

**Central Coventry Fire District
Board of Directors Monthly Meeting
July 17, 2012 – 7:00 pm
240 Arnold Road**

Minutes

1. Call to Order – 7:08 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: Loraine Houle

Clerk: Christine Moniz

Acting Chief Dave Gorman

Also in attendance - members of the public

Not Present: Director Niquette, Treasurer Tom Lacolle

A Motion was made to move the Tax Collectors report to the

beginning of the meeting since Loraine had to leave early. Motion made by Director Lapinski and seconded by V.P. Bonn.

All Vote Aye.

Note: the report will remain in section ten of the Minutes.

4. Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting – 06/26/2012

With the additional public comments as suggested by Director Crowe.

**Motion to accept the minutes with the changes – Director Lapinski
Seconded by Director Gizzarelli and Director Crowe**

All Vote Aye

Director Crowe also wanted to state that the Treasurer was not at our last meeting because he was not sent an Agenda. The clerk reported that she takes copies of the emails that go out and Tom is on the list. That the last meeting was moved forward and he received the cancellation of the June meeting and reschedule of the meeting in the same email. Also there is a posting on the door at Station 4, a posting on the State website. The clerk will also make sure a copy goes in the Treasurers mailbox.

5. Communications – the President read aloud a letter from East Greenwich Fire Department thanking CCFD for Mutual Aide during the bus accident on Rt. 4.

6. Old Business – no old business

7. Presidents Report –met with the Coventry Fire District board members and that will be discussed in executive session tonight. Received a grievance from the union regarding pension benefits and that will also be discussed in executive session tonight. Received letter of interest from both BC for their interest in the interim Chief position. Received a letter from Mr. Leveillee requesting an executive session that will be discussed later tonight. Met with Chief Seltzer three times last month before he left. Met with Active Chief Gorman to help with getting a handle on the transition. Also met with Centerville Bank and I also have some concerns with our Treasurer that will be discussed tonight in executive session. Attended a great farewell lunch for Chief Seltzer

Motion to Accept the Presidents report – motion made by Director Lapinski

Seconded by Director Gizzarelli

All Vote Aye

8. Chiefs report – Given by interim Chief Gorman. Captain Hall is still out of work with an illness, Lt. Stevens out of work with knee injury. He should return in October. FF Fratantuono is out of work with a knee injury and is expected to be out 12-14 weeks. FF Garrahan is

out of work with a muscle strain and return to work date is unknown.

I have been unable to make contact with the district treasurer, Tom Lacolle as he has been out with an illness and hospitalized. Our last budget update given by Mr. Lacolle was April 13th. Due to the treasurer's illness bills were on hold and I have been trying to access bank accounts to release money for payments on passed due invoices. I have also discovered that we have an account at Coventry Credit Union when the treasurer was advised that all accounts were to be transferred to Centerville Bank. It was also requested that Mr. Lacolle backup his records and turn them over to the Station. Mr. Lacolle provided us with a flash drive however we do not have the program to open it.

Action Item (1) Approval to seek RFP's from bookkeeping and accounting firms to provide such services.

I had requested a meeting with the Dawson Group. They will come in and go over reported and the updated needed for our billing. There is also a process called "Balance Billing" which other cities and towns do. We would balance bill any out of district resident.

Action Item (2) Approve Balance billing in whole or partially

Arson Dog – we have the states only Arson Investigation Dog. His name is jack. His handler is Lt. Dauplaise. The cost of food will more

than likely be donated by Tractor Supply. The cost of OT will can be billed to the insurance companies. We will need a full report to do so and bill it through Fire Recovery.

Currently we bill the insurance companies for vehicle accidents and vehicle fires we have the ability to bill the property insurance carrier for use of our resources at structure fires or even non medical service calls. This would also enhance our revenue.

Action Item (3) Approve to allow our current Fire Recovery billing company to bill insurance companies for our Arson Dog and our handler for travel and expense. Approve Fire Recovery for fires and non medical emergency response.

