

**SHELTER HARBOR FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES**

June 5, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.

Dunn's Corners Fire Department

1 Langworthy Road

Westerly, RI 02891

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Called to order at 8:30 AM. All board members are present. Nonie Price is absent. Glen Berwick and Harry Gregory are the officers absent. Peter Ruggiero is present as legal counsel and transcribed the minutes.

II. Public Comment/ SHFD BOG Response

Jim Levins inquired whether his house was plowed for snow over the winter. He stated to the Board of the need to ensure proper snow removal in winter months and the possible liability to the District if snow removal isn't performed properly.

The Moderator explained that the snow removal issue is on the agenda for discussion later in this meeting.

Rochelle Levins presented a letter from Liz Smith regarding snow

removal.

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Vivian Duff, seconded by John Bruno to approved the meeting minutes of December 20, 2014, as submitted. The vote was unanimous to approve as submitted.

IV. Announcements

The Moderator stated that a new entrance sign to the community was posted. Margaret Manfredi-Leffert donated the sign to the community.

The Moderator stated that Alan Leadbetter was appointed as agent for the Public Access Defibrillator and that he would monitor the locations and maintenance of the AED devices. The Moderator also informed the Board regarding location of AED devices; that an audit was undertaken to confirm locations and whether all the AED devices are being maintained properly. Mr. Leadbetter will now assume the responsibility for AED devices.

V. Correspondence

A letter was received from Anthony Nardone regarding the Tax Collector's consideration of imposing a charge for Municipal Lien

Certificates issued by the Fire District. Mr. Nardone questioned whether the Fire District had the legal authority to do so, why a charge was being considered, and that most other fire districts do not charge any such fee.

The Moderator asked the legal counsel for comment. Legal counsel stated that the General laws provide the fire district with the authority to charge such a fee and that it is a policy issue of the Board whether the fee should be charged. The Board agreed to hold the matter for further discussion to consider need and/or fee. The Moderator requested this matter be placed on the next Board meeting under old business.

The Moderator requested that all correspondence on snow removal be discussed in the Roads section of the agenda.

VI. Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by John Bruno, seconded by Vivian Duff to approve the Treasurer's report, as submitted. The vote to approve was unanimous.

VII. Tax Collector's Report

A motion was made by Michael McEntee, seconded by Marianne Nardone to approve the Tax Collector's report, as submitted. The vote to approve was unanimous.

VIII. Election of Vice Moderator

John Bruno was nominated for election as Vice Moderator. No other nominations were offered. A motion was made by Bob Hatfield to elect John Bruno as Vice Moderator, the motion was seconded by Vivian Duff. The vote was unanimous to elect John Bruno as Vice Moderator.

IX. Agent and Committee Chair Reports

The Moderator requested that the reports be taken out of order to accommodate those agents and committee chairs present. No objection was lodged.

L. Tennis

The Agent presented a digest of damage and the condition of the courts from the winter season. A report was discussed by the tennis courts maintenance company. The Agent stated that power washing was not really needed this year as the courts were relatively clean. By skipping this action, the community will save on the power washing fee. The Agent mentioned it was more important this year to perform some needed repairs of tennis courts totaling about \$1100. One of the repair tasks will be undertaken before July 4 and the other, after September 1.

The Moderator also stated that the basketball courts would also be under the purview of Tennis Agent.

A motion was made by Vivian Duff, seconded by Bob Hatfield to accept the Tennis report. The vote was unanimous.

J. Roads

The Moderator led a discussion concerning the several calls, messages, complaints, comments received and meetings held regarding the road conditions and snow removal service over this past winter. Several persons met at the Moderator's home to review the winter snow and ice removal conditions, service, issues, and challenges related to this past winter's severe snow and storm conditions.

It was stated that a new plan of action must be adopted; particularly that the snow removal vendor perform a better job - especially the need for regular mechanized sanding and plowing. The Board believes that a sand/salt spreading service along with more frequent plowing will significantly improve winter snow removal and improve winter travel conditions in the community. The Moderator stated that the snow removal vendor has been informed of these expectations and improvement in the level and quality of snow removal in the community and that he is expected to accommodate this higher level of service.

The Moderator also informed the Board that it is recommended that

the Fire District purchase a truck load of a sand/salt mix in advance of season and locate it appropriately as a winter supply emergency stockpile. This supply will be available for those times when sand/salt is not available at commercial vendors – as was this case this past winter. This supply will ensure that the community will not go without a sand/salt supply when needed.

