

AGENDA OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CUMBERLAND FIRE DISTRICT

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.

CUMBERLAND TOWN HALL, 45 BROAD STREET, CUMBERLAND, RI

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Lemois, Commissioners Koutsogiane, Matta, Parent, Ouellette, Champagne, Scullin and Solicitor Kelley Morris.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Under New Business, the resolution of communications for Vendors should be 34 and resolution for exemption for the Blind should be 35.

CONSENT AGENDA

COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 5/11/15 AND 5/12/15. MINUTES FROM THE 6/3/15 MEETING WERE NOT IN THE PACEKT. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE. PASSED 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of Resolution 2015-34 – Vendor Communications.

The Chairman will assign the key contact people for various vendors. Currently, we have the following assignments:

State agencies financial or other:	Thomas Bruce
Audit vendor:	Thomas Bruce
Payroll:	Thomas Bruce, Beth Markey & Diane Karolyshyn
Health Insurance:	Commissioner Champagne
General Liability Insurance:	Commissioner Champagne
Fire Operations vendors:	Chief Finlay
Media:	Chairman Lemois

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION IN REGARDS TO VENDOR COMMUNICATIONS. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE.

Commissioner Koutsogiane questioned the infringement of the commissioners. Chairman Lemois explained that he does not want any infringement but to have one person assigned to contact with any questions. Commissioner Scullin asked if they could discuss issues with Chief, Chairman Lemois complimented the question and explained this was only for external contacts.

A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND RESOLUTION PASSED 4-3. COMMISSIONERS OUELLETTE, KOUTSOGIANE AND SCULLIN VOTED NAY.

B. Finance Update

Mr. Bruce handed out individual financial statements for each of the four districts as of 5/31/15. The statements have been submitted by Bob Marry for North Cumberland, Ed Yazbak for Cumberland Hill, Beth Markey for Cumberland Fire and Diane Karolyshyn for Valley Falls. He briefly reported on the results and other significant factors of each of the statements.

The District is currently out to bid for audit services for up to a three-year period. Auditor General Dennis Hoyle, who approved the RFP specifications, plans on attending our bid conference next week. This meeting will be attended by firms who intend to submit proposals. The June 30, 2015 version of the attached financial statements will be a primary part of the scope of the first stage of the upcoming annual audit process. The specifications reflect a requirement advised by Auditor General Hoyle that the four individual district audits and audit reports be completed by September 30th. A copy of the specifications is available at the District website.

The tax bills were delivered by the post office on Monday, June 15th. The expected large amount of taxpayer calls were received by the Finance Department for the first two days following delivery. The staff commented that the number of received calls were within the amount they expected based on their past experience at the individual districts. On 6/4/15, RI State Municipal Finance Director, Susanne Grechner provided verification that our final tax levy was acceptable.

Beth Markey, with the assistance of our payroll service firm, has input and developed all data and set up files to start the live generation of payrolls in July. This same process has continued with our new QuickBooks Pro multi-user system which also will be utilized starting July 1st.

There were questions and discussion on the Districts which had surpluses as well as the date of first payroll.

Commissioner Scullin questioned negative balances and asked if it was due to tax by collections. Mr. Bruce reported that the District has a 96.3% tax collection rate and should rise by the end of June. A November tax sale is also a tentative plan which will first come before the Board for approval.

Commissioner Ouellette thanked Mr. Bruce and their staff for all their hard work.

Next was adding the exemption for the Blind to Resolution 2015-35. This is to add the exemption for the Blind residents of Cumberland. Currently, there are 18 qualified taxpayers. The CFD Tax Collector shall reach out to the qualified to correct their bills. The tax collector shall have the ability to make adjustments to any tax bill received to date from a qualified individual.

There were questions and discussion on the previous resolution. It was discussed that it should be an amendment to Section 2 to add a Section 4 for persons who are legally blind, the limit of the exemption.

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION AS STATED.
SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE. PASSED 7-0.

COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE MOVED TO ADOPT THE AMENDED RESOLUTION.
SECOND BY COMMISSIONER MATTA. PASSED 7-0.

C. Request to adjourn into Executive Session.

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION.
SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE.

Commissioner Koutsogiane questioned that the contract may be against the open meeting law.

Solicitor Kelley Morris does not believe it falls under the collective bargaining agreement but for job performance. After further research, Solicitor Morris decided that this issue could not be discussed in Executive Session. Chief Finlay was fine with his contract being heard in public session.

The Chief's contract was distributed to the members of the committee a week and a half ago. It is the same contract contracts with one exception on page 2, article 4.

