

WEST BARNSTABLE FIRE DISTRICT

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES - MARCH 24, 2021

PRESENT: Prudential Committee members Chairman Van Northcross and Ed Smith; Chief Joe Maruca, Deputy Chief Dave Paananen, District Accountant Susan Rao, District Treasurer Ray Pirrone, District Clerk Elaine Grace, District Moderator Kate Mitchell, and member of the public Dhiraj Malkani.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Van Northcross called the meeting to order at 4:08 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited by all present.

CLERK'S REPORT:

Mr. Smith motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and it was voted to accept the minutes of the February 17m, 2021 Prudential Committee meeting as written.

The Chief advised that the same rules and protocols used last year would apply to this year's Annual District Meeting. Masks must also be worn at the meeting.

Mr. Malkani suggested 2 or 3 more microphones should be made available at the meeting for the public to use for asking questions or making comments.

Motions will be assigned at the April 21, 2021 Prudential Committee meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The following Warrants were approved for payment:

PR 21-33 21,312.52

PR 21-34	15,548.87
PR 21-35	26,581.51
PR 21-36	15,776.84
PR 21-37	22,590.95
AP 21-18	11,062.35
AP 21-19	22,423.39
AP 21-20	20,602.48

Mr. Pirrone advised that Real Estate and Personal Property tax collections were high; prior tax year receipts are down. Ambulance revenues are ahead of budget, however, revenue and trips are down from last year. Expenditures and salaries are just under budget. Fire Department salaries are under budget due to good fortune and good management.

The Chief noted that training is reduced for the moment - there has not been much significant training done since Thanksgiving. However, Curtis is still on track to attend the Fire Academy in May and that will impact overtime and training.

Mr. Pirrone advised that the Audit Report is posted on the District website - the management letter should be available by mid to late April.

Cash accounts have been reconciled.

Mr. Pirrone will present a proposal for Accounting Policy and Procedures for the District at the meeting in April for discussion.

FIRE CHIEF JOB DESCRIPTION & REVIEW:

Mr. Smith motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and it was voted to approve the revised Fire Chief Job Description and revised Annual Review documents as written.

SUCCESSION PLANNING - CLERK, TREASURER:

An annual review, reappointment and succession planning policy needs to be implemented. The Chief will work on a proposal to present to the Prudential Committee in July/August.

PILOT PROGRAM:

The Chief introduced the idea of a PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program that some cities and towns in Massachusetts have implemented in order to reach out to non-profits and request voluntary contributions for services received. In his research, the Chief found that 67% of the land mass of West Barnstable is non-taxable and will remain so - never to be developed, never to be taxed. Land in West Barnstable is owned or used by Cape Cod Community College, the YMCA, the Cape Cod Conservatory, the Town of Barnstable (housing and conservation), several churches, the Barnstable Land Trust, and open land as part of sub-division trusts. The Chief has suggested putting together a letter outlining the services these non-profits have been receiving and reaching out to them seeking a voluntary contribution. The Chief also suggested the proposal state that all voluntary contributions would go to capital projects, not operating funds. The Chief will work on a West Barnstable PILOT proposal and letter.

Mr. Northcross and Mr. Smith were in agreement that these entities should be given an opportunity to say yes or no and it was worth trying.

COVID 19 OPERATIONAL REVIEW:

The Chief noted the resemblance to “Groundhog Day”...

The Chief advised that the COVID infection rate numbers are higher in the state and on Cape Cod perhaps due to the slower rollout of vaccine and reduced testing. Supplies have also been a problem. As of today, the schools have once again gone remote. Susan Rao noted, however, that although the infection rate is high, so is Massachusetts’ vaccine rate.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

- Nice article in the Barnstable Patriot on March 12, 2021 written by Barbara Clark about the renovated Forestry 295
- New volunteers - Orientation via ZOOM on March 25th, 3 ZOOM training sessions in April, hopefully outside in-person training beginning around April 15th.
- Most staff and current volunteers have been vaccinated - last ZOOM training was last night - in-person outside training will start again.
- Curtis still scheduled for the Fire Academy - in Springfield today, attending orientation.

DEPUTY CHIEF'S REPORT:

- Major truck accident last Wednesday on Route 6 - driver med lighted - no good reason for why it happened. Another 2-car head-on accident on Route 149 - transported 2 passengers to hospital - COMM assisted
- 296 Replacement - Truck in Dennis - 1997, new brakes all around. Will have additional follow-up with mechanic. Dennis has entered into agreement to trade, not getting much for it. Not sure we can get it, but third party vendor may let it go. It's in good shape, could get for reasonable price.
- Department in a holding pattern on grants - waiting to hear.

ADJOURN

Mr. Smith motioned, Mr. Northcross seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine L. Grace, District Clerk

West Barnstable Fire Distric