Impact fees – we have received legal opinion from the District’s attorney with regard to a proposed impact fee. At this time we need to conduct a needs assessment before we move forward. We can use the Towns template for this and if we work on this swiftly then this would also be a great revenue generator.

Public Safety Room Tax – this would apply only to the hotels in the district. This minimal tax would be a dollar or less per stay not per night and the money generated by this would be applied to our “Information Technology” this would offset the costs associated with our computer infrastructure.

Action Item (4) Approval to have the district Solicitor to investigate the feasibility of a “Public Safety Room Tax”.

Hopkins Hill Fire is contracted by AMGEN to respond to calls and alarms. The approximate annual income is 200-300K paid to HH. At the time of the agreement HH offered to pay 20-40K to area districts. Since Central Coventry provides more resources to that response than any other fire district in town, we should receive some monetary compensation.

Action Item (5) Approval to request a payment for our response to AMGEN from HH and / or AMGEN.

Fire works were held again at Johnson’s Pond. We had detail present. The association requested that we could donate or absorb the cost of details for the event (\$3600.00), we stated we could not afford to do that. We suggested maybe changing the date of the event so it does not fall on a holiday and the cost of detail would be far less. Since it is a localized area for a surge of population it is a safety concern and we need to stage an engine and crew to that area.

Howard Mill – Fire Marshal Godin and I met with the new owners of the mill complex and would like to get going on the project as soon as possible. The Marshal would like to streamline and expedite the process to get this up and running. This project will bring in revenue for our plan review however we may be affected if the Town allows

the reduction in value for a long term. This project should be followed closely and assigned to the Tax collector to keep an eye on it.

The Chief also went over the major responses in the district and a list of building maintenance that needs to be addressed in all stations. This list is attached to the report.

Vehicle repairs – The Chief reviewed all the issues with the apparatus and the list is attached to the report.

Audit – will be ongoing and the letter of engagement was signed and received by the audit firm.

Taxes owed to the fire district from the Town of Coventry. The Town is trying to make arrangements for payment as of today they owe us \$27,000.00.

The Chief thanked the Board for allowing him an opportunity to assist the District and taxpayers during this challenging time.

Motion to Accept the Chiefs report – motion made by Director Lapinski Seconded by Director Giguere and Gizzarelli

All Vote Aye

The Board members stated that this report was very informative and

they were impressed.

Actions Items – the President proceeded to go over the actions items presented by the acting Chief. Action item Balance Billing was presented and discussed and with great discussion the action item on Balance Billing.

Director Gizzarelli asked if there were any items that needed to be voted on tonight. Any emergency items. Director Lapinski feels we should start on the top and work our way down. “Balance Billing” can start right away.

President Bouchard would like to put off the discussion of Action Item (1) until after the executive session.

Director Crowe stated that all the Board members received the treasurer’s report and asked why we did not get one at the station. The treasurer sent our financial report to the wrong fire chief in another district.

The Board discussed the voting on Action Items- Director Crowe asked for Chief Gorman to explain what “Balance Billing” is and how it works. We don’t bill our district resident but we do bill surrounding districts we however, do not chase the bills. The chief would like to chase the bills and get the rescue bills paid. This would generate more revenue for our district.

Director Crowe would like to read the actions items and look further into the impact they may have before voting one them. A member of the public was upset that we could vote on the action item. “Balance Billing” before hearing from the tax payers or taking questions.

The President stated that Public comment is reserved at the end of the meeting and that this is a Board meeting.

Director Lapinski would like to make a motion to implement this process only to outside of the district. Chief Gorman wanted it clarified outside our district or outside of Town she said outside of the district. Director Gizzarelli seconded the motion. President Bouchard repeated the motion stating that we would balance bill include tax payers inside and outside the CCFD fire district.

Discussion again arose in regards to our balance billing President Bouchard then stated that public comment will remain at the end of the meeting and he called a recess.

President Bouchard made a motion to recall the last motion and approval of the last action item. Motion moved by Director Giguere and seconded by Director Crowe. All Vote Aye Action item removed.

