



WESTERN COVENTRY FIRE DISTRICT
1110 Victory Highway, Greene, Rhode Island 02827
Phone (401) 397-7520 - Fax (401) 397-1084

www.wcfd.net

Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, 17 October, 2013, 7:00 P.M.
MINUTES

Members Present

Chairman John Humble
Richard Holt
Jonathan Farnum
Robert Hevey
Robert Guastini

Joan Smith, Tax Collector
Glenn Underwood, Treasurer
WCS Mays III
Chief Steven Quattrini
Cheryl Wilcox, Clerk

Steven Bouquet

1. ***Call to Order and Attendance*** – The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. ***Confirmation of required meeting posting and quorum*** – The Chairman confirmed that there is a quorum present and the meeting was posted in all required locations.
3. ***Acceptance of BOD meeting minutes of 16 September and 19 September, 2013*** – A motion is made by Mr. Hevey and seconded by Mr. Farnum to accept the minutes of September 16 and September 19, 2013. Discussion: Mr. Holt says that the minutes of 9/19, page 2, paragraph A should read, ‘billing for radio maintenance’. Page 4, paragraph B, 4th line down, add the word to, ‘modifications have been made to the notes to the financials’. Page 5, 15, paragraph 2, the members voted to send the letter with tax bills should also read that the BOD approved the letter and send it with the tax bills, not in. Mr. Hevey would like to add that the Chief had accolades for the maintenance crew at WC School. He says it might be good to put a positive spin along the lines that ‘the Chief commended the maintenance staff of the school as it was in the best condition of any school that he had been in during the month of September’. Add the adjournment time to the 9/16 minutes (8:48). Mr. Hevey says that paragraph 3 is not an accurate description of what happened and he is struggling on how to rewrite it. Mr. Humble says that if he remembers correctly there were two parts of that meeting, the BOD agreed to send the letter of some form and then got into the meat of the letter. He says that this paragraph captures that first action. Mr. Humble asks Mr. Hevey to sum up what it lacks with a few lines. Mr. Hevey says the minutes lack the chain of events. It just says we did some editorial stuff and we were going to go review it, but it isn’t what happened. We started with a letter, we had a proposed rewritten draft on the table, and we