It was also discussed by the Board that many roads in the community are not able to be plowed to the hard surface without causing significant damage to the road surface. This will require expensive repairs to the roads after winter plowing and is not fiscally prudent. The Board discussed that although snow removal limitations exist given the road surface conditions and lack of winter sun exposure in the community, the Board understands the community's concerns and issues, and plans to take corrective action to improve the road conditions in the winter. All roads will be plowed appropriate to the road surface conditions, with an appropriate application of a sand/salt cover mixture to reduce ice buildups.

The Board also emphasized the need to have alternate plans to deal with the winter snow removal and road conditions. If the current vendor is unable to perform the work properly, alternate arrangements must be available. The Moderator mentioned that a Plan B and Plan C are already in place if the current vendor does not improve the service level.

Ron West stated that some community members believe plowing is being done selective and discriminatory, that the vendor does not have adequate equipment to handle winter weather conditions, and questioned whether the vendor and/or Board are doing their best to serve the community's winter travel safety needs. Mr. West stated he spoke with up to 40 persons who expressed their concern about the quality of snow clearing efforts; even mail delivery was a problem because road conditions were so poor. The Board acknowledged that snow removal service and road travel conditions were inadequate and not effective this past winter. Mr. West speculated that an ambulance service might have refused to enter certain roads this winter due to their unsafe conditions. Mr. West demanded a need for better snow removal service.

The Moderator-responded that the Board intends and desires snow removal service to be better and safer. Board members concur and support an upgrade of snow clearing and road safety in the community, even if greater cost is involved.

Rochelle Levins requested that a letter submitted to the Board from Elizabeth Smith be read into the record. Ms. Smith's letter mentioned snow plowing seemed random and inadequate, and questioned what actions the Board planned to improve the situation. Ms. Smith's letter will be placed on file with the Clerk.

Further discussion ensued – Jack Waters explained more about how

the sand/salt pre-purchase and storage would be conducted. John Bruno stated that the current vendor does extra work throughout the year but agreed he needs to improve the winter snow removal service. The Board intends to perform additional research and consider the matter further.

A. Beach

The Beach Committee Chair stated that the beach was scheduled to open June 20th; and that volunteers should please arrive on Friday, June 19, at 8 am to assist in opening. The summer crew is ready to go-and no personnel changes have occurred. The Chair stated that the Port-a-Potties will be available (and which will be concealed from view in an enclosure). The AED at the beach is ready; the Beach Bus will use the same routes as last year, and the vendor was informed to clean buses better. Beach Passes will be available for pickup June 20th and 27th from 9 am to noon at “Rochelle’s Corner.”

Dado Ferrari mentioned that the teak bench on Grove Dock was damaged, and asked who will repair it and when. It was stated that the matter was already being evaluated and would be handled soon.

B. Beanpot – No Report

C. By-Laws

No report was submitted. The Moderator asked the Board whether they would consider a by-law amendment to use e-mails, when made

available by residents, to provide the annual meeting notice, instead of U.S. mail. No objection was made. The Moderator requested the District Counsel prepare a draft revision to the By-Laws to allow the modified procedure. The Moderator stated the matter would be placed on the next meeting of the Board for action.

D. Community Events

Report distributed to the Board; the events would be posted shortly in the community..

E. Database

Report distributed; no comments.

 

F. Directory

Report distributed; no comments.

G. Finance-No Report

It was stated that a committee meeting would be upcoming.

H. Harbor

Report distributed; no comments.

I. Safety & Security-No Report

J. Website

Report submitted; no comments.

X. Old Business

A. Escrow of Fire District Taxes

Continued to next Board meeting.

B. APRA Policy

The Fire District needs to draft and post and make available an Access to Public Records Act (“APRA”) access request form in conformance with the General Laws. As part of this action, the Fire District must designate local records officer. The Board directed District Counsel to draft the appropriate form and that the Clerk serve as local records officer.

The Moderator also discussed his APRA response to a request from Ken Block.

XI. New Business

A. Fire Protection Contract

The Moderator discussed the status of the fire protection contract negotiations and fact that no termination notice was served on the SHFD by Dunn’s Corners to enter a new contract. This means that the current contract provisions can be extended for one year. The Moderator informed the Board that on-going negotiations would be pursued by Moderator with the DCFD.

B. MacDowell Road Driveway Plan

The MacDowell Road settlement agreement and driveway plan revisions were discussed by the Board, along with Carl Ciarcia's response to the draft revisions. After discussion a motion was made by John Bruno, seconded by Rick Wiatrowski to authorize the Moderator to review the revisions with District Counsel and exercise his discretion in agreeing to any revisions, a modified driveway design and to execute any and all necessary documents to effect his decision. The vote on the motion was unanimous.

XII. Public Comments

Brush collection would be conducted on June 22nd through the 26th.

XIII. Adjournment

Motion made by Vivian Duff to adjourn, seconded by Bob Hatfield. The vote to adjourn was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 11:47 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Ruggiero