

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

**August 18, 2010 – Wednesday**

**Open meeting: 7:00 pm**

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

**Chief – Paul Labbadia**

**Deputy Chief - Robert Warren**

**Clerk – Robin Leroux**

**Board Update and Discussion: Gary Cote apologized for having to cancel the previously scheduled meeting, since not enough Board members were able to attend. Gary read a letter from the RI Department of Revenue, Division of Municipal Finance regarding the vehicle excise tax that was restored. This allows the Fire Department to be able to collect from tax payers an additional vehicle tax beginning in the 2011 fiscal year. The tax collector prepared a report stating there are 17 Fire Districts in the state and only Lincoln has implemented the new tax. There will be a significant cost to start implementing this new tax and a lot of work. We have already requested 3 times from the Town the evaluations of vehicles for the taxpayers. They have not been printed yet. Bills would need to be sent separately from property tax bills. Ed Webster made motion to**

table this for further discussion. Peter Pankowicz seconded the motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, Peter Pankowicz, Shirley Matthews, and Edward Webster. Gary Read the tax collectors report. There was one correction on the properties sold at tax sale. The property was advertised incorrectly and the real owner was never notified of the tax sale. The buyer is now entitled to a refund from the improper sale and Gary instructed the Treasurer to cut a check for reimbursement ASAP, along with attorney fees. Shirley Matthews presented a Capital Improvement budget to date that her and Chief Labbadia and the Treasurer have been able to able to decipher from past administration information. So far we are under budget for this year and still have FEMA and insurance money due. Ed Webster commented that the building looks good. Everyone should be happy with the changes. He thanked Shirley and the Chief for putting the report together. Chief Labbadia said they will be putting the roof on next week and that should be the last thing to do. The upgraded fire alarm and boiler and new windows will make the building more maintenance free. He was able to stay under budget by doing a lot of the work in-house and with community service help. Tom Lacolle presented a 3rd quarter budget update comparing the last 3 years of actual expenses and receipts vs budgeted. Tom thought it would be best to combine the overtime account with the reimbursement for overtime from the insurance company. Gary thanked the Chief for the accurate budget figures he has been able to maintain. Shirley thanked Tom for his budget update that we can now add to the new website to keep the taxpayers up to date. Ed Webster asked the Chief about the

progress on taking down the old fire alarm lines and boxes. The Chief has asked a couple of other departments that still use the system if they want them. They do but have not given a time table as to when they will take them down. If the Chief does not hear from them by October he will have to hire someone to do it. Shirley stated that it is a liability to the district and Gary asked the Chief to put another notice in The Reminder telling everyone again not to use the boxes, they have to dial 911 in an emergency. Ed Webster made the motion to put the notice in The Reminder. Shirley Matthews seconded the motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, Peter Pankowicz, Shirley Matthews, and Edward Webster.

Public Comment – It was asked what the web site address is. Joanne will email it to her. It will be nice that the reports will be posted onto the website. Clarification was given as to what the new tax on vehicles is all about. Gary explained that the State is no longer reimbursing the districts with a portion of the registration fee's the state collects. The State is allowing the Fire Districts to implement their own tax which is how the system used to work anyway. The truck that was donated to the Pink Heels Organization was being delivered. A lot of positive publicity is expected. Chief Labbadia said that the two items for arbitration will be coming up 1) distribution of leave and 2) Overtime. He also received a letter from the Union requesting a sit down to start negotiation of a new contract. The one in place is up in June 2011. The extra time will be needed to work out some issues. The Memorandum of Agreement to merge unions was

signed by Gary Cote and the process is moving forward. There will probably be a different negotiation team for the next contract. Our Legal team did go over the merger agreement before it was signed. Chief Labbadia also let it be known that over a 2 month period he had to spend \$3500 on repairs to vehicles that needed fuel tanks replaced and other fuel related problems due to gas obtained through the town that was bad. Should we try to be reimbursed from the Town? Gary Cote requested a copy of the bills and he will sit down with the town manager to see about getting reimbursed. We have now switched to a different fuel source.

Motion was made by Shirley Matthews to adjourn. Peter Pankowicz seconded the motion. All were in favor Gary Cote, Peter Pankowicz, Shirley Matthews, and Edward Webster.

Meeting Adjourned 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted

Robin Leroux

Clerk, Board of Directors AFD