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made some other changes after that and there was a general consensus that the original draft was too long and it needed the catch phrases at the beginning. Mr. Hevey would have composed a rewrite but he hasn't had time. Mr. Humble wonders if we could simply refer to the rewritten letter. Mr. Hevey says that the letter is the final product which doesn't reflect the original letter that was sent out by email or any of the other work. Mr. Holt says that we had a proposed draft of the letter and at this meeting we revised it. Mr. Farnum says, after considerable discussion, and Mr. Holt agrees and says that after considerable discussion we revised the letter, that's all you have to say. He also suggests that Mr. Underwood was in attendance. Mr. Underwood says that he was not at the meeting. Mr. Guastini says to say, after two rewrites. Mr. Bousquet suggests that it was just edits and rearranging some structure; it wasn't so much that the whole letter was changed. Mr. Farnum and Mr. Guastini agree. Mr. Hevey would like to propose some changes. Mr. Humble says he thinks that the good thing is that the following meeting was the essence of why it was changed so radically is captured there. Mr. Hevey's other concern is that we should list all of the attachments that are going to be attachments to these minutes. He asks if the minutes are going to have attachments, such as this taxpayer letter. Mr. Humble asks if Mr. Hevey is suggesting that all the reports that we deal with should be attached to the minutes. Mr. Hevey replies, if we are making them an attachment, they should be listed in the body of the minutes as attachments. He says that this particular letter from 9/16 should be watermarked with the word draft so it doesn't get out there and someone think that we really sent that version of the letter which could backfire. Mr. Holt asks why it is necessary to attach a draft of the letter. He suggests just use the final letter. Mr. Farnum says that all the public should be interested in is the final draft. Mr. Holt says the final letter should be attached, not the preceding drafts. Mr. Hevey says that he can see the request for documents produced at the meeting and this was sent out with it as part of the minutes. Mr. Holt says to look at the number of drafts of the Bylaws. Do we have to have every one of those attached to the minutes? Mr. Hevey says that no one has asked for them, but they are available. Mr. Bousquet asks if the original draft that was being worked on while doing edits, is a working tool. Mr. Farnum thinks it confuses people if there are multiple drafts. Mr. Guastini says just to say that there are numerous drafts that are available upon request. Mr. Hevey says it depends on how you structure it; this one in particular should be marked draft. Mr. Humble asks if this is going to go out attached to the minutes or if it is a separate file. Mr. Hevey says there was a specific request for a letter to be attached to the minutes that is not listed as an attachment. Anything else that we are attaching should be listed as an attachment. It is established that the taxpayer letter that was attached to the email to the BOD that included the 9/16 minutes will not be included when filed with the Secretary of States website. Mr. Humble doesn't have a problem with labeling the taxpayer letter that had been edited during the 9/16 BOD meeting as a draft. Mr. Mays thinks that if we start attaching work documents to minutes we can open a pandora's box. He says what the minutes are supposed to represent are the finished product and discussion of what went into leading to that finished product. Mr. Humble and Mr. Mays discuss that attaching Mr. Novak's letter to the 9/19 minutes was done as a courtesy and is not going to be taken as a matter of policy or procedure. Mr. Humble says that in the case of the minutes that has the attachment of Mr. Novak's letter, the minutes should indicate that there is an attachment and the taxpayer letter that was completed at the end of the 9/16 meeting should have the watermark, draft on it in the official file. Mr. Humble states, all in favor in accepting the minutes as amended, Mr. Holt, aye; Mr. Farnum, aye; Mr. Guastini, aye; Mr. Humble, aye. Mr. Hevey says that he is a nay if we are accepting the minutes of 9/16. He

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still doesn't like the whole paragraph 3. Mr. Humble tells him to write something up. He would be interested in what Mr. Hevey would like the minutes to say. Mr. Mays says that his recommendation would be if Mr. Hevey wants to make a change that would form an amendment then it is perfectly legitimate to offer it at that time and the BOD can consider it at that time. Mr. Humble says that if Mr. Hevey is willing to put something on paper, the BOD will consider it. Mr. Holt asks if there should be a motion to revise the prior motion to vote on the two sets of minutes and just make it to vote on just one.

A motion is made by Mr. Holt to amend the previous motion that the approval is only for the September 19, 2013 minutes and not the September 16, 2013 minutes. Motion is seconded by Mr. Farnum. All voted aye. Motion carried.

4. Chief's Report to include:

- a. Department's operational activity and management for the month of August, 2013** - There were 9 fire and 22 rescue calls and 5 trainings in September. The live burn went well under Captain Gardner's supervision. Mr. Humble attended the live burn and was very impressed by everyone's professionalism. He said that everyone knew what they had to do and did it. There were 6 mutual aid out and 6 in. Ladder testing is complete. The septic system has been pumped at the station.
- b. Status of third party billing for fire calls.***
- c. E-Response program** – The Chief of Burriville has a program called 'I AM RESPONDING'. The person receiving the call via iphone can either tell the system that they are responding to the scene or the station, delayed response from home or work and it gets sent to the station. The Chief has a monitor at the station so everyone can see who is responding. The program costs \$850 per year. All of the departments in Burriville use the same system and \$850 is their share of the system. The Chief will contact for more information. E-Response, that Chief Brown uses, is \$1,500 per year. It is the same concept as I AM RESPONDING. There is discussion of whether our area has service. Mr. Guastini mentions that Verizon has a booster that can be purchased.
- d. Summit Station street sign lighting and Greene Station exterior lighting status.***
- e. Greene Station improvement plans and budget** – Station 1 cleanup is in process. There is discussion of adding a second floor to the building. Mr. Guastini suggests jacking up the building 2 feet, adding 2 panels to the garage doors and surrounding the building in metal to save money. Mr. Humble asks if there is an easement for the shed at the Greene Station.
- f. Command vehicle status** - The Chief's command vehicle is in service. The Chief apologizes for the \$8,000 in repairs to the BOD and the taxpayers.
- g. ISO update** – an ISO Committee has been formed that includes Captain Gardner, Captain Mann, Russell Lacaillade, Mr. Mays and Chief Quattrini. The deficiencies in previous reporting were because of Fire Alarm recordkeeping and the department had no control. We need to add our tankers to Fire Alarm run cards which would prove an efficient water source. Overall as a department we received 31% out of 50% grade. How we receive our call we got 5.6% of 10%. That is the number of dispatchers that are on duty; we have no control over that. When it came to water supply, because we don't have fire hydrants and we couldn't show at the time of the survey proficient water source of our tankers, we received 0 of 40%. We will add our tankers to our run cards. The only issue that we may have is the 50 year draught plan. Mr. Mays says that the biggest issue is when we approached ISO to see what we need; they never came back to us with a response. Mr. Mays called New Jersey, ISO

