

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on Wednesday, September 24, 2008.

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator - Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;
Treasurer - Sandra Owens; Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber;
Attorney - Fred Mason, Jr.;
Board Members - Louise Michaels, James Richards & Milton Huston

Absent: Clerk - Ann Dahlquist; Board Member – George Kain

I. - Meeting Called to Order: 7:03 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the August 21st meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the August 21st meeting. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Milton made a motion to accept the minutes. Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

III. - Treasurer's Report:

Sandy presented her report for the months of July and August. Beginning balance July 1st \$175,024.34 and the ending balance August 31st \$404,209.24. There were routine expenses in the month of July. In the month of August there was a large expenditure for insurance, but other than that there were just routine expenses.

Ray asked about the balance in the truck fund as of July 1, assuming that we deposit another \$45,000.00. Sandy answered approximately \$111,000.00 with the current fiscal years appropriations. So, Ray continued, if we were to add another \$45,000.00 in next year's budget, we would have a total of \$156,000.00. Ray then asked the Chief what he had for a cost estimate on the Rescue. The Chief stated somewhere between \$160 and \$170,000.00. Sandy asked if there were any potential grant opportunities available to make up the difference. The Chief said he would be applying to "The Greggson Foundation" for a grant, but there were no guarantees. Ray asked if the Chief's estimated cost included our trade in value. The Chief said no. Louise asked about paying some money up front, once we decide where we will order from, to potentially get a percentage off of the sale price, as had been done with a vehicle purchase in the past. Jim said the committee would definitely be looking into that option. Some discussion followed regarding the ordering process and delivery times for the new rescue. The "Truck Committee" will continue to work on the particulars. The Chief quoted from the annual meeting minutes, what had been decided on the rescue purchase at that time. Sandy thinks there is some sort of rule listed in the district by-laws regarding large purchases, it may even have to be advertised. Attorney Mason said he will check into it for the next meeting. Ray asked that the Chief apply to "The Greggson Foundation" for the grant as soon as possible.

Louise made a motion to accept the July & August treasurer's reports. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

IV. - Tax Collector's Report:

Kim then presented her report for August. Taxes receivable balance is \$154,683.53 as of today's date. Taxes collected in the month of August were \$275,015.10. Kim also wanted to note that since the tax bills were mailed on August 12th, \$342,052.39 has been collected of the \$440,596.67 tax levy, or about 80%.

Third party billing monies collected in August totaled \$603.70. But, another item to note was that we had estimated a total of \$60,000.00 or \$15,000.00 per/quarter for the fiscal year. Without the 1st quarter even being complete, we have already posted \$25,290.30 or \$10,290.30 over our quarterly estimate. Two months we had very low collections and 1 month they were very large. Ray asked about the consistency of the payments, were the bills submitted regularly? The Chief explained the process of electronically submitting run reports and third party billing. He also explained how the revenue varies according to the number and types of runs, as well as remittance of payments by health insurance companies.

Kim continued with her report stating that additionally in August, \$425.00 was collected for the Chief performing 10 Smoke Inspections and 2 Plan Reviews and Kim preparing 3 Incident Report Requests.

We have also received a quarterly car tax payment from state, in the amount of \$8,379.88. Milton asked about the car tax payments, if this was the item we could lose next year. Kim replied yes. Sandy stated that it would be a big chunk of revenue, about \$32,000.00, that we could lose.

Sandy asked about bankruptcies and foreclosures. Kim stated that she had not received any notices, but she had seen a few district properties listed in the legal ads for mortgage and foreclosure sales. This would not affect us though, because the bank or mortgage company taking over these properties would be liable to pay any taxes due to us. She also mentioned that one of the properties that were in our tax sale this past January has been sold and redeemed.

Ray stated that he had attended a meeting today and fire districts were mentioned twice. Once to say that they would probably come under the 5% cap provision. The second time was in a discussion regarding multiple fire districts in one town and if revenue from large taxable properties should be spread amongst them. For example, FM Global in West Gloucester. Some discussion followed on this topic, as well as commercial and tangible taxes in Harmony in general.

Jim made a motion to accept the tax collector's report. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

V. - Chief's Report:

To begin his report the Chief passed around an article written about Bryant University's IPICS network in which the Harmony Fire Department was mentioned. A while back, four or five years, he had worked with CISCO Systems at the inception of this program, and they have expanded on the idea greatly at Bryant. Some discussion followed about the IPICS network.

