

**Coventry Fire District
Monthly Meeting Minutes
January, 8, 2014**

Full board present: James Beckman, John Botello, Louis Cote, Jr., John D'Onofrio, Peter Pankowicz

1. Motion to move to an executive session: Motion made by John Botello and seconded by John D'Onofrio. The purpose of the executive session was to discuss and seek council regarding future matters as they pertain to firemen contract negotiations and the relationship to such negotiations with sitting board members. No votes were taken at this session. Minutes to the executive session will be recorded separately and sealed.

2. Nomination and Election of Officers –

a. A nomination for Chairman for James Beckman was made by Louis Cote Jr. and seconded by Peter Pankowicz.

b. A nomination for Chairman was made for Louis Cote Jr. by James Beckman and seconded by Peter Pankowicz.

c. A vote was taken to elect James Beckman as Chairman, resulting in 4 ayes and 0 opposed.

d. A vote was taken to elect Louis Cote Jr. as Chairman, resulting in 0 ayes and 0 opposed.

e. A nomination for Vice Chairman was made for Louis Cote Jr. by Peter Pankowicz and seconded by John Botello.

- f. A vote was taken to elect Louis Cote Jr. as Vice Chairman, resulting in 5 ayes and 0 opposed.**
- 3. A motion was made by John Botello to approve last month's minutes. The motion was seconded by John D'Onofrio. A vote was taken resulting in 5 ayes and 0 opposed.**
- 4. Roll Call was taken, all board members are present.**
- 5. Chief's Report – Chief Labbadia presented his monthly report with the following items:**
- a. Request to replace/upgrade 3 office computers with Windows 8. The proposed cost is \$900.**
 - b. Seeking approval to purchase CF53 or T53 "tough book" computers to be installed in 3 vehicles, allowing the department to utilize for fire plans and institute new tactics. The computers will be installed in the rescue, ladder and chief's vehicle**
 - i. Estimated cost to be approx. \$2,200/unit. This is just an estimate based on preliminary research and it not based on the state bidding process.**
 - ii. Funding will be provided through the Fire Prevention fund.**
 - iii. The chief will reach out to the state to determine vendors for the bidding process.**

The board will render a decision at a later time.
 - c. There is currently \$5,000 in the station account. A portion of the**

station account should be considered to be used to replace the heater in the Morton building.

On a separate matter, John Botello asked the chief if it was still necessary to replace the current septic system with a sewer hookup. The chief indicated that the current system is still functional but requires ongoing maintenance. In addition there still needs to be clarification as to whether or not the fire district is exempt from the current sewer assessment if an upgrade is made. There is no funding request for an upgrade in the 2014 budget.

Regarding upgrades to the rescue vehicle, the chief indicated that he is still reviewing and finalizing the estimate. The work on the refitting will be performed by Bulldog Fire Rescue. This is a soul source bid. Do to the nature of the work being done. The board will render a decision on this project after the estimate is finalized.

6. Tax Office Report – Submitted by Jeanne Lukowicz (see attached) and presented by James Beckman. A motion to accept was made by Louis Cote Jr. The motion was seconded by John D’Onofrio.

Jeanne Lukowicz notified the board that the 2014 tax bills have been sent to the district.

7. Treasure’s Report - Presented and submitted by Judith Hetherman (see attached). A motion to accept was made by Louis Cote Jr. The

motion was seconded by Peter Pankowicz.

8. New Business – A taxpayer (name not identified for the record) has requested an interest freeze on his outstanding tax bill. The request is being made due to extenuating circumstances. Both of his parents have passed away within a short period of time. The passing of his parents have imposed a substantial debt burden on the tax payer. According to statements made by the Chief and Tax Officer, the tax payer has made payments every month and is making a strong, good faith effort to pay his taxes in full. However, the accrual of interest is making it difficult for the taxpayer to catch up.

After discussions with the board as to the taxpayer's history and attempts to make payments, the board discussed making a motion to freeze the interest on the taxpayer's current outstanding balance due for a period of 9 months. The status of the taxpayer's tax debt will be reevaluated at that time. The motion was made by James Beckman and seconded by John D'Onofrio. A vote was taken resulting in 5 ayes and 0 opposed.

There was some discussion on potential savings in the electricity expenditures for the district.

The chief has recently renegotiated better rates with a new carrier John Botello inquired on the potential of requesting a RISE audit There was some discussion on whether or not the district could save money by purchasing street lights directly from National Grid. It was

the general consensus of the board that there would no significant savings when realizing additional charges that would be imposed by National Grid when physically replacing street lights.

9. Motion to adjourn was made by Peter Pankowicz and seconded by John Botello. A vote was taken resulting in 5 ayes and 0 opposed.