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headquarters, who said all we need is a professional engineer with some experience of hydrology. We had a contact with NRCS who was going to help us, but he no longer works there. Mr. Mays will continue to find someone else from NRCS who can assist. Mr. Mays says our ISO rating could lead to significant savings to taxpayers on their homeowner insurance. The Chief has gone out to survey water spots in the area. Mr. Humble will keep the ISO update on the agenda each month.

- h. Capital asset useful life schedule/anticipated Rescue Recovery Fund expenditures** – Members ask the Chief to provide a list at the next meeting. Items that still have not been purchased are portable radios and the chainsaw.

The Chief is working on the cooking element at WC School. They should only be heating food and has contacted the vendor regarding the same. Evidently, on the day that the Chief was at the School, there was a problem on the vendors end and the children had to be fed. As far as the horizontal vent in the school, the Chief has contacted the Fire Marshall who will look into it, and it should be rectified. Inspections were done at Summit Church, Weeks Hill Auto, and Rice City Church. There were some deficiencies that are being corrected. At Rice City Church, the State Fire Marshall will meet the Chief to review their needs. The Chief has the authority to write an agreement for hardship cases.

A Jeep Committee has been formed to repair the Jeep. It needs a \$400 carburator. A spaghetti dinner may be planned to raise the money. Mr. Guastini suggests that there may be scrap metal in the dumpster at the Greene Station that could be sold.

During public education at WC School, there will be a poster contest with the children on kitchen safety.

The Chief asks Mr. Underwood for a Home Depot or Lowes credit card. Members suggest that we have an account with Koszela Lumber.

The Chief is planning an open house in December.

A motion is made by Mr. Guastini and seconded by Mr. Farnum to accept the Chiefs report. All voted aye. Motion carried.

5. Treasurer's Report*

a. District's financial accounting activity for the month of September, 2013 – \$534,968 of tax bills have been sent out. We have made our revenues without touching our surplus this year thanks to the tax sale and reimbursement from FEMA. Expenditures had normal activity in the month of September. A motion is made by Mr. Guastini and seconded by Mr. Hevey to accept the Treasurers Report. All voted aye. Motion carried.

b. Adjustment of accounting allowance for uncollectable revenue – A motion is made by Mr. Farnum and seconded by Mr. Holt to adjust the allowance for uncollectable revenue from \$5,000 to \$2,500. All voted aye. Motion carried.

6. Tax Collector's Report*

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a. **District's tax collection activity for the month of September, 2013** – Opening balance, 44,744.55; new receivables, \$534,107.17; September payments, \$17,326.28; abatements, \$10.21; adjustments \$127.06; penalty paid, \$368.07; uncollected balance, \$562,399. A motion is made by Mr. Farnum and seconded by Mr. Guastini to accept the Tax Collectors report as read. All voted aye. Motion carried.

