

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

194 Putnam Pike
Glocester, R.I. 02814

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, January 16, 2014.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber;
Board Members – Louise Michaels, Milton Huston,
George Kain & James Richards
Association Representative – Linda Ferragamo, President;
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Moderator – Raymond Fogarty, Jr. – excused
Treasurer – Sandra Owens – excused

I. – Meeting Called to Order: Due to Ray’s absence, George stood-in as Moderator.
The meeting was called to order at **7:09 pm** by acting Moderator Kain.

II. – Approval of the minutes from the November 21st meeting:

Acting Moderator Kain asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the November 21st meeting. If there were no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

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

III. – Approval of Bills:

A check register of bills to be paid was provided to all board members in their folder. Acting Moderator Kain asked if there were any questions on these expenses. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them as presented.

Kim stated that there were a couple of large payments paid this month. One for \$9,000 to Reichert for gas, diesel and oil deliveries. Another for \$1,120 to Firematic for the purchase of foam to replace what was used at a mutual aid hazmat incident in Chepachet. The other expenditures were for routine expenses.

The Chief further explained that our third party billing company is handling the reimbursement claim from the MVA, which will be for the foam as well as the use of our engine.

Louise made a motion to approve the bills. Milton seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

IV. – Treasurer’s Report:

In Sandy’s absence Kim presented the reports for October and November that Sandy had prepared. She had also asked Kim to relay the message that the expenditures for both months had been routine.

Beginning balance October 1st \$695,862.49 and ending balance October 31st \$696,874.84.

Beginning balance November 1st \$696,874.84 and ending balance November 30th 668,710.04.

Jim made a motion to accept the October and November Treasurer's reports as presented. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

V. – Tax Collector's Report:

The taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$102,927.64.

Taxes collected in the month of November totaled \$4,551.74.

Taxes collected in the month of December totaled \$19,390.30.

Third party billing fees collected in the month of November were \$10,560.41.

Third party billing fees collected in the month of December were \$11,548.39.

Past Due notices had been mailed out in November, therefore the increase in revenue.

A representative from the USDA came in to do a compliance review for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We are subject to these reviews because of the loan we have with the USDA. The representative was very happy with the building and with our business practices in general.

Kim stated that there has been a lot of time dedicated to the setup of the new computer system for our run reports.

Milton made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. Jim seconded it.

The motion carried unanimously.

VI. – Chief's Report:

Our Tree Lighting went very well. We have placed an ad in the Bargain buyer to formally show our appreciation to the vendors who helped make the event a success. About 75 kids came to the event. Any leftover gifts were donated to the Fogarty Elementary School for their Secret Santa program.

As Kim had mentioned the USDA came in to do their compliance review. The Chief thought it was great that they were so impressed with our recordkeeping. It was quite a testament to the hard work that is done in her office.

A letter was sent to RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT) Director Michael Lewis as we talked about at our last meeting. An update on the status of the roadwork project was requested. No reply has been received yet. Louise noted that the roads are in worse shape than ever. They are horrific! She cannot image having to drive a rescue vehicle down some of them. Discussion followed.

We did put details in place for the snow storms in December and January. During the December storm there was a rescue call. We received a thank you from the party we helped, who was amazed at how quickly we responded during the storm. During the January storm there were no notable events, thankfully.

An Officers meeting was held this past Monday night. A drill schedule was prepared for the next three months and upcoming projects were discussed.

Some crew notes:

- Lt. Kevin Farley and Pvt. Cindy Rodriguez are currently taking a Paramedic Refresher course.
- Pvt. Amanda Young has been accepted in the Firefighter II course coming up.
- Private Alison Philbrick has graduated #1 from the Providence Fire Departments 50th graduating class. She is the first female to ever achieve this.
- Capt. John Falco has been hired as a Dispatcher at the Gloucester Police Department.
- *EMS Pride* awards were received by Capt. Falco, Pvt. Rick Waterman, Pvt. Chris Fusaro (Smithfield Fire Dept.) and Lt. John Baccari (Chepachet Fire Dept.).
The call they received this recognition for was a double hand amputation. They did an outstanding job and the patient is doing very well.

Upcoming events:

- Flu Clinic at Ponaganset High School Saturday, January 25th, 10:00am – 1:00pm
- *Pride & Ownership* – author to speak sponsored by the RI Association of Fire Chiefs to be held on this same date as the Flu Clinic.

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

VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:

The Annual Banquet has been scheduled for May 31st at Thompson Speedway.

The Association is looking into moving their money from Citizens Bank to Navigant Credit Union. They are considering this move due to fees charged by Citizens.

Linda brought up trying to start planning a bus trip to 9/11 Museum in New York this fall. The Chief said that is not very far away, when we are working on the Spring Open House, the Banquet, the new computer system, etc. We would need to get a group together to work on it. George said maybe it could be a cooperative effort, between the Association and the District. Louise offered to be the liaison between the Association & District Board. The Chief stated that the bus will probably cost about \$800 and can accommodate about 52 people. Discussion followed. Linda said she will bring it up at the Association's next meeting in March.

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

VIII. – Committee Reports:

- a. Broadband Work Team – Milton Huston, Chair
Progress. Milton said if anyone becomes aware of any grants in this field to let him know and he will definitely look into them.
- b. Apparatus Review Work Team – Jim Richards, Chair
Work Team: Jim, George, Chief, Deputy Chief Segee & Capt. John Falco

Kim discovered in the minutes that a motion had never officially been made to award the truck bid. Therefore a clarifying Motion was made by Jim to award the truck bid to Tri-Star for \$205,453. Milton seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Jim explained to the board that since being awarded the bid Tri-Star has been purchased by Advanced Media Technologies (AMT). Attorney Mason stated that he had reviewed the bid and did not feel that this would be an issue.