On Labor Day weekend Harmony again participated in the Oakland-Mapleville Fire Department Muster. We put together 2 teams of 6 to compete and again won 3 trophies. They are on display for the board to view. Everyone had a lot of fun and it was a great event.

The crew has started the second part of their EMT Cardiac Recertification Course. Two classes are done, with six more to go. It should be complete by the end of December.

According to the USDA, who our building loan is with, we were required to have an ADA Inspection. Harvey Salvias from ADA came in to do the inspection, we made a couple of changes and are now in compliance. One of the items was adding an equal opportunity notice to both the district and department letterheads.

RIEMS held a seminar titled "RIEMS 101 Now & Future." Lieutenant Donna DeConte and the Chief attended together. This is a seminar that RIEMS would like to make an annual event. Some discussion followed on the seminar topics and how they could possibly affect the rescue service we provide in the future.

On the 15th our phone service was down here at the station. We called in RI Telephone and they had to replace the phone system processor at a cost of \$1,334.00.

All three Gloucester Fire Departments, as well as Foster Fire personnel, did a walk through of the new Ponaganset High School. It looks good and is definitely a school for the future.

There is a Northern RI Firemen's League drill in West Gloucester this Sunday that we will be participating in.

Also, we have added two new members, one of which lives in Harmony, Steven Winsor.

The 800 MHz radios that we received the reimbursement grant from RIEMA for, have been received and are in place on the apparatus.

We have also received a \$2,000.00 matching grant from the RI DEM, so we are paying \$2,000.00 and they are paying \$2,000.00. These monies will be used to buy wildland firefighting gear: brush shirts, brush pants, helmets, goggles, and hand tools. The total amount of funding available for this grant was not expended, so they will be reopening for grant applications again sometime in January 2009. This will work out good for us, because should we get additional funds, they will not have to be used until the 2009-2010 budget is in place. So we can budget for the matching funds then.

The "Alternative Heating Workshop" has been tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 12th at 6:30 pm. We have been in contact with the Gloucester Building Inspector and he will be attending. Additionally, we have contacted local vendors and the State Fire Marshal's office.

Regarding the department's radios, the problems we have been having is due to some antennas installed incorrectly on the towers when the project was originally done. Replacement parts have been ordered and should solve this issue, hopefully within the next four weeks.

Lastly, we have contacted Tom Mainville at the Gloucester Town Hall and have been able to be added to their heating contract, along with the Town of Foster and the Gloucester School

Department. We are now locked in at \$3.199 per gallon for oil from October until March. Louise asked about the gas and diesel. The Chief explained that we had topped off the tanks in June and will be working closely with the vendor to keep topping off when the prices dip down. Some discussion followed about alternative fuels and their possible use in the future.

The Chief announced that there were also tickets still available for the Gloucester Firefighters Scholarship Steak Fry if anyone needed to purchase some. It will take place Saturday, October 4th from 4:00 – 8:00 pm at Watmough's Campground. Tickets cost \$15.00 each.

Louise made a motion to accept the Chief's report. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

VI. - Committee Reports:

- a. Building Committee – Milton, Chair – The Chief stated that the project is the demolition stage right now and the contractor is expected to start within the next week or two. He attended an association meeting recently, and they have formed a committee to begin the process of buying the appliances, which will be at their expense. There was some discussion regarding the construction of a wall in the reception area. This idea has been tabled for now, while we can look into other ideas such as buzzers and video. Security and safety are the top concerns.
- b. Truck Committee – Jim, Chair – discussion provided during Treasurer's report.

VII. - Old Business: Addressed throughout reports.

VIII. - New Business: Addressed throughout reports.

IX. - Public Input: No audience present.

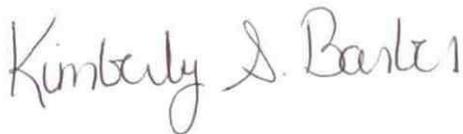
X. - Executive Session: None called.

XI. - Adjournment:

Louise made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim seconded it. The motion carried. The September meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at 8:13 pm.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board is scheduled for Thursday, November 20, 2008, 7:00 pm at the Harmony Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Secretary