

**Approved 02/07/08**

**Exeter Fire District**

**(January 10, 2008)**

**Call to Order**

**Chairman Peter Lacouture called the January meeting of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:44pm. Present were commissioners Vergano, Lacouture, Wilbur, Nievera, Gallagher and Whitford. Also present were district treasurer, Ms. Caito and district collector Ms. McMahon. There were 4 member of the public in attendance.**

**Public Comment**

**There was no public comment.**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Ms. Caito reports a beginning balance of \$363,837.77 as of Sept. 12, 2007. Activity within the accounts for the period of Sept. 12 thru Dec. 10, 2007 brings the balance to \$317,528.76. Mr. Nievera has compared the reports of the treasurer with the corresponding bank statements thru Dec. 10, 2007 and is satisfied with their accuracy. Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Wilbur second) accepting the report of the treasurer. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Previous Month's Minutes**

**Mr. Whitford moved (Mr. Wilbur second) acceptance of the minutes of the October 11, 2007 meeting. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Nievera stated that he had written and posted “minutes” for the December 13, 2007 meeting indicating that it had been cancelled due to inclement weather.**

## **Communications**

**Mr. Nievera reported that all communications requiring her action had been given to Ms. Caito. He also reported that the facilities use form, allowing the district to use the auditorium for the annual meeting had been approved and returned to him. He also stated that he had received a letter from the Exeter Emergency Dispatch Corp. concerning their budget submission for the new year. This letter will be addressed at a later time during this meeting.**

## **Old Business**

**Ms. Caito gave a brief explanation of the tax collections to date as well as well as our financial position and reported that the district was in better financial condition this year than the same time last. Ms. McMahon and Mr. Nievera offered an overview of the tax sale scheduled to take place in May of this year. Ms. Caito asked if there would be any “up front” costs to the district. She was told that the**

**title company has agreed to bill the district. Mr. Nievera was asked to e-mail the agreement between the district and RI Tax Title LLC to all board members. He agreed to do so tomorrow morning. After a brief discussion centering on when to meet to sign the contract, Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Wilbur second) to authorize Mr. Lacouture and Mr. Nievera to enter into the agreement with RI Tax Titles LLC for the tax sale. The motion carried unanimously. The board of commissioners was unanimously in favor of the proposed date of May 21, 2008 for the previously mentioned sale. Bridget (RI Tax Titles LLC) needs the taxpayer information on or before February 11. Mr. Nievera stated that it was the intent of the tax office to furnish this information sometime during the prior week.**

**Ms. McMahon inquired as to the possibility of requiring an “approval” of the fire district prior to the issuance of a building permit, not unlike the process used for town property taxes. It was agreed that this idea was worth pursuing and would be placed on a “to do” list for the near future.**

**Mr. Nievera moved, (Mr. Whitford second) that the district pay the entrance fee as well as her regular hourly salary for Ms. McMahon’s attendance at an upcoming RITCA meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The subject of this month’s meeting is tax sales. (Isn’t that special)**

**Mr. Nievera gave a short report on the status of the delinquent accounts. He reported that there were 35 accounts delinquent for the tax year 2005. They make up the tax sale list. There are an additional 118 accounts that are delinquent for both 2006 and 2007, and 327**

**delinquent for 2007. The total amount of money involved is approximately \$163,400. This figure includes interest/penalty computed until the end of January, 2008.**

**The timeline for the annual meeting was discussed due to the inability of some members to attend some of the necessary meetings. A re-scheduling of meetings was agreed upon and when he has secured the appropriate meeting places, Mr. Nievera will notify board members by e-mail.**

**Mr. Nievera will approach the Exeter BOC next Tuesday to begin the annual meeting notification process.**

**Chief Kettelle and Mr. Colacone (president and treasurer, respectively) of the Exeter Emergency Dispatch Corp. were on hand to explain the need for a sizeable salary increases for their dispatchers. The dispatch center has recently completed a payroll comparison study of dispatchers in nearby towns. He states that Exeter's dispatchers are paid between \$5 and \$10/hr less than those working in similar size nearby towns. Chief Kettelle reported that, due to the low pay schedule, there is an ever shrinking pool of qualified applicants that apply to fill vacancies. And when many discover the wage schedule, they simply remove themselves from consideration. Mr. Colacone stated that the cost to the Dispatch Center to hire the newest dispatcher was approximately \$22,000. This due to the amount of overtime needed to replace the former employee as well as the time and cost associated with interviewing for and the training of a replacement. Mr. Lacouture suggested a more thorough explanation of the figures at the budget hearing and annual meeting. He also**

reminded all that any increase in excess of 5.5% would have to be voted upon separately.

Chief Franklin stated that the requirements to become an emergency services dispatcher are somewhat unique. He said that you must have good people who understand the town and its complexities. "They are the first links in the public safety chain".

Mr. Nievera is in the process of arranging for better illumination for the rear of the fire station to make the area safer during the winter months. This is being done at the behest of the district collector.

Mr. Wilbur reported on the meeting with his ISO committee. He produced an outline of items that will be accomplished by each department. He also reported that he plans to conduct additional meetings to keep all involved with updates and progress. Chiefs Kettelle and Franklin are planning to attend an ISO conference in the near future. The Exeter fire departments are scheduling a "tanker task force" drill for the spring. It has yet to be decided whether the drill will take part on the east or the west side of town. This drill will help the departments when the time comes to be audited. ISO typically looks for 250 gpm of water flow over a specified time. Departments of the RICFL (Rhode Island Central Firefighters League) have flowed in excess of 1,000gpm offered Chief Kettelle. Depending on the level the town is attempting to reach, a video taping of the exercise may suffice for the water hauling segment of the ISO audit. Surrounding fire departments (and members if the RICFL) continue to have their tankers certified, by ISO standards, for capacities and fill/dump times.

**Ms. Vergano asked of the amount of lead time necessary to request an audit. She was told that the inspectors are somewhat flexible and are usually available on relatively short notice.**

### **New Business**

**There was no new business discussed.**

### **Next Meeting**

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be held on February 7, 2008 in the program room of the Exeter Public Library. The meeting will begin at 7:30pm.**

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Nievera moved (Ms. Vergano second) adjournment at 9:30pm. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Bill Nievera, Clerk**

**Exeter Fire District**