

# 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, March 17, 2016.**

Present: Moderator – Milton Huston, Jr.; Deputy Chief Jeffrey Muto;  
Treasurer – Sandra Owens; Tax Collector/Clerk – Kimberly Barber;  
Board Members –George Kain, Louise Michaels,  
James Richards & Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;  
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Chief Stuart Pearson – excused;  
Association Representative – Willy Vota, President

Audience:

**I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:04 pm** by Moderator Huston.

**II. – Approval of the minutes from the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting:**

Moderator Huston asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Jim stated that he had been absent from the meeting and that needed to be corrected in the minutes. Otherwise he said he was abstaining from the vote due to that absence.

Ray made a motion to accept the Minutes. Louise 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 Huston asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. Ray asked about the \$2,400 we had paid to Reichert. Kim replied that that amount was made up of 4 separate invoices, 3 for oil and 1 for diesel fuel. Some discussion followed.

The Moderator stated that this is an informational report only and no vote is necessary.

**IV. – Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer's Report for February was tabled.

At this time Deputy Chief Muto made a request of the board to reallocate funds from general ledger account #61127. These funds were originally allocated for the replacement of the overhead doors. The project was completed with only \$2,107.46 out of this year's budget. We would like to reallocate the remaining \$10,892.54 for the purpose of renovating living area

within the station. Sandy stated that the treasurers report showed a discrepancy between her figures and Kim's ledger. Some discussion followed. George asked that the request be tabled until next month's meeting. At that time, he also asked if the Deputy Chief could put together a written plan for the renovation, including estimates. He would also like him to look into upgrading the men's room.

**V. – Tax Collector's Report:**

The taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$91,948.62. The 2015 portion of that is \$71,818.83, prior years and penalties just over \$20,000.

Taxes collected in the month of February totaled \$7,039.

Third party billing fees collected in the month of February were \$8,864.

Kim mentioned that out on the table tonight she had put updated binder insert copies of all the districts pertinent major documents for each board member.

She also reported that the Tax Sale is moving along as scheduled. The 40 Day Notice letters went out March 11<sup>th</sup>. Collections have been slow, but steady. People generally show up within the last 20 days to pay. Sandy asked when the sale date was. Kim replied April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ray made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

**VI. – Chief's Report:**

Report given by Deputy Chief Muto in Chief Pearson's absence.

The Deputy, on behalf of himself and the crew, wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day and Congratulations were extended to Louise on the arrival of her new Granddaughter! Louise said thank you.

Firefighter I Class is finishing up. Four crew members attended: Privates Mike Sears, Kyle Lussier, Kerri Passaretta and Zeth Tucker.

The Fire Marshal Class the Deputy Chief was taking has finished. He took his final exam and will now have to wait approximately 3-4 weeks for his test results.

Congrats to Lt. John Detri! He is starting the Smithfield Fire Academy on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Johnny has been such an asset to us and will still continue to be. Ray said so he will still be with us? The Deputy said absolutely.

The new security system is finished being installed. Joe Webster, John Detri and Ken Lewis worked on stringing the wires and getting the cameras in place. We seem to very good coverage in all key areas of the building. Joe Web, our IT guy, set it up. Some discussion followed about the new system. Ray asked about notification being posted. Jeff said that we have posted stickers at the main entrances to notify the public that there are cameras in use.

Harmony's Banquet will be held on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Village Haven in Forestdale. Cocktails will be at 6:00 pm, with dinner served at 7:00 pm. Kim said that she will be sending letters out to invite everyone. Sandy gave her regrets; she will be boarding a plane that day for a trip to France.

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

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

The Association Report for February was tabled.

The Deputy Chief mentioned that the Association did have a meeting scheduled for Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>. Jim asked if he knew when the election of officers would be. Jeff said that it was supposed to be a while ago and that is part of the reason when there has been a meeting called for April 4<sup>th</sup>. He said hopefully they can get it done.

#### **VIII. – Committee Reports:**

- a. Property Review Work Team – George Kain & Louise Michaels, Co-Chairs  
George and Louise asked that this committee report be put on hold.

