

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, April 16, 2015.**

Present: Acting Chief Jeffrey Muto; Treasurer – Sandra Owens;
Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber;
Board Members – George Kain, Louise Michaels,
James Richards & Raymond Fogarty;
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.;
Association Representative – Willy Vota, President

Absent: Moderator – Milton Huston, Jr. – excused

Audience: Captain Segee, Privates Paul Perreault & Linda Ferragamo,
Tax Payers – Keith Brown & Jeff Tucker

I. – Meeting Called to Order: Due to Milton's absence, Ray Fogarty stood in as Moderator. The meeting was called to order at **7:02 pm** by Acting Moderator Fogarty.

II. – Approval of the minutes from the March 19th meeting:

The Moderator asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the March 19th meeting. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

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

III. – Review of Bills:

A check register of bills paid since the last meeting until today's date was provided to all board members in their folder. Moderator Fogarty asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. There were none. He also stated that this is an informational report only and no vote is necessary.

IV. – Treasurer's Report:

Sandy said that she is still working on making a bunch of adjustments to the General Ledger in order to submit the quarterly reports to the state. She is meeting with Kim tomorrow morning to finish up. They should be ready for year-end also then.

Ray asked about scheduling a budget workshop before next month's meeting. Sandy said she thought that waiting until our May 21st meeting would be cutting it too close to our Annual Meeting date of June 6th. She thought we should schedule a meeting before May 21st, so we have more time to address any issues. Kim suggested that we wait to schedule anything until after the Executive Sessions tonight, because any issues may be settled then and we might not need an extra meeting. Everyone agreed.

At this time Ray interrupted the agenda to address someone who was here to present a public records request. Keith Brown and Jeff Tucker, Harmony taxpayers, were in the audience. Mr. Brown said it was basically a request for a bunch of numbers and a couple of concerns. Ray

stated that the request would be given to our Attorney and opened in Executive session later this evening.

Jim made a motion to table the Treasurer's March report until the next meeting. Louise seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

V. – Tax Collector's Report:

The taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$67,334.79.

Taxes collected in the month of March totaled \$20,442.89.

Third party billing fees collected in the month of March were \$8,964.38.

The tax sale list as of today is down to 25 parcels. The ad will be run in the Journal on April 24th. The tax sale itself will be held on May 15th at 10:00 am.

Overseers for the Annual Election have been contacted and confirmed. Bob and Doreen Pierce have agreed to provide this service for the district again this year.

Louise made a motion to appoint Bob & Doreen Pierce as Overseers. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. Letters will be sent to the Pierce's as confirmation.

Sandy asked if Kim could repeat the current balance due for taxes. Kim said \$67,334.79. Sandy commented that she thought she was doing very well.

A letter stating the incumbents for elected board positions had been prepared. It was passed around for the boards review. On the ballot will be Milton as Moderator and Sandy as Treasurer, both one year terms. Also Louise is up for a four year term on the Executive board.

Louise made a motion to present the slate to the Clerk. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Kim stated that the voter list would be presented for the boards review and approval at next month's meeting.

Louise made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. – Chief's Report:

Acting Chief Jeffrey Muto delivered the report this month.

First he wanted to thank the board for the Banquet. A great time was had by all and the gifts were well appreciated.

The 3 District Meeting took place on March 26th. It was attended by myself and George from Harmony, from CFD were Chief Dauphinais and Earl Newman and from WGFD were Chief LaButti and Deputy Chief McKay. A general discussion was started about the per/diem programs and coverage. Not much accomplished. It was basically just an open discussion, breaking the ice on different topics.

Weekend Per/Diem shifts started on April 4th. We didn't have any coverage on Easter or Sunday April 11th. But other than that, the calendar filled quickly for both April and May. Several

people have come in to fill out applications, 2 right away from CFD. An ad was run in the Valley Breeze in which an error was made with the photo. The West Gloucester rescue was in it. To rectify the situation the paper credited ½ the cost for the 1st week's ad. The 2nd week they still failed to correct the photo, so there was no charge. Now in the 3rd week they have run a corrected ad for free. Ray joked that he hoped West Gloucester got some people out of it. The Chief that you couldn't really see the truck that well in the incorrect ad, but we knew it was West Gloucester's truck.

Architect John Aharonian stopped by to see if there was anything else we needed. He had submitted a rough draft of sketch of station upgrades to the Chief for presentation at last month's meeting.

An EMT Refresher class started on April 6th. The class will run through June 15th.

A Fire Prevention detail was done at the Harmony Child Care Center across the street.

On a crew note, Saturday April 4th our own John Falco was married to Miss Meaghan Robin. I would like to extend congratulations and best wishes to them! The board all expressed their best wishes to the couple.

MHQ has called to say the new Car 1 is ready. The Chief said he is working on having it added to the insurance and getting it registered. It is scheduled to be picked up on April 28th.

Apparatus Repair Notes:

Engine 21 was out of service for a few days due to an electrical issue.

Rescue 2 had a mirror replaced that was broke during a snow storm.

