

**Dunn's Corners Fire District**  
1 Langworthy Road  
Westerly, RI 02891  
**Minutes**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**July 16, 2014**

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 Wednesday July 9, 2014. 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 8, 2014

Safety Protocols – Chief Frink 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. 36 taxpayers signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

**July 17, 2013 Annual Meeting Minutes** - Copies of the minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting were printed and available for those in attendance.

*A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the July 17, 2013 Annual Meeting minutes.*

## **Reports**

**Chief's Report** – Chief Frink provided an update on the following items.

- The Fire Department responded to 662 calls over the past 12 months.
- That the department is facing challenges with recruiting and retaining volunteers.
- The department is at 38, which includes 18 active firefighters, 5 fire police, 4 probationary firefighters, 3 junior firefighters and 8 admin/life members.
- The departments had scheduled 88 training classes, drills and work parties amounting to 1,653 man-hours of training.
- The Chief thanked the apparatus committee of Deputy Chief Tom Algieri, Captains Dan Schilke and Jim Westervelt, Lieutenants Chris Wells and Jeff Thomas and Deputy Chief Retired Ted Burke for the work they put in developing the specs and

procuring the new E-One Rescue Engine. The Chief stated the vehicle should be delivered within several weeks.

- The Chief discussed the District's ISO rating and his hopes that with all the improvements made in training and equipment over the last several years that it will improve from 4/4X to 3/3X.
- There was a review of the plans to replace the hardwired 100 mil fire alarm system used by the District's businesses with a wireless system and how over the long run it will be more cost effective for the District.
- Chief informed the taxpayers that he has presented the Operating Committee a schedule of long-term capital expenses for the upcoming years to aid with the management of future budgets..
- The Chief thanked the Operating Committee, Clerk, Tax Collector, Office manager, his officers and firefighters and, all the families and significant others of the firefighters who allow them to take the time to be away from them. He also thanked his wife and children who have been understanding of his absences.
- The Chief discussed in detail the issues surrounding Bradford Industrial Park, how the DCFD has been responding to calls to the business even though it currently is not part of the Bradford Fire District. DCFD has invoiced Bradford Printing for services rendered but believes receipt of payment to be highly improbable. Additionally, the Chief went on to explain the steps the District is taking to discontinue providing fire protection to the business except as part of mutual aid support to another fire district.

*A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve the Chief's Report.*

**Treasurer's Report** – The Treasurer reviewed the financial statements for the period of June 2013 through May 2014.

The Treasurer informed the committee and tax payers in attendance that the Profit and Loss statement shows a substantial positive variance in revenue due to the unbudgeted income resulting from the short term contract arrangement to provide fire protection services to the Bradford Fire District and the funds for new Engine One had not been disbursed as of fiscal year end.

The Treasurer went on to inform the taxpayers that they would be voting on a resolution that would allow depending on the financial position of the District during the upcoming year to pay down additional principal on the Station 2 loan.

*A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the Treasurer's Report and accept the fiscal year end 2014 financial statements.*

The Treasurer informed the Tax Payers that the Operating Committee was recommending returning to a single mil rate for all taxpayers. Currently the District had been using a split mil rate system which many years ago was developed to account for changes in the valuation cycles for Westerly and Charlestown taxpayers in the district. Given the return to a more normal property appreciation cycle the Committee believes the single mil rate system would be fairer to all the district's tax payers.

*A motion was made, seconded and so voted to return the District to a single mil rate taxing system for all District Taxpayers.*

**Moderator's Report** – The Moderator informed the taxpayers in attendance of the new Rhode Island State regulations that require a higher level of reporting to State authorities on the status of fire districts' finances and the additional time demands this will place on the District's Treasurer and bookkeeper.

The Moderator reviewed the terms of a two year agreement to provide fire protection services to the Bradford Fire District at a rate equivalent to that paid by the District's taxpayers. The two-year agreement, which contains renewal options, will allow the two districts to continue to work through the matters of a sub-station, recruiting volunteers from Bradford and the retirement of the Bradford Fire District's debt. He also went on to discuss the lease of Bradford Fire District Equipment for one dollar per year however there was a dispute between the dissolved Bradford Fire Department and the Bradford Fire District over the ownership of some of the apparatus and equipment.

