of not less than \$805,577 nor more than \$821,689 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, 2018, 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. 2019. 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, 2019, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2019, 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 2018-2019, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but

not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2020, 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, 2018.

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, 2019, and ending May 31, 2020, 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 2021 annual meeting:

- Matthew Manni
- Matthew Thomsen
- Ken Martin

Ballots were provided to the taxpayers in attendance and a vote was conducted. After the tabulation of the ballots Matthew Thomsen and Ken Martin were elected to serve two-year terms as at-large members of the Operating Committee expiring at the end of the 2021 Annual meeting.

The Nominating Committee thanked Mr. Manni for his willingness to serve.

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

Old Business – No old business.

New Business

Treasurer, Bob Delaney wanted to thank Steve White for his continuous help to the District and helping the new Clerk and his continued help with the Dunn’s Corners Fire District retirement plans.

Appointment of a Tax Collector – *A motion was made, seconded and so voted to reappoint Diane Nardone as Tax Collector until the Annual Meeting 2020.*

Smokey the Bear Parade – The annual Karl E. Kenyon Smokey the Bear Parade will be held on Thursday July 19, 2019 at 5:00 PM. If cancelled we will have a contingency plan. Food will be served at the end of the parade.

Election of the Nominating Committee

A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the 2019 - 2020 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 2019 Annual Meeting of the Dunn’s Corners Fire District.

Meeting adjourned at 8.10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda F. Garabedian
District Clerk