

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

**February 17, 2010 – Wednesday**

**Open meeting: 7:01 pm**

**Board Members in attendance: Gary Cote - Chairman, TJ Matola and Edward Webster, Peter Pankowicz**

**Deputy Chief - Robert Warren**

**Accountant – Tom LaColle**

**Clerk – Robin Leroux**

**1) Board Update and Discussion: Gary Cote apologized for canceling last weeks scheduled meeting due to inclement weather. Ed Webster made motion to move resolution forward pertaining to Cola that all board members signed. TJ Matola seconded motion. Gary Cote accepted motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, TJ Matola, and Edward Webster. The resolution pertains to the Cola issue for the firefighters. Since the taxpayers approved it in the budget, arbitration was not necessary and at the arbitration hearing a MOA was signed with the Union and they will be in the RI State COLA program effective either March 1, 2010 if not retroactive to February 1, 2010. The arbitrator did issue a declaratory judgment on behalf of the firefighters. Gary Cote announced that Shirley Matthews was not able to attend this evenings meeting due to the Ash Wednesday holiday. Two months**

ago Board members voted on an action that could be taken if any board member becomes inactive or misses three consecutive meetings. Mr. Calci has not attended any meeting in 6-8 months. He has been notified in writing by our Attorney about this resolution. If Mr. Calci was not able to attend tonight's meeting it would be taken as a sign of his resignation. He did not come to tonight's meeting and told Gary due to personal and professional obligations he was not going to be able to serve on the Board. Gary Cote thanked him for his service and was sorry to see him go. The Board valued his opinion as a firefighter. Ed Webster nominated Peter Pankowicz to fill Mr. Calci's position effective immediately. TJ Matola seconded motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, TJ Matola, and Edward Webster. Mr. Pankowicz is interested in filling the position till the term ends. At that time he will have to run for the position and be reelected. Mr. Pankowicz joined the Board. TJ Matola read a letter of resignation on behalf of himself due to family and work constraints. He does not feel he can give the position the time it needs. Gary Cote was sorry to see him go and accepted his resignation with regret. Ed Webster made motion to nominate Jim Beckman to replace TJ Matola. Peter Pankowicz did not know Jim Beckman enough to comment on this motion. Gary Cote gave a brief history of Captain Jim Beckman's past history as interim Chief and former board member of the Anthony Fire District. Jim Beckman is currently a firefighter with the City of Cranston and would be an asset to the Board and has the time to put into Board functions. Gary Cote seconded the motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, Peter Pankowicz, and Edward Webster. A question was asked if it was legal

for the Board members to assign a position without having an election. If the term has less than 1 year left on it, the board has right to fill the position without a vote. Gary Cote announced that the monthly Board meetings would be rescheduled to meet every other month in the slow part of the year. When the budget planning meetings take place or if otherwise needed meetings times will change. Notice of unscheduled meetings will be posted at least 24 hours in advance if an emergency meeting is needed. The next regular meeting will be the 2nd Wednesday of April and June, and then the Board will decide the necessity of monthly/weekly meetings for the budget sessions. Gary Cote welcomed Mr. Pankowicz and gave a brief history of his background. He has been active at recent meeting and will be an asset to the Board. Gary Cote read the Tax collectors report. 80 properties will be going up for tax sale. Mr. Budziak voiced his opinion that the firefighters should not be paid if they do not work. It was asked if there was a payment plan option for the people notified of a tax sale. Yes there is. Is it known what the circumstances of these people are if they are elderly? It is checked into if they are elderly and the state is notified but it is not known what happens then. Gary Cote let it be known that our Tax Collector historically has worked with delinquent tax payers to try and help any way possible. Gary Cote explained the tax sale procedure. Gary Cote confirmed the medical coverage switch to our own policy through Blue Cross Blue Shield. The town said we owed \$65,500 towards back payments for the previous medical coverage. Gary met with Mr. Hoover, town manager and discussed that amount down to \$44,500

**saving the taxpayers \$20,000. We have a one year contract with Blue Cross and they can not raise rates till our year expires. Tom Lacolle submitted his budget report and distributed copies to anyone interested. Tom Lacolle and the tax collector discussed the meaning of their year end dates and should discuss together if they have to be the same, (it shouldn't matter). Ed Webster asked if the day room is now upstairs for the Firemen. Gary said yes and the executive secretary and Fire Marshall's offices are now on the 1st floor. The 1st floor common room is now used for Board purposes and as a training facility.**

**2) Public comment – has already been discussed previously.**

**3) Motion was made by Ed Webster to adjourn. Peter Pankowicz seconded the motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, Peter Pankowicz, and Edward Webster.**

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:40pm**

**Respectfully submitted**

**Robin Leroux**

**Clerk, Board of Directors AFD**