*A motion was made and seconded to approve entering into a 2-year contract with the Bradford Fire District to provide fire protection services and to approve the lease of the Bradford Fire District apparatus and equipment. Discussion centered on the lease and the disputed equipment and will it ever be available for use by the Dunn's Corners Fire Department. It was noted that two pieces of apparatus are currently in use and that the disputed apparatus matter was under investigation by the State Police.*

*The motion was approved by acclamation.*

**Tax Assessor's Report** – Tax Assessor Diane Nardone reported for the fiscal year 2013 – 2014 property within the town of Westerly had an assessed value of \$909,944,000 and was taxed at a rate of .38 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$346,023.44. Of that total the District collected 94% or \$325,716.37 plus an additional \$551.39 in interest payments on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 96.4% factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2010 thru 2012, bringing the total to \$333,583.27. For the town of Charlestown property had an assessed value of \$653,818,300 and was taxed at a rate of \$.44 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$287,713.68. The District collected 96% or \$272,339.01 in principal and \$306.45 in interest on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 95.8% or \$275,752.83 factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2011 thru 2012. In addition the District collected fees of \$1,544.43.06 associated with the tax sale for the 2011 & 2012 tax year. Total collections for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 were \$612,994.25.

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

**Financial Plan and Operating Budget 2014/2015** – 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. The draft budget totals \$896,347.00, which is an increase of

\$108,167.00 over the 2013/2014 budget more than 50% of the increase to be covered by the proposed multi-year Bradford Fire District contract.

The biggest item driving the increase in the budget was \$60,000.00 for the addition of a full time firefighter.

*A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed 2013/2014 budget: Discussion ensued with the concern being raised that with the addition of a full time firefighter volunteers may stop responding to calls. The Chief stated that the position is needed primarily during business hours since many members work outside of the district and it is becoming more difficult for volunteers to leave work and respond to calls. The Chief stated that he believes the volunteers will continue to respond and be needed especially after normal business hours and on weekends.*

*The motion was approved by unanimous acclimation.*

### **Resolutions:**

**Wired Alarm System Replacement** - Resolved to use \$80,000 from the Equipment Restricted Fund to update the existing business fire alarm monitoring system from wired to wireless.

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

**Wireless Radio Alarm Boxes** - Resolved to use \$60,000 (40 units at \$1500.00 per unit) from the General Fund to purchase wireless radio alarm boxes to replace the wired alarm boxes currently being used by the District's businesses. Each business will be given a period of three years to reimburse the District for the cost of the new box. Installation not included.

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

**Fire Hose Replacement** - Resolved to use up to \$20,000 from the Equipment restricted fund to replace old hoses to meet NFPA 1962 Code requirements.

*A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the resolution as presented*

**Lawn Mower and Lawn Maintenance Supplies** - Resolved to use up to \$5500 from Building and Grounds restricted fund to purchase a lawnmower and lawn maintenance supplies.

*A motion was made seconded and so voted 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 \$55,000 on the principal owed on the Station 2 loan from the general fund.

*A motion was made seconded and so voted 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 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 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 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 16<sup>th</sup> day of July, A.D., 2014, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property in the sum of not less than \$650,959 nor more than \$676,998. 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, 2013, 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. 2014. 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, 2014, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2014, 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 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 2013-2014, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2015, 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, 2013.

*A motion was made seconded and so voted 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, 2014, and ending May 31, 2015, 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 to approve the resolution as presented.*

## **Awards and Recognition**

### **A. Swearing in of Line Officers**

Deputy Chiefs: Keith Kenyon, Carl Johnson, Tom Algieri  
Capt. Station 1 Dan Schilike,      Capt. Station 2 Jim Westervelt  
LT Station 1 Jeff Thomas      2 LT Station 1 Paul Senita  
LT Station 2 Chis Wells      2 LT Station 2 Keith Moody  
Fire Police Capt. Bob Delaney      LT John Crandall

**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 serve on the Operating Committee:

- Robert Delaney – Term to expire 2016
- Jonathan Schreier – Term to expire 2016

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.

**Old Business** – No old business.

**New Business**

**Election of the Nominating Committee**

*A motion was made seconded and so voted to approve the 2014-15 Nominating Committee of Andy Schilke, Gina Laudone, and Art Ganz.*

**Public Comments** – The moderator of the Bradford Fire District Frank Manfredi stated that they were very satisfied with our service level thus far. He also stated that by Sept.30th the matter of missing equipment and trucks that were to be leased to the DCFD would be resolved.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the Dunn's Corners Fire District at 8:15 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve White  
District Clerk