Jim also stated that the contract was now ready to be signed by himself and the Chief. Louise asked what the expected delivery date is. Jim said it would be late Spring.

IX. – Old Business:

a. By-Laws Change – Special Meetings

Kim mentioned typed copies of the changes had been passed out at last month's meeting. If anyone needed an additional copy she did have some available. This change amends the requirement to call a Special Meeting.

Milton made a motion to accept the changes to the wording for Special Meetings in the By-Laws. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

b. By-Laws Change – Board Meeting Calendar

The Chief explained that this change was proposed by Ray at our last meeting. The change would enable us to have committee meetings and work on special projects in our off months. Louise was not sure if she was for this change or not. She was afraid if we changed it, it would be hard to get the regular schedule back. The Chief explained his and Kim's side of the matter. With there only being sometimes 3 weeks between monthly meetings, it makes it quite difficult to accomplish all of the tasks that the board assigns, we get crushed. Louise said she did not realize that. The Chief said that he believes Ray's thoughts focused mainly on the committee work though. Milton said that if we would require an additional meeting we could always call one, or if things deteriorate we could always change the calendar back. Jim stated that he was for the change, waiting to make a decision until next month is not going to change any of the facts as presented. George stated that things need to be brought to the board's attention, if Kim or the Chief can't complete an assigned task, just report that fact and they can be given more time. The Chief stated it is not just regular day to day functions, but the fact that we are project based. When we add projects on this side, and the fire side and then totally unrelated items pop up to consume time, that's when it starts to get difficult. Milton stated that he believes the intent of the change would be for the off months to focus on committee and special project work getting done, not to ditch it. That would force us to focus on these items specifically and get more done. The Chief agreed with Milton. He said he saw firsthand with Ray at a Chamber meeting an example of a board that does their meetings in this way. When their sub-committee reports are given at the regular monthly meeting they are ready and report just their findings – 1,2,3. It makes that meeting run much more efficiently. George asked about the regular business that needs to be conducted monthly. Kim said that Sandy had told her she could file her monthly Treasurer's reports electronically with the board, so they are not out of the loop financially. Jim said he thought that would work fine, because if any of the

board members found a discrepancy in a report a special meeting could be called to discuss it. Discussion followed.

Milton made a motion to accept the meeting calendar change to bi-monthly. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

George wanted to state for the record that he disagreed with the change, although he could not vote as Acting Moderator. He felt that as the governing board we are downplaying our importance. Louise said she felt we should review the change in 6 months to make sure it is working.

Kim distributed 2014 meeting calendar magnets to everyone.

X. – New Business:

a. Snow Plowing Bid –

Only 1 bid received on 12/1/2013, from Mike's Odd Jobs Plus – Mike Segee, Owner. The bid specifics were –

Plowing: 3" - \$75, 6" - \$125, 9" - \$175, 12" - \$225

Sanding, as needed: \$80

Tractor to move Snow: \$50 per/hour

Kim presented the last Snow Plowing contract for the board's comparison. None of the rates have changed. Some discussion followed about the bid and prior contracts awarded.

Louise made a motion to accept the 3 year bid from Mike's Odd Jobs Plus with the stipulation that billing is itemized. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

At the board's request, the item *Property Review Work Team – George Kain & Louise Michaels, Co-Chairs* will be re-added to the agenda under Committee Reports.

George prepared a hand out on the two properties whose owners had made contact with him. It was included, along with a map, in everyone's folder for their review. He met with Carol Ethier regarding her property at 190 Putnam Pike. The lot size is a little over $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre. George went to the Gloucester Town Hall to research the deed and did not find any restrictions. He had mainly been looking to see if there was a drainage easement. The Town of Gloucester has the property valued at \$167,500. On the *Zillow* website it is valued at \$177,000. During their phone conversation, Ms. Ethier stated she wants between \$250-270,000. She said she will wait for our decision, before putting it on the market. There is a new septic system, 3-5 years old, near the garage. She will produce a well report. Louise stated that many of the building mechanicals are updated and it is in good upkeep. Only one side of the duplex is currently rented. The Chief listed several potentials that the property may afford us: more room for parking & training and future plans for corrections of the building set-back from the road to bring us into compliance.

George asked if the board wanted to set-up an appointment to tour the site. They did not feel it would be needed, since the committee had already done so. The committee was looking for direction from the board as to the next steps to take. Jim stated we should definitely move forward. Milton suggested we find a Buyer/Broker to represent the

district. George said maybe he could contact Nathan Clark to do this, since he lives right in district. The board agreed.

Attorney Mason suggested that before we make any offers we:

- 1.) Have an Attorney do a title search and check for deed restrictions.
He can check with Attorney Tim Kane for a referral.
- 2.) Have a real estate appraisal done.
- 3.) Have a home inspection done.

Jim said that George should contact both Carol Ethier and Kathleen Buckley to express our continued interest in both of their properties.

XI. – Public Input: No audience.

XII. – Executive Session: None called

XIII. – Adjournment:

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Milton seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The January 16th meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:37 pm**.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board is scheduled for **Thursday, 7:00 pm, March 20, 2014** at the Harmony Fire Station.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Clerk