

Central Coventry Fire District

March 20, 2007 - 7:00 pm

MINUTES

1.Call to Order Time: 7:02pm

2.Roll Call

President: Girard Bouchard – VP: Michael New

Joe Bonn - Richard Tellier - John Bowen - Robert Crowe - Anna Mae Lapinski

Treasurer – Tom LaColle – left at 8:45pm

Tax Collector – Jeanne Graemiger

**Linda Bennet - Chief Hoxie - Chief Seltzer - Asst. Chief Scott Tucker
F/F Mike Stevens, Lt Kevin Schnell, Helen Quinn (taxpayer)**

**3.Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting –
1/16/07**

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Richard Tellier

Unanimous Vote

4.Old Business

Abatements

Helen Quinn, 72 Hunters Crossing, Abatement Interest \$18.91 Granted

Motion: Anna Mae Lapiniski Seconded: Mike New

Chris Reynolds, 7 Cinnamon Dr, Property was part of the lawsuit with

Anthony and as Taxpayer chose not to pay any taxes to either district for years in question Abatement is Denied

Motion: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Mike New

Benjamin Brouillard, 80 Maple St, Abatement Denied, Denial Letter to include advisement to go to closing attorney and/or title insurance co.

Motion: Robert Crowe Seconded: Richard Tellier

Mary Williams, 11 Cobblestone Ter, Abatement Denied

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Richard Tellier

Letter from Dawn Oliveiri she mailed her payment that should have gone to Hopkins Hill FD to Harris FD and the check was cashed. She provided copies of canceled checks made out to Harris FD and Hopkins Hill FD. She is requesting a refund. Refund Request granted in the amount of \$198.75

Motion: Robert Crowe Seconded: Mike New

Letter from Daniel Dyer requesting abatement of 2005 and 2006 taxes to allow for Elderly/Disabled exemption. Mr. Dyer received the exemption in 2005 as Washington FD allowed this exemption. Central Coventry FD does not allow any exemptions so he did not receive it in 2006. Abatement Denied

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Richard Tellier

Awards Dinner – work in progress

Veteran's Exemption

Edward Streaker asked about the veteran's exemption provided for in the state law. Mr. Bouchard answered that we have consulted the Attorney General's office and were told by them to consult our own

attorney. That is what we are in the process of doing. Mr. Streaker said that he would bring the information to Senator Reed's office and provide any information he receives back to us.

5.President's Report – accepted as presented

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Anna Mae Lapinski

Unanimous Vote

Chief Seltzer has been in contact with the Town Manager & School Officials. They are offering space at the Closed Flat River Middle School. Mr. Bouchard thinks it would be a good move to put the Tax Collector's Office there. He believes that eventually the Town Hall will be moving in there and it would be convenient for our taxpayers to be able to pay their town & fire taxes in one spot. Also it would give the Tax Collector's office a little more security as there would always be people in the building with them. This would be a rent free situation. We would only have to pay for the phone. Chief Seltzer had thoughts of putting the Fire Marshall's office there as well, however as the Marshall's office does not have a full time secretary it might be an issue with the Marshall being out on the road a lot. Ms. Lapinski asked about why it was going to be rent free. Chief Seltzer responded that we give a lot of in kind hours for Emergency Management and we don't charge them tax as they don't charge us tax. Mr. New questioned the condition of the building. Chief Hoxsie said the parts of the building we are looking at are in good shape. Some other parts do have some roof leaks and roof drainage problems. Mr. Bouchard brought up that there may be some minor

expenses for adding counters and or desks etc. Chief Hoxsie said the comment he hears most often is “I have to go way out there to pay my taxes!” but they have no problem going out to the Town Hall.

Mr. Bouchard made motion to accept the Town’s offer of office space and look in to moving the Tax Collector’s office and any others as appropriate. Mr. New added that if they start to charge rent in the future we re-evaluate the situation.

Motion: Girard Bouchard Seconded: Mike New

Unanimous Vote

6.Chief’s report – February 20, 2007 – Accepted as Presented

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Joe Bonn

Unanimous Vote

Chief’s Report – March 20, 2007 – accepted as presented

Motion: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Robert Crowe

Unanimous Vote

Administration

1 & 2. Chief Hoxsie met with the Chairman of the CFD Board at the chairman’s request. Chief Hoxsie was very clear with him that we would help any way we can but that they would have to ask for that help. Chief Seltzer informed the board that Robert Warren is the Chief of CFD again as Chief Beckman has resigned. Mr. Crowe asked if the districts are training together. Chief Hoxsie confirmed that we are training and responding together.

3. MOA between District and Local #3372 – Sets limitations on Probationary Firefighters and changes date of Life Insurance Premium payment to Local #3372 from April 1st to February 1st.

Motion: Joe Bonn Seconded: Richard Tellier

Unanimous Vote

7.Chief Seltzer said he has been asked to be a witness at an arbitration hearing between the Coventry Fire District and their Union.