The Chief agreed to remain under the old contract until 6/30/15. The new contract will start retro to 1/1/15 and can be terminated with or without cause.

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE CHIEF'S CONTRACT.
SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE.

Commissioner Scullin questioned the 3-yr. contract and does not agree with it. Commissioner Koutsogiane would also like a 1 year contract and questioned holiday pay.

Commissioner Ouellette expressed that she was happy with the 3 year contract. The merger is no easy task. The next round of negotiations may not go so smoothly but she believes in consistency in leadership.

Commissioner Scullin warned that the Union would be looking for increases and that the taxpayers are not being well served. Commissioner Parent commented that is speculation and has nothing to do with the union body. Chairman Lemois would not entertain the local's request based on the Chief's contract and it is purely Commissioner Scullin's opinion on who is best served.

Commissioner Champagne pointed out that the Chief has been very reasonable. His salary includes all off-duty calls, no over-time or stipend, retirement or dental plan. He further stated that he works very hard for the District.

Commissioner Scullin questioned what the breakdown of the increase would be which amounts to .02%

The Chief was very agreeable to any change suggested.

THERE WAS A ROLL CALL VOTE AND PASSED WITH A 5-2 VOTE. COMMISSIONERS SCULLIN AND KOUTSOGIANE VOTED NAY.

D. Personnel Committee Report – Approval on Personnel Committee's recommendation for the four positions on the administrative staff.

The Finance Committee Chairman presented recommendations for the following administrative positions:

Business Manager/Tax Collector:
Assistant Manager/Tax Collector:

Diane Karolyshyn
Beth Markey

Fire Prevention Specialist &
Admin to the Chief:
Tax Collector and Finance Clerk:

Keri Smith
Joan Lariviere

COMMISSIONER MATT A MOVED TO APPROVE THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FOUR POSITIONS ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE.

Commissioner Koutsogiane questioned on whether there was any advertising for other candidates. There were 4 people that expressed that they were not interested in the merger. The people recommended have experience with the software and tax collection.

Commissioner Scullin expressed his opinion that it should be publicly advertised. Chairman Lemois clarified that we are not required to advertise. In fact we had nine admin positions once merged. One was not filled and four others indicated they had no desire to stay on with the new district. The four remaining are the four recommended as new hires.

Commissioner Champagne stated that he did not appoint but made a recommendation because he has worked with these people that are the heart and soul of the District.

Commissioner Scullin questioned the hours and pay scales.

THERE WAS A ROLL CALL AND VOTE AND PASSED WITH A 5-2 VOTE.
COMMISSIONER SCULLIN AND KOUTSOGIANE VOTED NAY.

E. Chairman's Communications – 2015-2016 Goals.

The vision and direction for the District is very positive and uplifting in moral. The following are goals being used to set the vision for the district:

1. To create a plan to achieve a 1 rating on the ISSO scale. Develop a plan by the spring of 2016. Chief Finlay was appointed as Chair, along with Commissioner Champagne and a Deputy Chief.
2. Establish an in home inspection program and town-wide educational program on fire prevention. We will have inspections scheduled by the end of August,

beginning of September. We will present education program in the spring of 2016. Commissioner Ouellette will be Chair along with a local. It is recommended that these be conducted a couple nights a week during the summer.

Commissioner Ouellette suggested that we change the name from home inspection to home visit for advertisement purposes. She has reached out to the Red Cross who will be going to homes and replacing smoke alarms. Mayor Murray is on board with this targeting the fall of this year to implement this program.

3. Develop a wellness campaign for the department. The goal is complete the plan by January 2016. Chairman Lemois will be Chair along with a local as representative.
4. Review the potential for a fire alarm box inspection service for the businesses in the town. Goal is to present by the fiscal year end. Chief Finlay as Chair along with Commissioners Koutsogiane, Champagne and a local representative.
5. Complete a review of which platoon system works for Cumberland Fire District. The goal is to present a report at the July 28th meeting but more time may be needed. Commissioner Matta as Chair along with Commissioners Scullin, Ouellette, Chief Finlay and a Local. May be sometime in August.
6. Research and develop a Citizens Fire Fighter Academy. Goal is to present a plan in the first quarter of 2016. Commissioner Champagne as Chair along with Chief Finlay ad a Local. This will be a great way to connect with the citizens and already has a potential sponsor.

COMMISSIONER PARENT MOVED TO ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION AT 8:39 P.M. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE. PASSED 7-0.

Submitted by:

Debra Auclair
Committee Clerk