- b. Meeting of 3 Fire Districts – Chief Pearson & George Kain, Representatives  
George reported that a meeting had been held Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, at the Chepachet Fire Station. Attending were himself, Chief Pearson, Chief Dauphinais, Chief LaButti and a West Gloucester Board member.

They talked about how the communications project was going and also insurance coverage for the new equipment. Some discussion followed about the towers and the communications project in general.

Also covered was the subject of selling the current reserve rescue once Chepachet's new rescue comes in. We would then purchase ½ of their old rescue as the new reserve, just as they had done ours before. Chief Dauphinais will come up with a price for our by-in. Kim stated that we had charged Chepachet \$6,500 for ½ of the current reserve. Jim added that both boards would also have to agree on the sale price of the current reserve since it is commonly owned. Then the proceeds would be split. George added that Kim has been researching the *MuniciBid* website that the Town of Gloucester uses to sell surplus, we could probably use the same process. Jim asked that we list these items on next month's agenda, so we can vote on them.

Additionally, George said that they talked about town wide training. Our Chief has been trying, but we haven't had much success.

- c. Charter & By-Laws Review – Ray Fogarty, Chair  
Ray reported that a meeting had been held Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> that was attended by the Chief, Kim, Attorney Fred Mason and himself. Fred has proposed a change to the wording of the By-Laws and a copy of the verbage had been included in everyone's folders for their review. The discussed sections to amend for clarification

and consistency within the document are; Article II, Section 5, Line 1 and Article VIII, Section 1, Line 1. Some discussion followed about voting. Ray asked Kim to explain the research she had done on the topic. Kim stated that she had done an informal survey of several fire districts and municipalities to see if anybody else had a write-in on their ballot. No one at a fire district level does, municipalities do because they go according to RI General Law for elections and running for office. They also hold presidential primaries and all that kind of stuff, so they have write-ins at that level. We don't have a presidential primary here; we just hold elections for our own offices. No fire districts have write-ins, they're just too small. Ray said he did receive the same consistent feed-back after talking to people on other boards and the Chief also checked with as many Chiefs as he could. We could not find one instance where a write-in would be allowed. Some further discussion followed. Ray said that the proposed changes as discussed tonight will be posted on next month's agenda and voted on then. Jim also clarified that the board had addressed the fact of the illegal vote at the annual meeting during a prior monthly meeting. Fred agreed stating that he would be preparing a letter for the board to have available for the public's review. Kim said she just wanted to mention that the voting overseers needed to have a copy of that letter to display when voters come in, in case they have questions. George also stated that we needed to instruct the overseers more clearly about checking names off after voters do vote. Sandy added that people should also be presenting a valid ID.

Louise made a motion to accept the Committee Reports. Ray seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### IX. – Old Business:

- a. Vote to Approve Fiscal Year End June 30, 2015 Audit Report  
Ray recognized all of the hard work done by Sandy, Kim, the Chief and Milton. It is a fact that our accounting system is strong due to their due diligence.

Ray made a motion to accept the Audit Report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

#### X. – New Business:

- a. Annual Review of 'Standard Operating Guidelines'  
*(in accordance with HFD By-Laws Article IV, Sec. 1, Line 1)*

As Kim had mentioned earlier during her report, she has handed out updated document copies for all of the board member's binders. She stated that there had only been 2 changes to the SOG's since the last review. Revision dates are listed in the front on the document in the Table of Contents.

Ray asked that the motion to approve the SOG's be tabled to allow further review.

Kim mentioned at this time that the district had been sent complimentary tickets for the Opening Day Game of the Pawtucket Red Sox. Before the game they honor all Police Officers and Fire Fighters with a special ceremony. If anyone is interested, see Kim.

**XI. – Public Input:** No audience.

**XII. – Executive Session:**

Ray made a motion to go into Executive Session 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 8:06 pm.

A motion was made by Ray to reconvene the regular meeting at 8:18 pm. The motion was seconded by Jim. The motion carried unanimously.

The Moderator stated that no votes had been taken while in Executive Session.

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

**XIII. – Adjournment:**

George made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The March meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **8:20 pm**.

There will be a Budget Workshop on **Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 6:00 pm.**  
Attending: Chief, Kim, Sandy, Milt & George.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board  
is scheduled for **Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 7:00 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly S. Barber  
Tax Collector/Clerk