Chief St. Pierre of Harrisville Fire called and requested that our Rescue be brought over for them to look over. They are preparing to purchase a new truck.

~~~ *Note: recorder batteries died here* ~~~

We recently had some minor issues with the building generator testing and alarm. George and the Chief were present in the building when it happened. Some water was added to unit and it is all set now. We still have to work on adjusting the testing time so it will take place during office hours while there are people in the building.

Recently we had a young man came in to do some community service hours. He swept the parking lot and did a great job.

*Update on Chief Pearson:*

We spoke with him on Tuesday. He stated that his doctor had released him to drive just the day before. He's still in a lot of pain. They replaced 4 discs instead of the 3 they had expected. He is in very good spirits though. We went halves with the Association and bought him a season subscription to MLB.com, which is something he can enjoy from his recliner with his Grandsons. The cost to the district was \$97.50, which was discussed with George and Willy prior to purchase.

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

**VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:**

The Moderator asked Willy if he had anything to report this month. Willy said not a whole lot. Louise said anything? He replied nope.

**VIII. – Committee Reports:**

- a. Property Review Work Team – George Kain & Louise Michaels, Co-Chairs  
The Moderator stated that this topic would be discussed during Executive Session.

**IX. – Old Business:**

- a. Electric Savings Proposal by Louise Michaels *\*handout included in everyone's folders*

Louise made a presentation about *AMBIT Energy*, an electric provider whom she is a Consultant for. *AMBIT* was founded in Texas in 2006 and was ranked highest in 'Residential Customer Satisfaction' among electric providers in CT, NJ and PA by JD Power in 2014. They also have an A+ rating from the BBB. There is a free, no hassle sign-up. And if you are not satisfied for any reason, there is no charge to switch to National Grid or any other provider.

Louise calculated that the savings by using *AMBIT* vs. National Grid for the period 2/6/15 - 3/9/15 would have been \$176.45. The electric rate per/kwh with National Grid is .1595 and locked in with *AMBIT*'s 12 month commercial rate it would be .999. Average savings to us for a 12 month period would be approximately \$2,014.80. Alternate rates with *AMBIT* are a month-to-month variable rate of .750 and a 12 month green rate of .1175.

Ray said that he has spoken with the Lt. Governor about this subject recently and he advised him to hold on for now before we make any decisions. The Legislature is addressing the issues with National Grid during the current session. So he feels that we should wait and readdress after the Legislature adjourns in June. The board agreed.

George added that he would like Kim to e-mail the Gloucester Town Clerk to see if the town has looked into any of this.

**X. – New Business: None.**

**XI. – Public Input:**

Private Linda Ferragamo approached the board stating that she had a 2nd letter for the board from terminated crew member Kim Perreault. While stepping forward she proceeded to state that she could not understand why Kim had been terminated. She went on to state that Kim has good skills and she is a better EMT than herself. She was asked by the Moderator why Kim didn't come to the meeting herself and Linda's reply was, she didn't think she was allowed in the building after being terminated. He reminded her that this was a public meeting and anyone could attend. She continued by stating that she could not believe that she was notified by mail that she had been suspended. She said that she had been with the department for a long time, 13 years, and felt that she deserved better treatment than that. She also was unsatisfied with the suspension letter in how it stated that her membership is under review and she will be notified by mail with the results. She was holding up the letter as she told the executive board that she is a top responder and very active. However she then said that she will only respond if she hears Willy and/or Paul sign on the radio. George asked her what letter was she had in her hand that she kept referring to. She said it was her suspension letter. He asked if he could take a look at it,

because he had never seen it. She said she didn't care and gave it to George. He asked if she would mind if he had the Clerk make copies of it for the board to review. She replied that she did not. She continued addressing the board saying that she is disgusted with this place and the board. She said the Moderator had lied to her and was never available to meet with her as he had said he would. She stated that she never got credit for an EMT refresher she took in Potterville and commented that she didn't know what it would take for a woman to become an officer around here. She also stated that she came to resign tonight, but had decided not to. Her final comment was: wait and see what she is going to do with the budget.

The Moderator asked Mr. Brown if he minded his letter being opened at this point and addressed as well. He replied that he did not. Attorney Mason added that this letter, which had now been opened during public session, was now a public document and should be made part of the record.

**XII. – Executive Session:**

Louise made a motion to go into Executive Session regarding a possible property acquisition, pursuant to *RIGL 42-46-5(a)(5)*, and regarding matters of personnel, pursuant to *RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)*. Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board recessed for Executive Session at 7:40 pm.

A motion was made by Louise to reconvene the regular meeting at 8:50 pm. The motion was seconded by Jim. The motion carried unanimously.

The Moderator stated that the letter received this evening from Kimberly Perreault had been turned over to our Attorney for review. He also stated that no votes had been taken while in Executive Session.

A motion was then made by George to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Louise seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Moderator Fogarty asked Kim to look into setting up either an Emergency or Special Meeting on April 28th at 6:30pm for the board to have a budget workshop. He instructed her to notify the board by e-mail.

**XIII. – Adjournment:**

Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The April meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:53 pm**.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board  
is scheduled for **Thursday, 6:00 pm, May 21, 2015** at the Harmony Fire Station.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly S. Barber  
Tax Collector/Clerk