

# **Central Coventry Fire District**

## **Board of Directors**

**April 15, 2008 - 7:00 pm**

**Central Coventry Fire Station 4**

### **Minutes**

**1. Call to Order – 7:10 pm**

**2. Roll Call**

**President: Girard Bouchard – VP: Joe Bonn (7:35 pm)**

**Anna Mae Lapinski - Linda Giguere - Ron Gizzarelli - Elaine Hunt -  
Robert Crowe**

**Clerk: Tracy Hall**

**Treasurer: Tom LaColle**

**Chief Seltzer (7:14 pm) – Asst Chief Tucker**

**Not Present - Tax Collector – Jeanne Graemiger**

**3. Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting –  
3/18/08**

**Motion to Approve: Anna Mae Lapinski    Seconded: Linda Giguere**

**All Vote Aye**

**4. Old Business**

**Property Appraisal**

**Appraisals are in for both Station 4 and Station 3. There is a booklet**

for each station. Appraisals came in about a week ago. They were done by White Appraisals. Mr. Bouchard and Chief Seltzer met with the appraiser yesterday to review the appraisal. He offered some opinions and some advice if we decide to go thru with selling the stations. The appraisal for Station 4 (Arnold Rd) is \$500,000 and the appraisal for Station 3 (Station St) is \$450,000. The report is extensive they will be available for Board Members to review. Ms. Lapinski asked what the cost for the appraisals was. Mr. Bouchard wasn't sure. Chief Seltzer should have the correct amount. The property Station 4 is on is zoned residential. If we decide to sell we should go thru the process to change the zoning to commercial before we sell it. The Appraiser also suggested we interview several realtors to insure we get one with experience selling commercial properties. Mr. Gizzarelli asked about when the Board would be discussing if we want to do this. Mr. Bouchard assured Mr. Gizzarelli that this was a very young process. It only came up just before the new Board members came on. The start of this process was about 9 months ago. We were approached about a new station in the Brookside Center, the old Kmart Plaza. Then 4-5 months ago the Wood St property was brought up as the Senior Center and Human Services were moving to the Town Hall Annex. Chief Seltzer will have some more information in his report and there will also be more in the executive session.

Mr. Gizzarelli had more questions about whether moving to the Wood St location would be the best way to service the taxpayers of the district. He has asked around to see what people thought about this

possibility and has gotten no positive responses. He spoke to Acting Town Manager Paul Sprague, not as a Board member but as a citizen.

Mr. Gizzarelli feels that we shouldn't wait till the last minute to include the Board members as the project may have developed a momentum to go thru. It's not fair to the Board members to not be included in the beginning and not know the reasons why. The public may be upset when all of the sudden they are 7 minutes away instead of 5 minutes if there is a response time difference. He is not for the project and he is not against the project. He feels he does not have all the information. Chief Seltzer said the Mr. Gizzarelli has given the impression the he is against this project. Mr. Gizzarelli stated that he was not. The perception of the Town after Mr. Gizzarelli spoke with Paul Sprague was that the Board was against the project. Chief Seltzer spoke to Mr. Sprague and squared that away, we have not made a decision yet. Chief Seltzer would prefer that any concerns were brought to him or Asst. Chief Tucker who are heading up the project. At the last Board meeting he asked the Board to allow them to finish their work and present the information. We are going through a fact finding process and in fact the committee is ready make a presentation to the Board. There is a process to go through and that's what is happening. Nobody is being left out. The questions regarding response times and all of the other issues are being researched and the information will be provided to the Board so they may make a decision. There was some continued discussion on this subject.

