

**Central Coventry Fire District
Board of Directors Monthly Meeting
April 19, 2011 – 7:00 pm
240 Arnold Road**

Minutes

1. Call to Order – 7:10 p.m.

2. Roll Call

President: Girard Bouchard Jr.

Vice President: Joe Bonn

**Directors: – Bob Crowe – Linda Giguere – Ronald Gizzarelli -Anna
Mae Lapinski, Armond Niquette**

Treasurer: Tom Lacolle

Tax Collector: Jeanne Graemiger

Clerk: Christine Moniz

Chief : Robert W. Seltzer

Asst. Chief – Scott Tucker

Union President Dave Gorman

**Not Present – Director Niquette, Treasurer Tom LaColle, Asst. Chief
Scott Tucker, Director Gizzarelli**

3. Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting – 03/15/2011

Approval with the following changes 700 million in place of 7 million on page three, and on page 4 post employment health plan instead of pre.

**Motion to Approve with changes: Director Lapinski Seconded:
Director Giguere**

All Vote Aye

4. Communications - The President read aloud two thank you notes. One note came from the Tucker Family thanking the honor guard, and for the nice turnout. Also, one from Mrs. Carson thanking the Department for such great care.

5. Old Business – Discussion of back tax issue for Coventry Health Center. The Board discussed voting on the action to take on the Health Center. Central Coventry Fire District could wait to meet with the lawyer and review the options at next month’s meeting or vote to place the lien on the property for past due taxes. President Bouchard, Jeanne Graemiger will meet with the lawyer next Tuesday to discuss the bankrupt business and to also discuss placing a lien on the property. The President reiterated the fact we could take vote on an action tonight or wait for next Board meeting in May. The Board of Directors decided to take action immediately.

Motion made by Director Crowe to place a lien on Coventry Health Center for past due fire taxes. The motion was seconded by Director Lapinski.

All voted Aye.

6. Presidents Report – looking at the Charter we are suppose to take a look at the bi-laws every 5 years. Since we have made changes this past Annual Meeting we have fulfilled the obligation.

The President went over his discussion he had with the clerks in the Tax Collection Office. They will get the hours that they are hired to work each week. There was also discussion about a raise and the Board felt to hold off on the raise until October of this year.

The President brought up to the Board the issue of establishing criteria for the Chiefs position. The members of the committee are President Bouchard, Director Lapinski, Director Crowe, President Gorman and Chief Seltzer. President Bouchard would like to meet with the committee on April 28th at 6:00 p.m. at Station 4.

Code enforcement at the High School - The President met with the Town Council to intervene a bill submitted to house floor to extend the time to bring the school up to fire code. The Town at one point

had appealed to the code enforcement fire board and at this moment the school has until September 1st 2011. They have a half a million in repairs to get up to code. The bill has been pulled and the Town has budgeted \$50,000.00 for smoke detectors. The Chief and the Marshal have agreed that the school is headed in the right direction. If the school does not have the smoke detectors by the next inspection, the district will not give the permit for the school to open in September. If they are installed then they will get the occupancy permit. Director Lapinski asked after they install the smoke detectors what is the next step for them to become compliant with the fire codes. The Chief stated that the Marshal, the Chief and the School will discuss the next step. Another issue that was remedied was the fact they had no hand rails on the bleachers in the school gym. They have since been purchased and installed. The district is not claiming that the school is unsafe it just has to meet the fire code.

There was also discussion in regards to the street lighting in the District and what we can do to reduce the cost of street lights without compromising the safety of the tax payers. National Grid submitted a report and we have 1,376 lights in our District. There are several options that we can choose from to help reduce lighting. One option is to switch the 100 watt bulbs to 50 watt bulbs. Tiogue Ave has 250 watt bulbs we can look into reducing them to 100 watts. We can also reduce lighting inventory by 1% each year with no cost to the District.

Since we have several accounts we need to look into whether it is per account or for the whole District. The Chief and the President can

go out to see what lights can be removed. Then come up with a list for National Grid.

The President also discussed that the Fire District needs to finish removing the rest of the Fire Alarm wires from the poles. We can look into getting a retired lineman to come in and remove the wires and also look into the cost of renting a bucket truck. The Chief mentioned that we might be able to borrow one from a bordering Fire Department. We need to look at keeping cost down to a minimum. Director Lapinski inquired if we have someone to come in and start removing the lines are they covered under our policy if they are injured. The Chief stated that they are.

The President also reminded the Board to make sure they fill out their ethics paperwork.

Motion to Approve: Director Crowe Seconded: V.P. Bonn

All Vote Aye

7. Chiefs report –At the current time we do not have anyone out on OJI.

Central Coventry Fire Hired 7 new employees. We had eleven in the Academy and the rest will get hired by November. We expect open spots after the promotional exams.

We are working on the swearing-in ceremony.

Repairs at the Coventry Town Hall Annex are completed and the Tax Collector and Fire Marshal can move back to their offices. The office has new ceiling tiles, new rugs and they put on a new roof at no cost to us.

