

WEST BARNSTABLE FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING – NOVEMBER 15, 2017
REGULAR MINUTES

Present: Prudential Committee members Van Northcross, Ed Smith, Chrystal LaPine, Chief Joe Maruca, Deputy Chief Dave Paananen, District Treasurer Ray Pirrone, District Accountant Kathleen Barrette, and District Clerk Elaine Grace.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Smith at 4:00 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Tax Classification Hearing:

Ms. LaPine motioned, Van Northcross seconded, and it was unanimously voted to open the Tax Classification Hearing.

The Town Assessor, Edward O'Neil, notified District Treasurer Pirrone that information relevant to the tax classification hearing was unavailable at this time and the hearing needed to be rescheduled.

Ms. LaPine motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and it was unanimously voted to continue the Tax Classification Hearing until Mr. O'Neil was available and a new date could be scheduled.

Clerk's Report:

The minutes of September 13 were distributed and approved as written.

The draft minutes of October 18, 2017, taken by District Accountant Kathleen Barrette in the Clerk's absence at the October meeting, were approved as written.

The Clerk advised it was time to start prepping for the Annual District meeting which will be held on April 25, 2018. The 1717 Meetinghouse Foundation would be happy to accommodate the District again this year by providing meeting space on the day, per Fred Clausen.

Treasurer's Report:

The following warrants were approved for payment:

PR 18-17	14,118.69
PR 18-18	15,909.53
PR 18-19	24,234.78

The FY17 wrap-up is underway. The auditors have begun their process. Tax revenue is tracking well. Both FY2018 expense and revenue budgets are on target. However, Mr. Pirrone has concerns about a potential deficit in ambulance revenue.

Mr. Pirrone advised there is a discrepancy in the amount of free cash available to the District. His calculations show FY2017 free cash to be \$309,037 which was submitted to the DOR. However, according to DOR calculations, the amount is only \$153,433. The DOR can't identify prior year unused free cash. Mr. Pirrone has a call into Jared at the DOR. If the problem can't be resolved tomorrow over the phone, he will invite him to come down on Monday or Tuesday.

The District planned to use \$180,000 in free cash to pay for the new engine. Mr. Northcross stated there is a big difference between \$309,000 and \$153,000. Ms. LaPine queried why can't we identify the previous year's unused free cash and why can't the auditors figure it out. Last year's audit did not identify any issues. Mr. Pirrone advised he will continue to work on a resolution with the DOR.

Administrative Policy Review:

The policy was distributed to Fire Department staff and the Chief has received some comments.

Breaker 295 Disposal of Assets:

The Chief advised that there is no title for the chassis. The department has spent the last 4 years trying to bring this equipment into functionality but it can't be achieved. After a lot of volunteer labor, it is a somewhat assembled pile of metal.

Ms. LaPine motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and it was unanimously voted to declare Brush Breaker 295 as surplus and authorize the Fire Chief to dispose of it as scrap in accordance with GL Chapter 30B Section 15 (f) and Wbfd policy.

Staffing Models for FY2019:

Chief Maruca reviewed proposed staffing models for FY2019 for the Prudential Committee's consideration. Plan A would increase part-time staff payroll by 5 positions for a total of 8, at a cost of approximately \$67,000 per year. The tax rate would be \$2.94, a 5.73% increase. Plan B would increase career staff by 1 position, and increase part-time staff by 3 positions, for a total cost of \$202,500 per year. Estimated tax rate would be \$3.20, a 15.09% increase. Plan B (1) would increase career staff by 1 position for a total cost of \$148,000 per year. The tax rate would be \$3.13, a 12.70% increase. All scenarios have taken the additional retirement costs of Chris Greim into the calculations. The Chief advised he could make a good case for not increasing staff, but feels the District needs to maintain what is expected of the department. Plan A would get us where we need to be. West Barnstable is not growing – the population is stable or decreasing, there is no commercial growth, emergency calls are up 40% but so is mutual aid. Sandwich will soon be opening Station 3 in East Sandwich. The Chief will continue to keep refining the plan for more discussion at the December meeting.

Sponsorship of Flagpole at Roundabout:

Rusty Gage, a resident of West Barnstable brought a proposal to the Chief regarding erecting a flagpole in the center of the roundabout on Route 149 at Exit 5. His group of veterans and motorcycle aficionados are seeking to erect a flagpole to honor veterans. The Town of Barnstable thinks it's a great idea, but it is state property. Deputy Police Chief Steve Xiaros, also a West Barnstable resident, supports the idea, and has obtained a flagpole. Chief Maruca has the paperwork to apply to the state for approval, the Deputy is working with Dig Safe and it is a low cost project that would result in a lot of resident support and good public relations.

Mr. Northcross motioned, Ms. LaPine seconded, and it was unanimously voted that the Fire District sponsor the installation and maintenance of a flagpole and solar floodlight at the center of the West Barnstable Roundabout on Route 149 and that said flagpole should be maintained as part of the street light department.

Chief's Report:

- a. **Emergency call activity** – Routine calls, nothing unusual
- b. **Ambulance billing & write-offs** – only 23 transports in October, revenue is down. The Chief advised that new ambulance rates should be reviewed at the December meeting and voted on at the January meeting.
- c. **Workplace/Fire Station Health/Safety** – A decision has been made to tear out the 30 year old carpeting in the station – there are health concerns due to age, contamination from fires, medical calls, etc. A subcommittee has been appointed to look at replacement alternatives.
- d. **New Engine Update** – the engine is being assembled on schedule and should arrive in West Barnstable by the end of January.
- e. **New Ambulance** – No update
- f. **New Recruits** – 10 candidates have been interviewed. Six will be going to the Fire Academy on January 29th. A new volunteer, a career firefighter from Tampa, FL started last night, assigned to Team 4; Roger Santos and Mike Whitely have returned to duty from leaves of absence. Dennis FD will be hiring 8 firefighters, Hyannis is looking to hire 4, and Eastham will be hiring 4.
- g. **Events** – Halloween Safety Day was a success and a good time; the Pancake Breakfast will be held December 3rd; Christmas trees will go on sale the Monday following Thanksgiving; several West Barnstable firefighters will be involved in the fundraiser to raise funds for the homeless; and it's 9 weeks until open burning permits will be available!

Ms. LaPine motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and it was unanimously voted at 5:30 PM to go into Executive Session, and not to return to regular session for the purpose of Collective Bargaining – Purpose 2 – Settlement.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine L. Grace
District Clerk