## **5. President's Report**

**Mr. Bouchard met with Chief Seltzer, Assistant Chief Tucker and some of the Firefighters for a tour of the Wood St property. Mr. Bouchard said he was amazed at the cleanliness of the inside of the building. It's in good shape. He was only able to stay for 2/3 of the tour but the building has a lot to offer.**

**Mr. Bouchard has spoken to three Board members about representing the Board as a bargaining committee with the Union for the upcoming contract. There were more than three Board members who requested to be on the committee. Mr. Bouchard has asked Ms. Lapinski, Mrs. Giguere and Mr. Bonn, who will be chief negotiator. Mr. Gizzarelli said he had also expressed interest in serving on the team. Mr. Bouchard replied that there could not be more than three as that would constitute a quorum and would cause issues with the Open Meetings laws.**

**As discussed earlier, Mr. Bouchard and Chief Seltzer met with White Appraisals.**

**Motion to Accept: Linda Giguere    Seconded: Anna Mae Lapinski**

**All Vote Aye**

## **6. Chief's Report**

**Chief Seltzer presented his report. Mr. Crowe asked if there was anything we could do about the injuries. There seem to be a lot of them. Chief Seltzer replied that he has spoken to VFIS and we are about average. Chief Seltzer is working with VFIS to look into an alternative method which would involve self insuring with an**

insurance payment after. Chief Seltzer is still gathering all the information. Mr. Crowe asked about physicals. Asst. Chief Tucker replied that he is a certified fitness trainer. The problem is we don't mandate it for everyone. We offer physical fitness with the gym here at Station 4. They can use it both on duty and off duty. He is working with Chief Seltzer to create a rotation so guys working out are the last ones to go out for a call. There was some additional discussion on this. Chief Seltzer has talked with the Union President regarding having mandatory physicals. They are in favor of it.

Mrs. Hunt asked how much the ad for the Administrative Assistant cost. Chief Seltzer said he would have to check the bill but he thought it was around \$1,100.

Mr. Crowe asked about the amount of insurance we carry on the call personnel. Chief Seltzer replied that he had worked with VFIS last year and reduced the cost by \$3,000 to \$4,000 based on how active they were. But we are still in the \$20,000 range. There was some additional discussion on how the amount is calculated and the benefits provided. There was also some discussion regarding other associated costs. Mr. Bouchard feels that an average participation of 600 hrs per year is not worth the \$40,000 we spend. As much as he doesn't like it we may have to look at it in our next budget. Mr. Crowe would like a quote from the insurance co with the volunteers and without the volunteers.

There was some discussion regarding selling and not repairing old Engine 3.

**Motion to Accept: Ron Gizzarelli Seconded: Robert Crowe**

**All Vote Aye**

**Regarding the Administrative Assistant resumes, Chief Seltzer is looking for some help from the Board to weed out some of the 130 or so resumes for interviews. Mr. Crowe, Mrs. Hunt, & Ms. Lapinski volunteered to help with the process. Mr. Crowe commented that the Chief should have the most say as he has to work with this person. Mrs. Hunt asked if there were any applicants who had fire department experience. Chief Seltzer replied that including Mrs. Hall there were three so far. Mr. Gizzarelli suggested creating a hiring list. Chief Seltzer agreed we could do that.**

**Regarding the workshop about Wood St location, this could be rolled in with the Chief presenting his future plans for the department. There was some discussion about when to have that work session. The next Board meeting date, May 20th, seems to be best for all. In consideration of not having an extra long meeting President & Chief's reports will be kept short.**

**Regarding the station on Hill Farm Rd, Mr. Bouchard thinks it's a good idea to rename the building and allow community to use it as a meeting place. The Police Department has also expressed interest using the building. Mr. Crowe asked if we would be charging people to use the building. Chief Seltzer replied that the Police Department would pay for any services they needed such as phone or internet. There was some additional discussion. Mrs. Hunt asked if we would**

need to change our insurance. Chief Seltzer replied that he would change the listed use of the building and that we already have an umbrella policy to cover anything that might happen.