Under new business the Chief will discuss replacing squad 3 and recommend a revision to the Fire-Recovery Resolution.

The Chief also reviewed the recommendations that were made by the building committee to upgrade the existing fire houses. The report was distributed to the Board members for review. Director Lapinski inquired if the list was needed items or wanted items. The Chief explained that it was both. We will look into the repairs that are necessary first then see where we will go from there. The Chief did go over the major issues and that is the heating systems in Station 3 and in Station 4. The stations are a big expense when it comes to heating them. Director Lapinski would also like to price out the repairs that way the Board will have a better idea on the impact it would make on the budget.

Motion to Approve Chief's Report: V.P. Bonn Seconded: Director Crowe

All Vote Aye

8. Treasurer's Report - The Chief went over the report in the packet and explained each line item that was over. We will move some money from the Fire Marshals account and also we did not hire all of the recruits so we will save some money there. Also, as of May 8th we will have a floater on shift that should with the overtime expense. The union also deferred \$40,000.00 in Holiday pay.

At this time we are allowed to borrow up to 850,000 on the line of credit. The District has borrowed 632,000. Director Crowe asked is we have paid any of the line back and the Chief said we have made some payment not all of it. We have paid about 50%.

**Motion to Approve: Director Crowe Seconded: V.P. Bonn
All Vote Aye**

9. Tax Collector's Report – The Tax Collector went over the process of the legal letters that went out. The ones that have contacted the office either paid or they made arrangements to pay. If they have not paid in full after receiving the legal notice the homeowner will go to tax sale. What the tax office will do is take the legal fee of \$35.00 off the top then applies payment to the interest then applies the rest to the overdue tax.

The Chief asked about RI Housing and if they pay back the legal fees along with the delinquent taxes and the Tax Collector said yes.

The President asked Jeanne to please have a separate line to show what the back taxes total amount and what back taxes were collected.

The President asked if we there was a report of how much is owed in back taxes. The Tax Collector only knows who owes back taxes she did not have the dollar amount. The Tax Collector did point out that the past due total is on the report that she provides every month.

Motion to approve tax collectors report: Director V.P. Bonn

Seconded: President Bouchard

All Vote Aye

10. New Business – Revision of the fire recovery resolution. The Chief first reviewed section 3 and explained that Central Coventry Fire District has to right to change the resolution as we see fit. Section 6 was then read aloud and was explained that we would only apply this to anyone that does not live in Central Coventry Fire. If we bill people who live in the District we could get another \$3000.00 per month. The chief revised section 6 stating that we will bill the insurance companies for fire or mva's. We will only charge the insurance carrier. Director Crowe asked if we do not do anything at an mva do we charge. The Chief said we do not bill. But if we stay on scene and take care of anything further and wait for tow we will charge. The District will bill out for the fire side the same way we bill for Rescue. Also, if there is a hardship then the bill would get signed off and excused.

Motion on the floor to change the fire recovery resolution section 6 as presented by the Chief

Motion made by Director Crowe Seconded by V.P. Bonn

All Vote Aye

New Business – The Tax Collector discussed the letter on Harris Mills. They have been in arrears since 2008 they are looking for relief for back taxes. The person dealing with Harris is very nice and is working with the Tax Collector. He would like to remove interest on back taxes. Director Crowe wanted to know are we going to get the back taxes even though the owner went bankrupt. The Tax Collector explained that the owner just wants to get some relief from the interest from the time it went into bankruptcy to the present.

President Bouchard asked the Tax Collector if she has the numbers on what is owed and she did not have them available. The President wants this tabled until next month so we have the figures of what the interest is on the back taxes. The Chief wants us to vote to approve because this will be an income generator. It would be to our benefit to allow this to go through. We need to help this owner out with this project it is close to a done deal that the owners are going to move forward and start building. Motion made by Director Crowe to abate the interest prior to May 24, 2010 as long as he pays the bill in full.

Director Lapinski asked Director Crowe to withdraw his motion. She would like to make a motion to allow the President to look at the

amount due and to make the determination to abate the bill or act on applicable taxes as he sees fit so the District does not come away with nothing.

Seconded by director Crowe

All Voted Aye

Discussion replacing squad three it is oos and it is nickel and diming us. The Chief wants to replace it with a new vehicle or slightly used and wants to place it in the new budget. In the range of \$60,000 – \$90,000. Does the Board want to support the purchase, if not he want's to know what we can do with the truck. Director Crowe can't see us buying another truck because we do not have the money. We could look into getting a smaller truck. The President would like the Chief to look at options and then report his suggestions. We can also try to get some homeland security money. The Chief needs the Board to look at replacement of trucks. We do not have a reserve. Also, discussed a 5-10 year plan to replace trucks.

11. Introduction of new business- None

12. Good and Welfare – Reminder to fill out ethics paperwork.

15. Motion made to adjourn 9:35 p.m. By V.P. Bonn Seconded by

Director Crowe

All Vote Aye