

OAKLAND~MAPLEVILLE FIRE DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING

Meeting Minutes September 9, 2015

Opening:

The annual meeting of the Oakland~Mapleville Fire District was called to order at 8:01 pm on September 09, 2015 in the district fire station at 46 Oakland School St. Oakland by Bob L'Esperance, Moderator.

Present:

Operating Committee Members: Treasurer Patricia St. Pierre; Tax Assessors Mike Cosetta and Leigha Joyal; Peter Leone, Clerk; Richard Nolan, Tax Collector; Commissioners Tom Demers and Ed Bertholic; and Fire Chief Joseph Bertholic.

Absent: Commissioner Warren Steere

Quorum for the meeting was met. (See attached log.)

A. Reading of Warrant

The reading of the warrant (see attached) was read by Clerk, Peter Leone.

B. Election of Officers

- The slate of officers presented for voter consideration is:
 - Moderator – Robert L'Esperance
 - Treasurer – Patricia St. Pierre
 - Clerk – Peter Leone
 - Tax Collector – Richard Nolan
 - Tax Assessor (3 year term) Leigha Joyal
 - Tax Assessor (1 year term)
- Floor was opened for nominations.
- Leigha Joyal nominated Nicole Crandall of Oakland for the 1 year term for Tax Assessor. Seconded by Mike Cosetta.
- Hearing no other nominations, the Moderator called for the voters pleasure on the slate of officers presented.

- A motion was made to accept the slate presented, by Mike McGrane.
- Seconded by Ed Bertholic
- So voted “Aye” by all present.

C. Treasurer’s Report

The treasurer, Pat St. Pierre, provided a copy of the year-end Unaudited Profit & Loss- Budget vs. Actual and Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2015. (see attached). We stayed within budget for the past year with the biggest exception of the insurance accounts. The insurance account was over budget due to the increase in premium greater than anticipated and the fact that some of the vehicles were under insured. We also put a new rescue vehicle into service in June. Rescue billing income was budgeted for \$75,000.00 and the actual was \$118,600.00. Overall the budget was under the projected budget.

M. Ryan questioned how pay was determined for personnel. Chief J. Bertholic responded that it was the qualifications of the individuals and training they have received that determine their rate of pay.

M. Ryan questioned fees for the officers of the committee and asked if the Treasurer over sees the entire budget. Pat St.Pierre responded that it is her responsibility to monitor the budget throughout the year. B. L’Esperance, Moderator, replied that the fees or stipends were listed in the report and that the stipends were small.

M. Ryan asked the name of the attorney that represents the District. B. L’Esperance, Moderator responded that it was Pierre Rondeau. The line item of Professional Fee covers any expense throughout the year.

M. Ryan asked about the Tax Sale attorney. B. L’Esperance, Moderator that it was Glenn Andreoni. Further questions along this line would have to asked in a different portion of the meeting.

The Moderator asked for questions from the floor. Hearing no more questions, the Moderator called for the voter’s pleasure.

- Motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report was made by Ed Bertholic.
- Motion was seconded by Mike McGrane.
- So voted “I” by all in attendance.

D. Tax Collectors Report

The Tax Collector’s statement (see attached) and report was read to those in attendance by the Tax Collector, Richard Nolan. The total tax collected \$376,972.64 which includes prior years, current tax year, and interest (see attached).

The tax levy for the past fiscal year was \$366,849. And the amount \$23,735. remains outstanding. 93% of the tax levy was collected.

The annual Tax Sale was held on July 30, 2015 and two properties were presented for auction and were sold.

The PO Box 675 was closed at the Mapleville Post Office and a new mailing address and mailbox was established for the office on the fire station property. This change was due to the limiting of hours and services at the Mapleville Post Office.

The Moderator asked for questions from the floor. Hearing no questions, the Moderator called for the voter's pleasure.

- Motion to accept the Tax Collectors Report was made by Ed Bertholic.
- Motion was seconded by Pete Leone.
- So voted "I" by all in attendance.

E. Fire Chief's Report

Fire Chief Joseph Bertholic read the attached report to those in attendance. There were 701 different types of incidents, of that number, 445 were EMS call, which the department responded to, please see attached report for details.

The Engineers of the fire department performed approximately 150 hours of routine maintenance duties on the apparatus and equipment. Due to liability issues we are performing minimum maintenance only.

All business's "places of assembly" have had the annual inspection conducted. We are working with several multi-family homes to bring them up to code. Fire prevention materials were distributed at local businesses and the Burrillville Middle School. Tours of the fire station and fire safety talks are available to civic and social groups throughout the year.

On June 29, 2015 we put a new rescue truck into service. We have a 7 to 8 year plan in place to replace our rescue vehicles.

A federal grant for \$87,523.00 was announced on August 13, 2015. This was applied for and awarded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. This was announced by Sens. Reed, Whitehouse and Rep Langevin. The funds will be used to purchase cardiac equipment which will be placed into the rescue vehicles. I would like to thank Capt. Mike McGrane and Chief Stuart Pearson of the Harmony FD and a resident of Mapleville for writing the grant request.

