

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE CUMBERLAND FIRE DISTRICT**

**JULY 28, 2015 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**CUMBERLAND TOWN HALL, EVERETT "MOE" BONNER, JR. TOWN CHAMBERS**

**45 BROAD STREET, CUMBERLAND**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

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

**GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Two district crews were nominated for commendations by the Rescue Squad.

The members who received the Life Safety Award were:

Captain James Bardsley, Lieutenant Stanley Haworth, Lieutenant Jeffrey McCabe, Lieutenant Christopher Smith, Firefighter Aaron Babikian and Firefighter John Bradley.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 7/14/15. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE. PASSED 7-0.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- A. FC-R2015-40 Due date, tabled from 7/14/15.** There has been some confusion on due date and when interest rates will start. Chairman Lemois discussed the status of the tax levy. On 6/11/15, 15,000 tax bills were sent out. To date, 10,000 have already paid at a rate off 69%. The decision this year would have implications for future years. The current due date is 8/1/15.

Chairman Lemois would like to consider an extension and would recommend the due date be 09/1/15.

COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE MOVED TO GIVE A GRACE PERIOD OF ONE MONTH FOR THIS YEAR AND EXTEND TO 9/1/15. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER PARENT.

COMMISSIONER KOUTSOGIANE MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION WITH THE DUE DATE MOVED OUT TO 10/1/15 FOR THIS YEAR ONLY. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SCULLIN.

Commissioner Parent questioned the impact of delaying the due date. There are no factors. Interest on taxes was not budgeted.

The amendment passed 5-2.  
Matta and Champagne voting nay

Representative McBeth had some public input. She expressed appreciation for the extension and believes there is still wiggle room and hope that next year there will be quarterly payments. She asked for a vote of confidence on this bill.

Chief Findlay stated that 70% of the taxpayers have paid and could claim hardship and ask for refunds. Solicitor Morris stated that legally the District does not have to give refunds.

Commissioner Scullin stated that people who are struggling can on their own make quarterly payments. Chairman Lemois stated that next the District will be looking into quarterly payment as we will have the time to set up.

THERE WAS A ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE MOTION AS AMENDED AND PASSED WITH A 4-3VOTE. COMMISSIONERS Matta, Ouellette and Champagne voted nay.

- B. FC-R2015-41 Interest rate, tabled from 7/14/15.** Mr. Bruce recommended that we lower the interest rate to 14% equal to the Town. Chairman Lemois strongly recommended that the interest rate be lowered to 12%.

COMMISSIONER SCULLIN MOVED TO LOWER THE INTEREST RATE TO 12%. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER KOUTSOGIAGNE.

Representative McBeth gave public input and stated that 12% is fair and appreciates it but believes that 12% is still too high.

Commissioner Koutsogiane stated that the interest rate is to entice people to pay their taxes on time and that 12% is enough to encourage people to pay.

MOTION PASSED 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **FC-R2015-44 Payout to Captain Jason Lavelle.** Captain Jason Lavelle has been in IOD status for the year of 2014. He has not been able to use the benefit of earned sick and vacation time.

Commissioner Scullin questioned whether he is retiring or not. Chairman Lemois stated that he was not sure if this would be a personnel issue but is State Law. Multiple years cannot be carried over.

COMMISSIONER SCULLIN MOVED TO TABLE THE PAYOUT UNTIL NEXT MEETING.  
COMMISSIONER KOUTSOGIANE SECONDED. PASSED 7-0.

- B. **Review of Proposed Financial Reports.** Mr. Bruce stated that the unified District started on 7/1/15. Disbursements are listed by Payee. He feels we can excel at managing the budget year after year. This report lists all of the District's expenditures. These reports were reviewed at the State level.

Commissioner Koutsogiane questioned the amount of overtime wages. Mr. Bruce stated that overtime costs have actually decreased.

Mr. Bruce stated that he will have a full review of the numbers on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Lemois asked that Mr. Bruce get the financial reports to commissioners as soon as possible to review.

- C. **Overall Finance Department Review/Vote of approval and process for financial questions.**

COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGE MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROCESS FOR FINANCIAL QUESTIONS. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PARENT. PASSED 7-0.

- D. **Chairman's Communications**

The 3-Platoon committee met and sent out invitations to discuss the pros and cons. There is a meeting on August 3<sup>rd</sup> and have one person who has agreed to come in and testify. Looking to set up a future meeting in September.

Last meeting with the Department of Revenue was very positive and are pleased with what the District is doing.

The District was contacted by the receiver of the Coventry Fire District, Heather Martino, asking if we are interested in merging healthcare. We are not even close to looking at that at this time.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Mr. Martinez, a resident of Cumberland Fire District, commended Diane Karolyshyn on her professionalism in regards to confusion on his tax bill and what was paid. There was a check not processed and was charged \$450.00 in attorney fees.

Diane Karolyshyn spoke in defense of Michelle Baker who was collecting monies for tax sale. She stated that is was really confusing and recommends that the District reimburse Mr. Martinez \$450.00.

Commissioner Champagne will go over with Diane and Mr. Bruce to verify.

COMMISSIONER PARENT MOVED TO ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION AT 8:32 P.M. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETE. PASSED 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Auclair  
Committee Clerk

**APPROVED AS AMENDED**  
**7-0**