

Coventry Fire District

Special Meeting, January 5, 2015

Minutes

- 1. Emergency Evacuation Procedures were reviewed by John D'Onofrio**
- 2. Roll call was taken. Present were John D'Onofrio, Frank Palin, Brenda Raposo and John Cook. Sam Rachiele was absent**
- 3. Further review of the candidate for the position of Treasurer**
 - a. The only candidate for the position David Krekorian reviewed his billing rate for the fire district.**
 - i. Mr. Krekorian established his standard billing rate at \$175/hour with a Bookkeeper rate of \$60/hour.**
 - ii. Mr. Krekorian stated that his bookkeeper will be doing most of the work.**
 - b. Mr. Palin asked Mr. Krekorian if he had talked to the previous treasurer, Judith Hetherman regarding the new state reporting requirements (RIGL 44-5-69). Mr. Palin expressed that due to the size of the district and our cash flow, that we would be considered a tier 1 under the reporting requirements. Mr. Krekorian responded that Ms. Hetherman had spoken about the new reporting requirements but had not yet seen them. It is unclear at this point to both the board and to Mr. Krekorian, the nature and frequency of the new reporting requirements.**
 - c. Mr. D'Onofrio suggested that we accept Mr. Krekorian's hourly billing schedule on a trial basis for the 1st quarter of the calendar**

year. Mr. Krekorian was amicable to the idea. Mr. Krekorian also expressed however, that due to his concerns regarding the district's finances and the new state laws affecting the district, that he be paid a partial fee/retainer in advance of \$2,500. This fee would be reconciled with actual hours charged at the end of the quarter. The retainer would be based upon an estimate of time required by his firm over the next 3 months. Both the board and Mr. Krekorian acknowledged that there would be more time required in the beginning/startup period. Mr. Krekorian's time billed would be reduced once he enters into more of a "maintenance" mode. Mr. D'Onofrio estimated that Mr. Krekorian would be needed for approximately 4-5 hours per month with 2-3 hours being utilized to process the twice monthly payroll. In the event that Mr. Krekorian's services are ended, before the total retainer is accrued through billing, Mr. Krekorian stated that he would reimburse the district for any overpayment to his firm. The board agreed that this would be an acceptable arrangement. Mr. Palin stated that the board will revisit this arrangement at the end of the three month trial period.

d. Ms. Raposo asked Mr. Krekorian if he had asked the previous treasurer, Judith Hetherman, about the time requirements of the position. Mr. Krekorian responded that he did. Through Mr. Krekorian's conversation with Ms. Hetherman and Mr. D'Onofrio's experience with the prior board, it was acknowledged that Ms. Hetherman's firm was, at best, breaking even on her bookkeeping operations but was most likely losing money on duties beyond that of bookkeeping. As a result of the actions between the board and his

predecessor, Mr. Krekorian wants to be certain that his firm is fairly compensated and made whole.

e. Mr. Krekorian agreed, if hired, to meet with Ms. Hetherman to begin the transition process. Deputy Chief Warren added that the payroll process was fairly simple. Mr. Krekorian agreed to sit with Ms. Hetherman to watch the process that will be taking place this week. This process includes the processing of pension payments. The board agreed that payroll and pension processing is the most important duty of the treasurer that needs to be fulfilled at this time.

f. Mr. Krekorian inquired about the reporting and maintenance of the district's cash balance. Mr. Palin responded that this was currently being maintained and reported by Ms. Hetherman who also works with the tax collector to record incoming receipts. Mr. D'Onofrio added that Ms. Hetherman gave a financial summary to the board every month at the regularly scheduled board meetings (2nd Tuesday of the month).

g. A motion was made by Mr. Palin and seconded by Ms. Raposo to accept Mr. Krekorian's offer to the board. A vote was taken resulting in 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

h. Mr. Krekorian submitted his contact information to the board.

4. Further review of the candidates for the position of Legal Counsel

a. The board received a revised proposal from Timothy Williamson, attorney from the law firm of Inman, Tourgee & Williamson.

b. Regarding the other candidate for the position, attorney, David D'Agostino from the law firm of Gorham and Gorham, Mr. Cook asked if Mr. D'Agostino intended to provide revised proposal. Mr. Palin

answered no and that his proposed rate stands.

c. Mr. Palin reaffirmed his concern that a conflict of interest may arise if the board hires Mr. D'Agostino. This is due to the fact that Mr. D'Agostino's boss, Nicholas Gorham, is the solicitor for the Town of Coventry.

d. Mr. Palin acknowledged that both candidates will have support from their entire firms.

e. Mr. D'Onofrio asked the board to review the pros & cons of hiring Mr. D'Agostino as legal counsel.

i. Mr. D'Agostino's firm is currently representing the Central Coventry Fire District in all matters, including labor negotiations. Mr. D'Onofrio stated that this experience and knowledge of the district(s) would weigh in the board's favor. Mr. Palin stated that the same could be said for Mr. Williamson due to his experience in West Warwick and with the state's Department of Revenue. Mr. Palin feels that both candidates were equal in experience in all matters relating to the Coventry Fire District.

ii. Ms. Raposo felt that Mr. Williamson's offer would be a cost savings for the district because it would be partially charged an "Associate's" rate for some of the legal matters being billed. In the case of Mr. D'Agostino, the district would be charged one flat rate, regardless of the work being done by his firm. Mr. Palin also stated that he believes Mr. Williamson's rate would be more favorable to the district.

f. A motion was made by Ms. Raposo to hire attorney Tim Williams to represent the Coventry Fire District in its legal matters. The motion was seconded by Mr. D'Onofrio. A vote was taken resulting in 4 in

favor and 0 opposed.

5. Mr. Palin stated that the next regular monthly meeting would be held at the Anthony Fire Station on Tuesday, January 13th at 7:00pm.

6. A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Cook and seconded by Mr. Palin. A vote was taken resulting in 4 in favor and 0 opposed.