

Dunn's Corners Fire District
Operating Committee Meeting
February 14, 2023

The Dunn's Corners Fire District Operating Committee (OC) convened on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 6:30 PM at Station One, Langworthy Road, Westerly, Rhode Island.

Attendees were comprised of OC members - Richard Thomsen, Bob Delaney, Chief Keith Kenyon, Paul Gencarella, Ken Martin, and Bill Balczak. A quorum was present.

Other Attendees: Attorney Michael Cozzolino and Members of the Friends of the Quonochontaug Grange.

Paul Gencarella, Moderator coordinated the meeting.

Actions of OC (all votes unanimous unless otherwise noted).

Agenda Items:

Pledge of Allegiance – The meeting started at 6:30 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

Previous Meeting Minutes – a Motion was made and seconded to approve and file the Minutes of January 10, 2023 Operating Committee Meeting with a minor change being made.

FOTQG Report – Ann Bettinger read the report that has been emailed to all members.

Rental Updates – watching expenses but rentals are starting to pick up

Maintenance Contracts – waiting on Verizon transition

Update on maintenance items – Bob Delaney states there is a landscape work party scheduled for April 1st from 8:30 – 12:30 PM to begin landscape upgrades at the Grange. DCFD will serve food after work is done.

Fence Work – DCFD will get a response from FOTQG representative by early May regarding any fencing.

AED – still to be located in the lobby area. Chief states it is still on order.

CHAIR LIFT – Chief is getting additional bids from a local vender.

Shingle Project – FOTQG strongly support red cedar shingling.

CHS, QHS support of red cedar shingling.

Want to maintain historic nature of the building.

FOTQG would like to understand the cost difference between the two options.

Scheduling and timing for completion once vendor begins to allow coordination with renters.

Bob Delaney states the fuel bill appears low for the facility. They indicate that a delivery of oil was just made.

Treasurer's Report – Bob Delaney gave the following report:

The expenses are tracking well against the budget and the rates are good.

All Contracting Districts have paid.

There has been talk about a new engine, it is about 1 ½ years out.

Letter is being sent out to get back PPE items from former members which will save money for the District.

A Motion was made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's report.

Tax Assessors/Collector's Report – Rosalind Choquette, Tax Assessor reported the following:

For the Month of January, the office reimbursed \$609.96 in overpayments to taxpayers due to mortgage companies and property owners both paying the taxes.

The office mailed 457 delinquent tax bills. This resulted in several phone calls and emails from some taxpayers indicating they never received a bill and do not feel they should be paying interest or rebill fees. Tax Assessor indicates she has taken abuse from taxpayers regarding interest and being delinquent. She has told them to contact the Operating Committee.

Bob Delaney has asked for assistance with matching the collected amounts from the Tax Collector versus what is reported by Kerry the Bookkeeper to get the numbers to match.

The \$3.00 billing recharge which goes on each bill should be in financial reports. Kerry gets her reports from Quick Books and the Tax Collector needs to advise Kerry when she rebills.

The result of January collections resulted in a collect rate of 95.25%.

Chief's Report – Chief Kenyon reported as follows:

Fire Calls 14; EMS 3 for a total of 17. Fire Marshall RFI – 16; RSI 12; CPR 2. 264 training hours.

Burst pipe at Station 1 was cleaned up by Service Master.

Both generators at Station 1 and Station 2 are good to go, they have both been serviced.

25 members completed harassment training and 6 members completed their probation.

Bob Delaney asked about a burn down at the grange. There is nothing scheduled yet but it will be scheduled later and the Chief will coordinate.

Kitchen appliances arrived, they were damaged and returned. The new set has now arrived and is in good condition.

A motion was made and seconded to approve all reports that were given.

Grange Siding Job:

Correspondence was received from the Historic Society to support the red cedar shingle option. Ann Bettinger wants to make sure that the Operating Committee knows the Historic Society supports the red cedar shingles. Vinyl shingles were an option but they really want the red cedar shingles. The shingles being replaced are the original (76 years old)

Fred York did job in 1990, more or less per Chief Frink.

Moderator asked for any comments:

Bill asked for a summary. Rich states there are three quotes. Ann thinks more due diligence on the quotes should be done to get more knowledge regarding the jobs. Rich states that we want to make this work. Paul asked about the insulation and Rich states it should be considered. Bill doesn't think we should spend money on insulation now. Bob says to get quotes on blown in insulation.

Motion was made, seconded and approved to get quotes on blown in insulation.

Committee tabled getting estimates for red cedar shingles at this time. Atlas Insulation and Anchor Insulation will be called by Roy Jacobson

Next Meeting – The next meeting of the Operating Committee will be Tuesday, March 14, 2023 6:30 PM at Station One.

ERISA Attorney Assistance:

Attorney Cozzolino spoke to pension attorney. They will charge \$500. - \$800. to give a written opinion letter regarding W2 employees who are paid stipends.

Motion was made, seconded and approved for the sum of \$800.00 to be used for the special legal matters.

ARPA Matters:

There is nothing new from the Town of Westerly. Bob feels a letter to each Council Member should be sent regarding our request. Moderator has spoken to the President of the Council who indicates all three departments will get the same amount across the board.

Chief is speaking with the Treasurer of the Town of Charlestown who is cutting a check to DCFD for the remaining ARPA Grant Funds.

Motion was made, seconded and approved to send a letter to each Westerly Town Council member regarding our ARPA request that has previously been sent to the Town.

Resolutions:

Landscaping – previously reported on.

Siding – previously reported on.

Car 1 – is on preorder with a \$500.00 deposit.

Kitchen appliances – have arrived (griddle, refrigerator and stove)

Old Business –

NONE

Public Comments -

Bob Peacock asked about what the Operating Committee is doing about Bradford Fire District's Moderators comments about purchasing the truck. The Operating Committee has made numerous attempts to obtain ARPA Grant Funding from the Town of Westerly for the purchase of the truck.

Bob Delaney states they cannot take the truck away for another year. There is wording in the Contract that covers extensions and the need for any changes to the Contract to be made with notice in writing to our District.

Chief states based on John Merkel's letter to Bradford Moderator there may be an issue regarding the wording in contract. He states it has an affect on our ISO if we lose a truck. Bradford Moderator wants us to keep the truck. At this time, we have well over \$100,000.00 of work completed on this truck. Ken states it is going to be awhile for another apparatus to be ready. \$140,000.00 is a small investment for a good cause and we know the history of this truck.

Motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn at 7:58 PM

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:58 PM

Linda F Garabedian, District Clerk