Department members are actively looking for ways to recruit and retain members for the fire department. We are still waiting to learn if we have been awarded a federal grant to assist with marketing; this grant was applied for this year.

Approximately 1000 hours of training was held under the leadership of the company officers. We have training on Monday nights with other departments. This aids us in making our ability to better serve the public we protect.

Call Pay System-was instituted this past year as an incentive for the volunteers to respond to calls. This is paid once a year. The department experienced an increase in volunteers for calls due to this system. The duty shifts were put in place and at times all the shifts were not covered. The cost was about \$17,000. and it was worth the cost of the program to increase the turn out for calls from 2 or 3 to 4 or 5 members. Asked how they were paid by taxpayer M. Ryan, the Chief responded that it was according to experience, i.e.; a fire fighter basic was \$10. /hour, EMT was \$16. /hour.

Hearing no further questions from the floor, the Moderator asked for the voter's pleasure.

- Motion was made by Pete Leone to accept the Fire Chief's Report and expressed the gratitude of the Operating Committee to the O-M Fire department members for jobs well done.
- Motion was seconded by Patricia St. Pierre.
- So voted "Y" by all in attendance.

F. Adoption of Budget

The proposed budget for fiscal year September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016 was presented to voters for review (see attached). The floor was opened for questions from the voters.

- M. Brizard asked what the increase does to the tax rate. The moderator responded that it would increase from \$1.78 to \$2.13 - \$.35 increase
- Increased budget amount for insurance due to new rescue vehicle and some vehicles being under insured.
- Increase in the per diem wages and taxes for additional coverage up \$33,000.
- Increase in the budget due to funding of Call Pay \$20,000.
- Total budget of \$535,219. is proposed. A \$77,130. increase over last year.
- Home valued at \$200,000. tax bill would increase \$70.00.
- Asked how the valuation of property is determined by M. Ryan, R. Nolan, Tax Collector responded that the Town of Burrillville's valuation is used each year for the districts taxes. M. Ryan questioned fees that are added to tax bills of property owners that go to tax sale. Both B. L'Esperance, Moderator and R. Nolan, Tax Collector answered the questions.

Hearing no questions from the floor, the Moderator asked for the voter's pleasure.

- Motion was made by Mike Cosetta to accept the proposed budget.
- Motion was seconded by Mike McGrane.
- So voted "Y" by all in attendance.

G. Old Business

No old business to discuss.

H. New Business

The floor was opened for new business.

M. Ryan asked questions regarding the Tax Sale process and how the attorney was chosen. These questions were answered by B. L'Esperance, Moderator and R. Nolan, Tax Collector.

M. Ryan asked questions regarding the District's By-Laws and where the original documents of the district are kept. B. L'Esperance said that a committee was formed to review the By-Laws for updating and if changes are made to present the changes to the voters at the next Annual Meeting for approval. Documents are kept in the district office.

The Tax Collector, R. Nolan, explained the tax sale process that is followed when a tax payer is two years or more delinquent, after being asked questions by M. Ryan. He also explained what happened in the past by previous tax collectors, is not the process followed today.

Discussion was held regarding using the OM fire station for the purpose of voting during the election process. B. L'Esperance, Moderator explained that this item was already voted on at last year's Annual Meeting and there will no longer be voting in the station. The Town Clerk has already moved these precincts to the Burrillville Middle School for the next election cycle. M. Ryan asked why this change was necessary. J. Bertholic, Fire Chief explained that when the station was used it hindered the operations of the station. M. Brizard said that political signs were not appropriate on the property of the fire station and the bay doors were blocked by parked cars. Other fire stations in town do not have voting in their stations.

M. Brizard asked why the Annual Meeting is held at 8pm instead of an earlier hour. B. L'Esperance, Moderator explained that the time is stated in the OMFD Charter.

I. Setting of Tax Rate

In order to meet expenses the tax levy needs to be set at \$452,219. The rate of \$2.13 would be needed to raise this amount in taxes. We would be increasing the tax rate by \$.35 from \$1.78 to \$2.13 per thousand to raise enough revenue.

Hearing no questions the Moderator asked what was the people's pleasure.

- Motion to raise the tax rate to \$2.13 per thousand was made by Mark Brizard.
- Motion was seconded by Mike McGrane.
- So voted "I" by all in attendance, with Mary Ryan abstaining.

J. Setting of Bonds

Bonds for Tax Collector, Clerk and Treasurer are automatically set at \$1,000,000 and are in force per Pat St.Pierre.

Hearing no questions the Moderator asked what was the people's pleasure.

- Motion to set the bonds was made by Ed Bertholic.
- Motion was seconded by Mike Cosetta.
- So voted "I" by all in attendance.

H. Adjournment

Hearing no more questions/comments the Moderator asked what was the people's pleasure.

- Motion was made by Mike McGrane for adjournment at 9:10pm.
- Motion was seconded by Ed Bertholic
- So voted "I" by all in attendance.

Minutes submitted by:

Anne Chretien, Office Clerk