

Approved 06/12/08

Exeter Fire District

(March 6, 2008)

Call to Order

Chairman Peter Lacouture called the March meeting of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:42pm. Present were commissioners Vergano, Lacouture, Wilbur, Walker, Nievera and Gallagher. Also present was district treasurer, Ms. Caito. There were 6 members of the public in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Caito reports a beginning balance of \$243,151.92 as of Jan. 9, 2008. Activity within the accounts for the period of Jan. 10 thru Feb. 8, 2008 brings the balance to \$211,338.07. Mr. Nievera has compared the reports of the treasurer with the corresponding bank statements thru Feb. 8, 2008 and is satisfied with their accuracy. Mr. Nievera moved (Ms. Vergano second) accepting the report of the treasurer. The motion carried unanimously.

Previous Month's Minutes

After several recommended corrections were made, Mr. Wilbur moved (Mr. Walker second) accepting the minutes of the February budget hearing, as revised. Ms. Vergano then moved (Mr. Gallagher second) accepting the minutes of the February board meeting. Both motions carried unanimously.

Communications

Mr. Nievera reported that all operational mail had been given to the treasurer for her action. Mr. Nievera read a letter from Mike Cerullo indicating his interest in performing the duties of moderator at the district's annual meeting. Ms. Caito and Mr. Gallagher have completed the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 Survey of Local Government Finances and will file it on-line within the week.

Old Business

Mr. Wilbur moved (Mr. Gallagher second) appointing Mike Cerullo as moderator for the annual meeting. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Nievera will send a letter to Mr. Cerullo by the weekend notifying him of the appointment.

Mr. Nievera was asked about the approaching tax sale. He reported that he had no updated information, however he would have up to date figures for the membership at the annual meeting.

Mr. Wilbur moved (Mr. Nievera second) presenting the budget in its

present state to the membership at the annual meeting in April. Messer's Lacouture, Wilbur, Gallagher and Nievera voted in the affirmative and Ms. Vergano and Mr. Walker opposed the motion. Ms. Vergano would like to see the budget adhere to a 5.5% limit; Mr. Walker feels the same. The motion carried 4 – 2.

There followed a short discussion on the abnormally high number of abatements (and the corresponding amount of refunded taxes) this year. The majority of which were in the month of February. Several errors have been discovered in the town assessments and therefore must be abated by the town, as well as the fire district. Mr. Caito recommended adjusting the abatements line item in the budget request to reflect this issue. It was agreed that this was, in all likelihood, a one time occurrence.

Mr. Nievera suggested applying the sum of \$5,208 (all of the int./penalty collected in FY05/06) to the reserve fund, thus arriving at our reserve fund target figure that much sooner. Mr. Walker explained that doing so would only increase our deficit and thus not be a wise move. The funds that Mr. Nievera wishes to use have already been applied to reduce our deficit from prior years. We may, in a year or two, be in the position to deal with surplus funds. Mr. Conroy asked what the reserve fund target figure was. Mr. Lacouture stated that previous discussions centered around \$10,000/yr. for three (3) years.

Ms. Vergano agreed to re-date the budget worksheets and re-circulate them to the board. Mr. Nievera will see to it that copies are available at the annual meeting.

Mr. Lacouture stated that Mr. Whitford had moved his primary

residence from Exeter to Warwick He is in the process of resigning from the board. Mr. Lacouture will research the manner in which a new board member is replaced prior to his/her term expiring.

Mr. Lacouture also produced a report on the “State of Affairs of the Fire District” and a copy of the draft resolutions for the annual meeting. After some discussion it was deemed necessary to modify some of the information in the State of Affairs. Mr. Lacouture will re-circulate the finalized version at his earliest convenience. Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Gallagher second) accepting the “State of Affairs” in its finalized form. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Walker second) accepting the draft resolutions, as presented. That motion also carried unanimously.

Mr. Lacouture notified the board that he has scheduled a surgery for March 25th. He thinks that he will have recuperated well enough to preside over the annual meeting. If not, he feels that we’re in good hands with Mr. Wilbur.

Mr. Nievera offered that the Projo legal ad advertising the time and place of the annual meeting will run again on Saturday of this week. The last ad listed the wrong location for the meeting.

New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Exeter Fire District will be the annual meeting held at the Exeter West Greenwich Jr. /Sr. high School in West Greenwich, RI. That meeting will start at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Nievera moved (Ms. Vergano second) adjournment at 9:12pm. The motion carried unanimously.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Nievera, Clerk
Exeter Fire District**