

Dunn's Corners Fire District
1 Langworthy Road
Westerly, RI 02891
Minutes
Annual Meeting
July 19, 2017

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 Monday July 10, 2017. 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 7, 2017.

Safety Protocols – Chief Kenyon 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. Twenty-six (26) taxpayers signed the attendance roster. A quorum was present.

July 20, 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes - Copies of the minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting were printed and available for those in attendance.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclamation to approve the July 20, 2016 Annual Meeting minutes.

Reports

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

The Chief stated that the that the district had another successful year even with the changes in personnel. He discussed the resignation of immediate past Chief Mike Frink, wished him luck with his future endeavors and thanked him and his wife Heather and their family for their dedicated service and support of the department.

Chief Kenyon also informed the electors of the resignation of District Firefighter and Facilities Manager Chris Wells. He thanked Firefighter Wells for his service and wished him the best of luck with his new employment with the Tiverton Fire Department.

The Chief stated the District should take pride that even with these significant changes in personnel the department continued to provide the district with the best possible emergency care.

He stated over the past year there 115 trainings held totaling 1791-member hours and that the current membership is at 46 up 5 from the previous year.

The membership breaks down as follows: Senior Members 32; Life Members 5; Associate Members 2; Junior Members 1; Probationary Members 6.

Calls for the year were as follows: Non-medical 441 and medical 447.

Incidents per district were as follows: DCFD 733; Bradford 51; Shelter Harbor 31; Central Beach 22; Shady Harbor 10; Mutual Aide 41.

Chief Kenyon provided an update on the following projects:

Wireless Fire Alarm System Upgrade – He noted that all occupancies in the district’s response area that were on a hard-wired system have all been switched to radio boxes improving the reliability of the system in severe weather. He noted that during the upcoming year the district will need to focus on removing the wire from the antiquated system.

Car-1 – The department researched and purchased a new Car-1 a 2016 GMC Yukon. The former Car-1 is still in service as Squad-2 and is being used to transport firefighters to trainings, meetings and fire scenes.

Painting and Lighting – The Station-1 paint project was completed and both stations had exterior lighting upgraded to LED lights.

Uncompleted Items – The Chief noted that two projects scheduled for the 2016/17 year, the replacing of the hot water heater in Station 2 and upgrades to the security systems to both stations were not completed and are included in the current year’s budget and resolutions.

The Chief told the electors that the district was still in the running to receive a grant to help offset the cost of new SCBAs due to be replaced in the 2017/18 fiscal year. He noted that the district has been reserving funds in case a grant cannot be secured. He stated that the district was currently working on purchasing personal protective gear for wildland firefighting from a Rhode Island DEM grant received last year.

Finally, the Chief acknowledged the following: Mary Rathbun, the Operating Committee, retired Deputy Chief Ken Martin, Deputy Chief’s Carl Johnson and Tom Algieri, the department’s Line Officers, Captain/Training Officer Jeffrey Thomas, Fire Police Captain Bob Delaney, Firefighter John Merkel, the Members of the Department, and his wife Andi and children Brody and Karlin.

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 2016 through May 2017.

The 2016-17 financial statements showed a net surplus of 51,978.16 aided by a tax sale. Additionally, he discussed the District's equity position which stood at \$2,173,003, total District Assets which stood at \$3,370,202 and stated that the District did make an additional \$25,000 in principal debt reduction payments on Station 2 during the year.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to accept the Treasurer's Report and accept the fiscal year end 2016-17 financial statements.

Moderator's Report – The Moderator stated to the electors that over the past year the district has seen a lot of changes. He noted the following: new contracts were completed with the Shelter Harbor, Shady Harbor and Bradford Fire Districts; a new contract with the QCBFD will be completed soon; the district is continuing with litigation to resolve the Bradford Industrial Park/Westerly Ambulance Corp dispute; the Operating Committee is working with the Board of Engineers on a plan to replace our firefighters' protective equipment while controlling the expense to the taxpayer.

He also discussed the steps the Operating Committee has taken to recruit a new Chief.