The Actions items will be tabled for two weeks. A meeting was set for

July 31, 2012 at 7:00 pm. The President directed the clerk to place an agenda online. It will be the only item discussed.

9. Treasurer's Report - The President stated that there was not report for tonight's meeting and he would table it until next month. Director then stated he has July 2nd report and that he made copies and would read off the report. Director Crowe presented the Treasurer's report to the Board and read aloud every line item. The report is attached to this packet. There was also discussion on the grants and what we have left on them. Acting Chief Gorman stated that we would have to log into every grant and see what is left on them. The grants are very specific on what we can use them for and how much we can request at one time. For example the SAFER grant you can only request a block of the money not all at once. We can budget the money but we cannot collect it in a larger lump sum. That is a Federal Guideline.

There was also discussion on the accounts at Coventry Credit Union that we have three accounts all with a substantial amount of money that no one was aware of. The Treasurer was directed to close all the accounts and merge into one account at Centerville Bank and he did not do that. We found that all credit card transactions were still going to Coventry Credit Union. The numbers on the report are not accurate. They did not include the balance in Coventry Credit Union. Director Crowe stated that the balances are not current but they were accurate as of June 30th.

Director Gizzarelli asked again about the lighting and when we will start to see a savings.

**Motion to Accept the Treasurer's Report – motion made by Director Lapinski as read by Director Crowe Seconded by Director Gizzarelli
All Vote Aye**

10. Tax Collector's Report –The Tax Collector reported the amount collected in June and also what we have left in uncollected taxes. She also stated that we are ahead of schedule for taxes collected. They are also ahead of schedule for collections for the 2011/2012 fiscal year. The tax payers that have not made any attempts to pay on their taxes will be going to tax sale and it will proceed as planned for next week.

**Motion to Accept the Tax Collectors Report – motion made by Director Lapinski Seconded by Director Gizzarelli
All Vote Aye**

The tax collector answered some questions presented by Director Lapinski in regards to tax payers that have not tried to make arrangements to pay the prior taxes. Mrs. Houle explained that she works out agreements based on what they can pay and as long as they come in on a timely manner and make the payments they will not

go to tax sale.

Mrs. Houle wanted to bring to the Boards attention the fact that we have an outstanding tax due amount back from 2001 – 2004. She wanted to present to the Board examples of minimal amounts that are uncollectable and would like as an action item to abate the taxes from 2001 – 2004. President Bouchard stated that the total adds up to about \$6,000.00.

Director Lapinski inquired again what the credit amounts are on the report from the Tax Collector and Mrs. Houle stated they are amounts that are from tax payers that overpaid or paid off their taxes ahead of time and are no longer living in Coventry or no longer in business.

Director Gizzarelli asked if the Tax Collector could add a signature line to her reports. She stated she would

President Bouchard asked for a motion to abate the 2001-2004 uncollectable taxes due. A motion was made by Director Crowe and seconded by Director Lapinski.

All Vote Aye.

The Tax Collector was directed by the President of the Board to take care of the abatements.

11. New Business – none

12. Introduction of new business- Smithfield Fire Department will buy the Chiefs gear. The purchase price will be \$1200.00. We just need permission from the Board to invoice Smithfield for that amount and turn over the gear to the Chief.

13. Good and Welfare – none

14. Public Comment –

15. Motion made to convene into executive session 9:25 p.m. Director Lapinski made a motion to go into session by voice vote seconded by Director Giguere. A roll call vote was taken and Directors Crowe, Lapinski, Gizzarelli, Vice President Joe Bonn and President Bouchard voted aye to move into executive session at 9:25 p.m.

**16. Motion made to return to open session and seal the minutes of the Executive session at 11:40 p.m. Motion made by Director Lapinski and Seconded by VP Bonn
All voted Aye**

**17. Motion made to seal the executive session minutes at 11:40 p.m. Motion made by Director Lapinski and Seconded by Director Crowe
All voted Aye**

**18. Motion made to adjourn at 11:42 by Director Giguere and
Seconded by Director Lapinski.**

All Vote Aye