

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 **Thursday, February 18, 2010.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator - Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;
Treasurer - Sandra Owens; Clerk - Ann Dahlquist;
Board Members - Louise Michaels, James Richards, Milton Huston & George Kain

Absent: Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber; Attorney - Fred Mason, Jr.
Association Representative – George Nichols, President

I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:05 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the January 28th meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the January 28th meeting. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

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

III. - Treasurer's Report:

Sandy presented her report for the months of December and January.

Beginning balance December 1st \$559,025.09 and the ending balance December 31st \$474,468.88. In December there were the usual large payouts for Call-Pay and the Building Loan. Sandy had questions about the amounts in the Call-Pay and Incentive Pay. The Chief mentioned that he thought the amounts balanced between the two. Sandy said she would check with Kim to be sure.

Beginning balance January 1st \$474,468.88 and the ending balance January 31st \$456,011.37. There were routine expenses in January.

George asked about the debit balance in equipment replacement. The Chief stated that is because we are waiting for the RI DEM reimbursement grant of \$5,000. It will offset the RTV expenses posted to this account.

Milton asked about the car tax payments from the state, have we received any? The Chief and Sandy said that there is a quarterly payment due to come in. Milton asked what about the future. Sandy asked why we couldn't just collect our own car taxes again, as we had done in the past. Ray said that he believes the state will reinstate the fire district's rights to collect our own car taxes again. The Chief stated that Kim had attended a workshop regarding this issue and she might have more answers to these questions. Ray stated that he thinks we will be OK for this year. The issue was that the Governor had broken the law by withholding the car tax phase out payments already approved in the

budget without legislative approval. Going forward the Legislature may vote to make changes though. The car tax phase out payments of approximately \$32,000 amount to between 6-7% of our revenue. It will be important to know whether or not we will be receiving these payments next year, before we finalize our budget figures.

Louise made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried.

IV. - Tax Collector's Report:

Kim was absent due to illness, therefore there was no Tax Collector's Report to be presented.

V. - Chief's Report:

A representative from the RI Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA) came in to our station to program all of the 800 MHz radios for the Gloucester Fire Departments.

On February 16th the Chief attended the Woonasquatucket Valley Firemen's League (WVFL) Annual Banquet along with Captain David Plante, Lieutenant Kevin Farley and Board Member George Kain. It was held at Chester's this year and the Chief did the swearing in their newly elected President. Ray asked what departments belong to WVFL? The Chief replied about 10 -12: Gloucester, Scituate, Foster, Coventry, Geneva and some from Connecticut.

There was another regional Fire Chief's meeting held. These meetings include Burrillville, Gloucester, Scituate and Foster Fire Chief's. Some discussion followed regarding the opening of lines of communication between the departments and working cooperatively together on common issues.

The Chief and Kim have contacted the Ponaganset High School (PHS) guidance office with a proposal. It is now a requirement of graduation for each student to perform community service hours. We thought that perhaps a student, or students, could come here to maybe work on our website, help organize our archive materials or even help with some general administrative tasks. Ray suggested that we contact Bryant College for students as well. Louise agreed that this idea might help the students with their required Legacy products.

Matt Floor has come in again to help resolve some issues with the Chief's computer. He does a great job assisting us with our IT work.

The stations class schedule is full and going along smoothly. Something is going on at the station every night for the next couple of months. The Chief says it is great to see all of the activity.

The Chief has received a new application from a young man in Harmony.

We have received the Fogarty Grant for \$1,500 which will be used to buy 4 new pagers for the crew. We have also received a grant of \$1,000 from the Kilmartin Foundation, these funds will probably be put towards the purchase of a new radio for the new rescue.

Upcoming Event: The Association is planning a Ham and Bean Supper in the near future.

Reminder: Anyone interesting in applying for Scholarships the due dates for applications are coming up soon. The 100 Club is due by 3/1, the WVFL is due by 3/31 and the Gloc. FF is due by 4/30. The Chief had copies and information available for anyone interested.

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

VI. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:

A representative was not available to present a report.

VII. - Committee Reports:

a. Rescue Committee – Jim, Chair

No new information to present. Everything is on schedule. The vendor has come in to take pictures for the purpose of matching the American LaFrance paint. The rescue should be delivered on schedule in April.

b. Call Pay Review – George, Chair

We have not started on this yet. This policy needs to be prepared in conjunction with the Policies & Procedures Manual. George said that we also still need a representative from the Association on this committee.

c. Policies & Procedures Manual – Milton, Chair

Milton has started to do some research on other manuals already out there. He asked for clarification of what the manual must cover. Is it meant to cover HR only or go further to involve sexual harassment, retirement, pension, medical, etc.? The Chief stated that in the SOP's and SOG's for the fire side he does have policies that address sexual harassment. This manual is meant to cover basically himself and Kim, the administration side. What we have done to help gather information, is contact several other fire departments to get copies of the manuals or handbooks that they already have in place. Then we can use this information as a starting point. Ray asked if anyone has ideas for a Harmony resident, preferably an HR person, to sit on this committee.

d. Charter & By-Laws Review – George, Chair

George stated that Kim and himself have been making progress doing these reviews. George brought up the fact that we need to delete from the charter, the responsibility of the district to pay for street lights. Attorney Mason will have to review the changes and then we will have drafts of the changes available for the board to vote on sometime in the future.

VIII. - Old Business: Addressed throughout reports.

IX. - New Business:

Ray stated that the board needs to keep in mind that with the budget preparation coming up soon, we need to focus on either little or zero increase. Also, we need to find out for certain about the car tax payments for next year. He suggested that we be frugal, as we always are, with the fact that 25% of Rhode Islanders, let alone Harmony residents, are currently out of work.

X. - Public Input: No audience.

XI. – Executive Session: None called.

XII. – Adjournment:

Louise made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded it. The motion carried.

The February 18th meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **7:35 pm.**

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board
is scheduled for Thursday, 7:00 pm, **March 18, 2010** at the Harmony Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Secretary