**Motion to Approve: Ron Gizzarelli Seconded: Robert Crowe**

**All Vote Aye**

**Regarding Chief Seltzer's request for reimbursement of educational expenses associated with a Master's Degree.**

**Motion to Approve: Ron Gizzarelli Seconded: Linda Giguere**

**All Vote Aye**

Regarding the old Engine 3, Mr. Bouchard makes a motion to allow the Chief to sell the Engine. Mr. Bonn seconds the motion. Ms. Lapinski asks if we have that money earmarked for anything. Mr. LaColle suggests putting into the equipment budget. Mr. Bouchard amends his motion to put the proceeds into the equipment budget.

**Motion to accept amended motion: Girard Bouchard Seconded: Joe Bonn**

**All Vote Aye**

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

**Mr. LaColle presented his report.**

**Motion to Accept: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Robert Crowe**

**All Vote Aye**

## **8. Tax Collector's Report**

**Mrs. Graemiger was not feeling well but left her report. Mr. LaColle presented her report. Mr. Gizzarelli asked about the district buying properties that go up for tax sale. There was some discussion regarding if this was allowable. Chief Seltzer commented that the number of properties that actually make it to a tax sale is very low. Most people take care of it before then.**

**Motion to Accept: Elaine Hunt Seconded: Ron Gizzarelli**

**All Vote Aye**

### **9. New Business**

**Mr. Bouchard read a letter from Edward Streaker requesting a veteran's exemption and asking if there was an additional appeals process. Mr. Streaker has been previously informed that the Central Coventry Fire District does not allow any exemptions. Mrs. Hall will follow up and reply to Mr. Streaker. There was some additional discussion about exemptions and as to the contents of the reply.**

### **10. Seek to Convene an Executive Session pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5 (a)(5)**

#### **Acquisition of Real Property**

**As there had already been discussion on this topic Mr. Bouchard did not seek Executive Session.**

**Chief Seltzer has requested a price from the Town for the purchase of the senior Center Building and the fenced in area and building behind it. He is also in touch with the State regarding a traffic signal at either South Main & Rathbun St or South Main & Wood St. In addition**

research has confirmed that the titles for both Station 3 & Station 4 are clear. Station 3 is zoned General Business and Station 4 is zoned Residential. Chief Seltzer has spoken to Mr. Sprague in regards to changing the zoning on Station 4. A request would have to be submitted to the Zoning Department and they would take it from there.

Mr. Gizzarelli asked if the property would have more value if the zoning was changed. Chief Seltzer replied that would absolutely be true. Mrs. Hunt asked if taxpayers would have to vote on the zoning change. Mr. Crowe replied that if it came before the Zoning Board anyone within 200 feet would have to be notified. There was some additional discussion on this process.

Mr. Crowe asked if the land behind the Senior Center is for sale. Would it be possible to buy that land and build a new station? Chief Seltzer replied that the Town does not own property that goes out to Sandy Bottom Rd. Mr. Bouchard added that in the long run it would be more expensive to build a whole new station. Chief Seltzer agreed, all we have to build to use the Senior Center are bays. The Chief also added that the sale of the two stations should finance the building of the bays so we would not have to borrow any money. There was some additional discussion regarding the land behind the Senior Center versus the existing building.

**11. Introduction of new business to be considered at the next Board Meeting**

**12. Good & Welfare**

## **Spaghetti Dinner for Fogarty Family**

**Chief Seltzer confirmed the date of Sunday May 4th, 2pm – 6pm. Everything they need has been donated. If any Board Member wants to help that day it would be appreciated. They have also organized a Food Drive. Donations can be dropped off at any of the Stations. Mr. Gizzarelli inquired as to how the accident happened. Chief Seltzer responded that Mr. Fogarty crossed in to the oncoming lane. The tank truck pulled over as far as he could but Mr. Fogarty's truck ended up under the rear wheels of the tank truck. Any questions about the fundraiser contact Lt. Giles or Lt. Gorman.**

**There was some discussion regarding the construction on Tiogue Ave and what can be done to push the state for reconstruction of the road.**

## **13. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn: Elaine Hunt Seconded: Linda Giguere**

**All Vote Aye**