

Draft 10/19/2014

Exeter Fire District

(October 9, 2014)

Call to Order

Chairman Scott Kettelle called the October 9th meeting of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:02pm. Commissioners Scott Kettelle, Kevin Rooney, Patricia Whitford, Andrew Slater, Larry Aker and Bill Nievera were present. District treasurer Pauline MacDonald, district collector Jean McMahon, EMS Chief Tom Lawrence as well as solicitor Peter Ruggiero were also present. There were 4 members of the public in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. MacDonald reported that the beginning balance in the district accounts was \$297,892.71 as of 07/25/2014. Activity within the accounts brings the balance to \$473,913.27 as of 09/25/2014. Mr. Nievera moved (Ms. Whitford second) accepting the report of the treasurer. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Nievera has compared the report of the treasurer with the bank statements for August and September and is satisfied with its accuracy.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rooney moved (Mr. Aker second) accepting the minutes of the 09/11/2014 and 09/18/2014 meetings. The motion carried 4 – 0 with Mr. Nievera abstaining due to his absence from the subject meetings.

Communications

Mr. Nievera reported that all operational mail has been given to the treasurer for her action. Additionally, he produced a letter from Donna Silva requesting that her late charges be voided. Mr. Nievera reminded the commissioners that it had been a long standing policy, since the inception of the district, not to forgive interest/penalty on any account for any reason (other than an error on our part) for fear of establishing a precedent. After a short discussion Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Aker second) honoring the policy and denying the request of Ms. Silva. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. Kettelle will notify Ms. Silva of the decision.

Old Business

Chief Lawrence gave his Report of the Chief (of EMS). He feels that the first three months of operations have been very good and that he is satisfied with the personnel that he has around him. He will be applying for a couple grants in the near future. He is looking to purchase 3- season jackets for his EMTs. He was reminded by Ms. Whitford to get three quotes for any purchase he intends on making.

Since the last meeting an incident occurred where Mr. Kettelle

received notice of our insurance cancellation from VFIS. Unable to contact Chief Lawrence or Ms. MacDonald, he was forced to pay the premium on his personal credit card to keep the policy from lapsing. Ms. Whitford moved (Mr. Aker second) re-imbursing Mr. Kettelle the sum of \$4,051.79. The motion carried unanimously. This will be ratified at the November meeting.

Mr. Ruggiero reported that the loans for the building and vehicles should be finalized by November 14.

Ms. McMahon (district collector) reported that the abatements to date (July thru October) totaled \$1,852.55. The fire district budgets \$2,000/yr. for abatements. This unusually high figure is due primarily to the erroneous assessment of several properties by the town.

The subject of a rather large pot hole in front of the dispatch center parking area was briefly discussed. It was determined that we would most likely have to tend to it ourselves.

It was discussed to inquire of the highway dept. as to the likelihood of them plowing the apron on the EMS property. If this not doable, we will have to look for someone to plow the apron. Chief Chamberlain currently plows the circular driveway behind the tax office. Between him and his firefighters, the access for taxpayers has been very good.

Mr. Kettelle suggested the purchase of a weather proof/water tight storage container to be placed behind the EMS building to store records. There are records that must be kept for many years after an incident. This will be discussed/voted upon at the next meeting.

After a short discussion on the need for a purchasing agent, Mr. Aker moved (Mr. Rooney second) appointing Ms. Whitford as the

purchasing agent for the fire district. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. McMahon gave her reasoning for continuing her policy of not issuing MLCs. For a full time staffed office, MLCs are a good idea. However her office is not staffed full time and she feels that she currently receives invaluable information from closing attorneys. This information is retained until the new bills are prepared. The addresses are then changed to reflect the new owner's name. This cuts down on the number of returns due to bad addresses and allows her to concentrate on posting payments to accounts. Mr. Nievera noted that in addition to the staffing difference there is the mail delivery system. The town has their mail delivered and the fire district does not. For this reason he feels that the fire district will not be able to turn the MLC request around within the legally allowed time limit. Mr. Ruggiero explained the law and stated that we are in line with most other fire districts by not requiring MLCs. Mr. Aker moved (Mr. Nievera second) continuing our process as it is currently (without MLC's) and issuing MLCs only when requested to do so. The motion passed 5 – 1 with Ms. Whitford opposed. She appreciates the discussion but reads the law differently.

Mr. Aker moved (Ms. Whitford second) following our resolutions to the letter of the law and charge taxpayers the maximum amount of interest allowed by law. The motion passed 5 – 1 with Mr. Nievera opposed. He feels that this will be a hardship on many families in town, particularly in a weak economy. Since the inception of the fire district, guidelines have allowed the collector to collect interest to the

end of the month and allow quarterly payments to resume rather than call the entire tax bill due, (provided all taxpayers are treated equitably). Mr. Ruggiero will draft something for the newspaper and posting. Mr. Nievera will see to its posting in the usual places around town.

Messrs. Caito and D'Orsi will be invited to the November meeting to discuss the method of getting invoices and authorizing payment of same from the EMS office to Mr. D'Orsi's office.

New Business

Chief Chamberlain reports his intent to apply for several grants. One of which will be for SCBA bottles. Several of the local surrounding departments are looking to become uniform with regard to their Scott air packs.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Exeter Fire District Board of Commissioners will be held on November 13, 2014. The meeting will be held in the program room of the Exeter Public Library and will begin at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Aker moved (Mr. Nievera second) adjournment at 8:52pm. The

motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Nievera, Clerk

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