7. **Clerk's Report***

a. **District Clerks activity for the month of August, 2013** – n/a. A motion is made by Mr. Farnum and seconded by Mr. Guastini to change the Clerks report from August to September. All voted aye. Motion carried.

b. **Research of deed for Greene Station One property** – The deed to the Greene Station was read but doesn't reference an easement to the abutting property. Mr. Humble asks if the deed describes property that goes all the way beyond that driveway. Mr. Underwood thinks it should be two deeds because of the house that the fire district purchased.

c. **Research of nearby cell tower ownership and possible provisions for municipal use** – The Police Chief says that the Waterman Hill tower is very important to the police department and if there is a power outage, he would have a generator sent to the tower. He is not aware of a written agreement stating that fire departments are able to put antennae on towers. Mr. Humble thinks that the Hickory Ridge tower may be higher than Waterman Hill. Chief Quattrini says that the tower company may make an agreement with the Town when applying to place a tower, to allow safety equipment. Mr. Hevey thinks he may have a file that would include the agreement for the tower at Hickory Ridge.

8. **SAP Committee Report**

a. **Announce schedule of next SAP Committee meeting** – a meeting has been scheduled for October 30, 2013.

b. **Suggested topics:**

i. **District policy for possible future FEMA reimbursable expenses** – the Chief will come up with some ideas for compensation.

ii. **Member handbook** – Mr. Underwood will come up with items that should be included in a handbook.

iii. **Command vehicle use** – The Chief and Mr. Humble will come up with ideas to present to the SAP Committee and ultimately the BOD.

The Chief says that an individual contacted him saying that he/she would be out of work for a period of time for surgery. The Deputy received a call that the individual was in the ACI. After some research the Chief found that this individual was charged with felony assault. The surgery was covering for their 90 days in the ACI. The Chief received reports from Providence and the AG's office and found that the charges were true. He also received a call saying that the same individual had problems in the Town of Smithfield. There were felony charges in 2005 and he/she was hired by WCFD in 2010. In 2010 the BCI that we received showed no criminal record. The Chief would like to do a local and national check for new members that will cost \$25 as part of the hiring process. The new hire will be asked to pay that amount. It is suggested that fit for duty physicals be required.

9. **Charter/By-Laws Committee Report** – Mr. Hevey says that a meeting was held and the taxpayer's letter was gone through item by item. There were a couple of the taxpayers comments that justified some minor changes to the Bylaws that will be submitted to the BOD

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prior to the Annual Meeting. Mr. Hevey will provide a redlined copy with changes for the next meeting.

Mr. Humble asks how things are posted on the SOS website. Financial records and SAP's cannot be posted, only minutes are posted.

10. **FLSA study status** – The average for the past 8 months is an additional \$192.78 per month. Mr. Humble is anxious to get this done. He asks if the BOD is in agreement that we are going to abide by FLSA and what are we going to do to the budget to abide by FLSA. Mr. Holt says if you annualize it, it comes to \$2,300 per year. If you look at the training pay line of the expense sheet, \$33,000 annualized compared to the \$37,000 budgeted. We are running \$4,500 less than budget on that line item, so we have the money to do it. However, if you factor in the fact that we are running a 13% reduction in calls, you have a different answer. Mr. Humble says if we do go with the FLSA we will have to add a margin of unpredictability. If you implement it now there is only a four month impact on the budget. Mr. Humble thinks it should be an event for next year. Mr. Mays asks if the attorney has looked to see if we actually have to comply. Mr. Humble thinks he did and we went to the Department of Labor. Mr. Underwood says that they are employees; there is no way around it.
11. **CCFD receivership status and any possible WCFD response/action items** – There is a meeting tonight to go into more detail of what to present to the public next Monday for their vote.
12. **New Business** – Discussion of adding lighting at Greene Station.
13. **Open Forum**
14. **Schedule next BOD meeting** – the next meeting will be held on November 21, 2013.
15. **Adjournment** – a motion is made by Mr. Guastini and seconded by Mr. Hevey to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 p.m. All voted aye. Motion carried.

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