He noted that the Friends of the Quonchontaug Grange have worked hard to update the Grange facility and improve its profitability.

The Moderator also discussed the time the Operating Committee had to devote to the district matters over the past year stating he believed the committee must have met over 20 times.

The Moderator thanked the following: the volunteers, officers, assistant chiefs; Past Chief Mike Frink; Interim Chief Keith Kenyon; Mary Rathbun; Diane Nardone; Kerry Schreier.

He went on to thank the former Operating Committee members Jon Schreier (at-large-member) and Tom Algieri (immediate past department rep) for their past service to the district.

Finally, he thanked the taxpayers for their support of the department.

Moderator Thomsen then turned the meeting to District Solicitor Mike Cozzolino who provided an update on the Bradford Industrial Park(BIP)/ Westerly Ambulance Corp litigation. The Solicitor updated the electors as to the status of the litigation. He noted that a ruling stating that BIP was not part of the Bradford Fire District and DCFD was not under any obligation to respond to calls to BIP was awarded however BIP has appealed the ruling to the Rhode Island Supreme Court. The Solicitor believes that there is high probability the earlier ruling will be affirmed.

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 2016–17 property within the town of Westerly had an assessed value of \$903,565,600 and was taxed at a rate of .453 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$409,473.57. Of that total, the District collected 96.0% or \$394,066.09 plus an additional \$867.47 in interest payments on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 101% factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2013 thru 2015, bringing the total to \$410,653.68. For the town of Charlestown property had an assessed value of \$642,667,800 and was taxed at a rate of \$.453 cents per thousand establishing an amount for collection of \$191,031.40. The District collected 97% or \$281,125.29 in principal and \$584.44 in interest on past due taxes. The overall collection rate of 101% or \$293,499.69 factors in past due amounts collected for the years 2013 thru 2015.

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

Financial Plan and Operating Budget 2016/2017 – 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 \$1,046,610.66, which is an increase of \$87,076.66 or 9.07% over the 2016/17 budget. Additionally, it was noted that \$39,100 would be used from the unrestricted General Funds to limit the expense increase to 5.00% or \$47,976.66.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted by acclimation to approve the proposed 2017/2018 budget.

Resolutions:

Upgrades to Security and Information Systems for Stations 1 & 2 - Resolved to use up to \$10,000 from the unrestricted General fund to add additional cameras to improve security and new cat 6 cables to upgrade information system processing at both Stations 1 & 2. This was a carryover item which was approved in the previous year's budget but was not completed.

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

Hot Water System Station 2- Resolved to use up to \$6,000 from the unrestricted General Fund to purchase and install a new hot water system at Station 2. This was a carryover item which was approved in the previous year's budget but was not completed.

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

Personal Protective Equipment – Resolved to use up to \$10,000 from the unrestricted General Fund to purchase Personnel Protective Equipment for new members and to replace outdated equipment.

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

Radio Equipment – Resolved to use up to \$40,000 from the unrestricted General Fund to replace and upgrade outdated radio equipment.

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

General Fund Transfer to Budget – Resolved to use up to \$39,100 in unrestricted excess General Funds to hold the increase to the taxpayer in the 2017-2018 budget to 5% over the 2016-2017 budget.

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 \$10,000 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 \$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 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 19th day of July, A.D., 2017, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on the taxable inhabitants and property in the sum of not less than \$724,181 nor more than \$738,665 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 2016, 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. 2017. 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 2017, and all taxes remaining unpaid on said 30th day of September, A.D. 2017, 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 2016-2017, and all other monies collected during said fiscal year, but not otherwise appropriated. Provided, however, that prior to January 1, 2018, 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, 2016.

A motion was made seconded and so voted by acclimation 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, 2017, and ending May 31, 2018, 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 serve on the Operating Committee:

- Matthew Thomsen – Term to expire 2019
- Kenneth Martin – Term to expire 2019

To fill the unexpired term of Jonathan Schreier

- Richard Thomsen – Term to expire 2018

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 2017-18 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 Annual Meeting of the Dunn's Corners Fire District at 7:40 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve White
District Clerk