

# **Meeting of the Coventry Fire District, Anthony Fire Department Board of Directors**

**September 19, 2009 – Wednesday**

**Open meeting: 7:03 pm**

**Board Members in attendance: Gary Cote - Chairman, TJ Matola, Shirley Matthews Co- Chairman, TJ Matola and Edward Webster**

**Chief – Paul Labbadia**

**Clerk – Robin Leroux**

## **1. Board of Directors update and discussion:**

**Gary Cote read a thank you letter from Dale Hartman thanking everyone again for their quick response to try and help Joe and the impressive show of support at Joe Hartman's funeral. She wanted to return the checks for Joe's Chief money but Gary told her we would be continuing the checks till they run out in December.**

**Gary Cote spoke with the attorneys and we are on track for the closing next week for the property next door. There will be an additional charge for the sewers since the property is not part of the abatement from the town. We are responsible for 2 ½ years of this fee, which should be between \$5-6000. This will be paid at closing out of the proceeds. We will be able to collect fire taxes once it goes back on the tax roll. We are still receiving bills from the town for our**

sewer bill even though we have an abatement agreement in hand from the town. Our attorney will have to straighten this out.

Gary Cote read the tax collectors report: We have collected just over 71% of budget, 4th quarter due October 31, 2009, We have \$14,333.74 in Coventry Credit Union and the tax sale brought in \$9,768.73 (7 properties were sold). Approximately \$88,812.10 was collected from legal letters sent prior to tax sale. Some went to tax office, some to Attorney, some in closing from sale of home.(Oct 20087-to August 27, 2009). The Treasurers report was too long to read into record. Gary Cote did state that we can not pay bills and payroll at this time. Payroll will take precedent and we are over budget on 10 line items at this point. We have \$810 in miscellaneous income.

Gary Cote read a letter from the American Arbitration Association addressed to him and Board of Directors regarding dispute for fire department not enrolling the Firefighters with the Cost of living plan. We need approx \$88,000 to do this. They are entitled to this and if we had the money it would be done. We have had a lot of civility between the Chief and Union to remedy 99% of the disputes so far without going to arbitration. Gary spoke to Chris Pachino and Chris spoke to Attorney Arthur Capaldi, it seems our best defense is probably hardship, which is understandable in this economy. Not sure were this will go.

The hours at the Tax collectors office have changed due to security reasons. Friday nights the Tax Collector leaves with money

sometimes, has had irate taxpayers and felt threatened. The fire fighters were out on call on some occasions. Gary Cote made an executive decision to change the hours.

TJ Matola had a question on the budget vs. the actual. We have received 71% of budget so far and may end the year ok if all moneys come in.

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There will not be an executive session this evening. All the final numbers are not in yet to continue.

Chief Labbadia recognized two of the firefighters that just had new babies. He also said Mr. West from the town had said we can take all the time we need to continue to check into alternative health care. Chief Labbadia is addressing the issue of checks paid for back taxes that are being held to long at the Attorneys office and the customers are still being charged late fees and additional interest. Gary Cote and Chief Labbadia will make an appointment with the Attorneys office next week to remedy this.

Gary Cote asked what happens with tax payers that set up payment plans. They still accrue interest but are not penalized anymore. All moneys received come off the interest owed first before it goes towards the principal.

**Gary Cote asked Chief Labbadia where we stand with changing insurance companies. The fire alarm is being put in upstairs. We should be close or done by end of year. Gary Cote would like to use the new insurance rates when planning the new budget. He would like to start on the budget process in early October. The Chief is still trying to determine specific budget allowances needed in this year's budget that have been put into general accounts. He has talked to the Treasurer about getting numbers together that he needs to put a proper budget together that he can submit to the Board.**

**Gary Cote will keep the Union involved with the budget planning process so everyone knows where we stand at all times.**

**Gary Cote and Chief Labbadia discussed replacing the ladder truck. Gary feels we are not in a position to replace it. The Chief is looking into cost effective ways to make it a possibility. TJ Matola suggested we start putting the numbers together for the budget and table the ladder truck discussion for now.**

**Gary Cote brought up the fact that the Board voted at the last meetings to retire Deputy Chief Hartman's car number and only have one deputy Chief position. Gary asked for a resolution from a Board member to move second Deputy Chief Robert Warren to the first Deputy Chief's position and eliminate the second Deputy Chief position altogether. TJ Matola made the motion and Ed Webster seconded. All members approved motion – Gary Cote, Ed Webster,**

**Shirley Matthews and TJ Matola.**

**2. Public Comment and Discussion: None**

**Motion was made by TJ Matola and seconded by Shirley Matthews to adjourn meeting. All members were in favor – Gary Cote, Ed Webster, Shirley Matthews and TJ Matola. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.**

**The meeting was taped. The tape is on file with the record of the meeting.**

**Respectfully submitted**

**Robin Leroux**

**Clerk, Board of Directors AFD**