He has spoken to an attorney from Capaldi & Boulanger, who is representing the District, and the questions were general in nature. They have also asked Chief Brown, Paul Sprague from Town, Warren West, Town Finance Director, & someone from East Greenwich. Chief Seltzer doesn't have any problem doing it but wanted to discuss it with the board first. The Arbitration is in regards to the section of the Anthony contract concerning lifetime Blue Cross. Chief Seltzer has spoken to Chief Warren and he had no problem with it. There was some discussion and the Board had no problem with the Chief being a witness.

7.Grant for Thermal Imaging Cameras - Warren West still has a checking account open, so the money will go in there and then account will be closed out. According to Chief Hoxsie this grant will allow us to buy 2 cameras and that will put a camera on all 4 engines and the ladder. There was some discussion about how the cameras

can be used.

Maintenance & Repairs

There was some discussion of why an engine responds with the rescue on each rescue call. There was no question of the need for additional manpower, the question was do we need the engine or could we use a smaller vehicle. Chief Seltzer, Chief Hoxsie & Lt. Schnell all explained that the practice of sending an engine was the best way to insure that the firefighters had the tools they need for any situation that might occur on that call or the next call.

Station 4 Administrative offices are done! All future meetings will be held at Station 4.

8. Treasurer's Report – accepted as presented

Motion: Robert Crowe Seconded: Richard Tellier

Unanimous Vote

Treasurer had to leave at 8:45pm.

Chief Seltzer spoke with the Treasurer and he said at the 6 month mark we were at about 50% of the budget. So everything seems to be going well. Nextel phones were switched to Verizon and we will be seeing a savings of about 50%. He is also speaking with several companies about what we can do with the land lines and we will should be seeing some savings there as well.

Mr. Bouchard spoke with the Treasurer in regards to direct deposit. He is not having any success with the Coventry Credit Union. He is

looking into going to Centerville Bank.

9. Tax Collector's Report – accepted as presented

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Joe Bonn

Unanimous Vote

On the February report there are more deposits but they have not been posted yet. She is hearing from people with past due amounts especially from Tiogue. They are going on Monthly payment plans and are catching up.

Cardi property issue. Tax Collector doesn't have really have knowledge about the legal issues with the Cardi property. She has received a letter from Steven Cardi. According to Chief Hoxsie 10+ years ago the Tiogue FD put the property up for tax sale. It did not sell. The Tiogue FD did not file a deed to take possession of the property. When the property was sold it was given a clear title by the title insurance co. even though there was a clouded title due to the Fire Tax lien. When Tiogue FD sent tax bills with past due amounts Mr. Cardi sued the TFD to clear the title. Attorney Friend was the last person to handle the case as far Chief Hoxsie knows.

Mrs. Hall found a document that came from the Supreme Court that appears to say when the tax sale that Chief Hoxsie mentioned happened the notification was sent with an incorrect name. Mr. Cardi owned two companies and the notice was addressed to the wrong one. Apparently the tax sale laws say that if the notice is not sent to

the proper entity the tax sale is invalid. Therefore the tax sale held by TFD was not valid and they never took possession of the property nor was the lien properly filed therefore the monies owed are gone. The second part of the lawsuit was saying that TFD slandered the title and Mr. Cardi is due damages. The court apparently says that because it was a clerical error and not intentional, there is no slander and he is not due damages. So it appears to be a wash. He does not receive damages and we don't receive taxes. When the property was sold to Commerce Park on March 31, 2000 there was \$50,000 put into escrow but that status of that is unknown.

The Tax Collector is holding a check for \$1,667.00 that can't pay current taxes until the back taxes are taken care of. Chief Seltzer suggested we contact Attorney Friend to give us a recommendation. Considering the timeframe of the original Tax Sale (1991 or so) it is uncertain how much of his current back tax problem has anything to do with this lawsuit. Chief Hoxsie said Attorney Friend had told him that Mr. Cardi had paid in excess of \$100,00 in legal fees to not pay \$50,000 in taxes. Chief Hoxsie recommends The Board have a representative meet with Attorney Friend or have him come to a meeting as he was involved with the case before anyone else and should be able to explain the whole thing. The property in question was one large parcel that was divided. The tax collector has six different accounts. Mr. Bouchard is going to contact Attorney Friend and get a recommendation.

10.New Business:

Call Pay for Harris FD

Mr. Bouchard spoke with the former Treasurer for the Harris FD and the Callmen were paid on 4/27/06. There was money budgeted but it was less than previous year. Mr. Bouchard thinks it was \$5,000. The previous treasurer thinks it was less. The Treasurer would get recommendations from Chief Fontaine & Capt Leveillee and the pay amounts would come from that. Considering the last time they were paid, they would be owed for April thru August. Chief Seltzer asked Capt. Mulcahey to go thru their records and give a report on how many calls each person went on. Nothing has been received as of yet.

Harris FD Opal Bill - \$1,212

Mr. Bouchard spoke to the previous Treasurer. She says this is a valid bill that needs to be paid.

**Issue with Cardi property and Tiogue FD, info from Attorney Friend
See above – Tax Collector's Report**

11. Introduction of new business to be considered at the next Board meeting:

Ms. Lapinski asked if there could be some information about impact fees, as had been mentioned previously East Greenwich was trying.

12. Adjournment – 9:40pm

Motion: Mike New Seconded: Anna Mae Lapinski

Time: 9:40 pm