

West Barnstable Fire District
Prudential Committee Meeting – April 20, 2022

Present: Prudential Committee members Van Northcross, Edward Smith, Dhiraj Malkani; Water Commission member Kristine Clark; Chief Joe Maruca and Deputy Chief Dave Paananen; District Treasurer Ray Pirrone; District Accountant Bernie Meyler; incoming District Accountant Chuck Marshall; District Counsel Chuck Sabatt; District Moderator Kate Mitchell; District Clerk Elaine Grace; Assistant District Clerk Dan Furbush.

Call to Order: Prudential Committee Chairman Van Northcross called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Clerk's Report:

Mr. Smith motioned, Mr. Malkani seconded, and the minutes of the March 30, 2022 Joint Meeting of the Prudential Committee and the Water Commissioners were unanimously accepted, in a roll call vote, as written.

Ms. Grace advised the Committee that the annual report booklet had been mailed on April 18, 2022 to 1,688 West Barnstable Fire District voters, and an additional 25 reports had been sent to district voters outside of the West Barnstable post office delivery area. The FY2023 Warrant was also published in The Barnstable Patriot newspaper, under Legal Notices, on Friday, April 15, 2022. Motions for the Annual District Meeting were briefly reviewed, and no changes were made. The Clerk and the Moderator will meet at the West Barnstable Community Building at 5 PM on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 to open the meeting for voting. The Annual District Meeting has been posted on the Town's website under meeting agendas.

Public Comment:

Water Commissioner Kristine Clark reminded the Prudential Committee that the Water Commissioners receive no stipend and have no budget. She felt that with increased public interest in the potential development of a public water source in the Bridge Creek Conservation area in West Barnstable, funding for the Water Commissioners would be necessary. Ms. Clark requested that a motion be made on the floor at the Annual District meeting to fund the Water Commission.

Attorney Sabatt advised that the FY23 Warrant had already been published under Legal Notices in The Barnstable Patriot and it was too late to make any changes. It was also too late to advertise a Special District meeting to follow immediately after the Annual Meeting. Chief Maruca noted that there was nothing on the posted April 20, 2022 meeting agenda for the purpose of discussing a motion to fund the Water Commissioners. Chief Maruca suggested the Water Commissioners tell the Prudential Committee what they need in the way of funding and for what purpose. If it is under \$2,500.00, the Fire Department could cover the expense. He suggested a proposal to the Prudential Committee from the Water Commissioners requesting funding in FY2024 would also be appropriate.

Treasurer's Report:

The following Warrants were submitted for payment:

PR 22-36	21,954.01
PR 22-37	19,105.99
PR 22-38	20,986.18
PR 22-39	15,593.05

PR 22-40	27,655.16
PR 22-41	22,812.64
PR 22-42	21,800.56

Mr. Pirrone advised that all cash accounts are reconciled and those cash balances as of March 31, 2022 are as follows:

General Fund	933,901
Ambulance Stabilization	118,027
Critical Illness Fund	10,023
Special Revenue	103,713
OPEB	361,685

Tax revenue is on budget, and lien redemptions are increased; ambulance revenue continues to remain up significantly. Other revenue includes \$201,202 in Grant proceeds. Treasurer/Accountant salaries are over budget by 15% due to extra time on-boarding new District accountants. Streetlights are well below budget, as is Fire Department overtime. Fire Department salaries are on budget. Warrant articles are all well below budget.

Ambulance Billing/Revenue Report:

Chief Maruca advised that the number of ambulance runs continue to increase. We are apparently climbing out of the 2019-2021 downturns, caused partly by COVID-19. Beginning in July 2021, runs have increased each month. Medicare payments average \$400/run; Blue Cross/Blue Shield and other private insurance payers about \$1,100/run. It appears West Barnstable has reached a plateau and has stopped aging as a community. The Chief advised he did not receive the Comstar reports before this month's meeting – he will make them available for next month's meeting.

Water Hearing Review:

Ms. Clark advised that the meeting on April 13, 2022 at the West Barnstable Community Building was an informational meeting, not a hearing. About 25 people attended and they were provided with the same presentation by the Department of Public Works as the Prudential Committee and Water Commissioners were given earlier. The meeting was recorded and is available on the Town's website via Channel 18. Ms. Clark asked the Chief to provide a link on the Fire Department's website. A series of informational meetings has been scheduled by Water Commissioner Chairman Mark Wirtanen, as needed, on the 1st Monday of each month, beginning in June, at the West Barnstable Community Building.

Station 3 Farmer's Market:

COVID-19 sidelined this endeavor. However, Chairman Van Northcross is willing to coordinate efforts to get a Farmer's market up and running this year at the old Fire Station on Route 6A.

Fire Chief's Report:

- The Chief reported two staff members experienced deaths within their immediate families. Lt. Walsh's sister died in a motor vehicle accident and FF Austin Moloney's grandfather passed away.
- A mysterious streetlight was found on Oak Street – no one knows who it belongs to – West Barnstable will obtain ownership and repair the burned-out light. The Chief noted that if a light is not LED, it is not a West Barnstable streetlight.
- The Old Village Store reopened today to the relief of its many fans.

Deputy Chief's Report:

- The Truck Committee has met frequently and met with 4 vendors. The FCAM Collective is experiencing delays with receiving pricing from manufacturers. Pricing is being adjusted every day. The Committee continues to adjust their specs and drawings and will continue to plug away.

Mr. Northcross motioned, Mr. Smith seconded, and it was voted unanimously, in a roll call vote, to go into Executive Session at 4:55 PM for the purpose of discussing strategy and negotiation regarding the collective bargaining agreement between the District and the West Barnstable Professional Fire Fighters Local #4938 for the period July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2025, and not to return to public session.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine L. Grace, District Clerk