



Three Rivers Fire District
50 Springfield Street
Three Rivers, MA 01080

Prudential Committee Minutes

Chairman Stephen Chiacchia called a meeting of the Prudential Committee to order at 6:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Stephen Chiacchia; Prudential Committee Chairman
Norman Czech; Prudential Committee Vice Chairman
Lorinda Baker; District Treasurer
David Basler; District Clerk

Scott Turner; Three Rivers Fire Chief
Nicole Newberry; Water Department
Sherrie Bellefleur; District Recording Secretary

Roll call finds Prudential Committee Clerk Richard Pobieglo absent from this evening's meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the February 9, 2022, Open Meeting.

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To approve the February 9, 2022, minutes to the Open Meeting. 2-0-0

Public Comment

None

Committee Reports

David Basler has said about the upcoming District Vote and absentee ballots he will be putting a notice in the Journal for next week and the ballot papers will be able to be picked up at the Water Department Office along with the rules. Dave has hinted this may be his last year. Chairman Steve Chiacchia comments he hopes this is not the case and that in the 6 years Dave has done a good job.

Report of the Treasurer

Lorinda Baker: District Treasurer read the Report of the Treasurer for the month of February 2022.

WATER DEPARTMENT:

- February revenue was down \$8,000 compared to February 2021; this appears to be due to timing as the YTD revenue is up \$43,000.
- Expenses are higher this fiscal year – repairs (+20,629), pump station maintenance (+7,911) and meter replacement (+15,843).
- YTD profit dropped by \$22,451 (note – hydrant bill (\$21,000) paid in May 2021 – not yet paid in 2022).
- Electric bills jumped in January – could be an issue later.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

- No unusual items
- Rise in Fuel and electric costs could be an issue later

DISTRICT:

- No unusual items
- District balance sheet and relate reports have been submitted to DOR for Free Cash Certification

BANK ACCOUNT BALANCES EOM:

- Fire North Brookfield Savings Bank - \$493,173.44
- Water Country Bank Checking - \$130,147.87

- Water Country Bank Meter Account - \$14,790.88

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To accept the Report of the Treasurer for February 2022. 2-0-0

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To approve the Treasurers Warrant for February 2022. 2-0-0

Report of the Fire Chief

Fire Chief Scott Turner read the report of the Fire Chief for February 2022.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF:

The month of February was a good month in terms of public safety, as emergency dispatches were much lower than previous months. Active members continue to build upon and improve the services this department provides to our community, by continuous training and drills both on, and off duty. Three members have been accepted into the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Academy Program; Steve Nodurf; Samantha Hoy; Nathan Gomez, Class 098, and two additional members will begin the Basic Firefighter 1 program hosted by Monson FD; Amber Duby; Chris Clark, both beginning on March 1st.

OPERATIONS:

- 10-Emergency Incidents
- 20-Non-Emergency Service Calls

TRAINING:

Department: Engine Company Operations.

Duty Crew: Ground ladders; rope rescue; pumping and hydraulics, hoseline deployment, forcible entry, building collapse shoring techniques.

EVENTS:

- Open house for the Explorer Program (able to add a fifth member to the current membership).

FIRE PREVENTION/INSPECTION AND CODE ENFORCEMENT:

- 2-Oil tank installation inspections
- 1-Propane tank inspection
- 4-Open burning permits issued

FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS:

- Lieutenant Ian Grimes graduated from the Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Academy, Class 096. This program is a 54-day, 240-hour program designed to meet National Fire Protection Association, NFPA 1001 Firefighter Professional standards.
- To improve communications and save taxpayer money, the department began a lease program with Goosetown Communications for three portable radios. These new, top-of-the-line radios improve Firefighter safety and would otherwise be beyond the scope of our current budget for purchase. Presently the TRFD has 3 portable radios on a trial called tri band. These operate on 3 different frequency ranges meaning we can communicate not only with our surrounding communities, but we can also communicate with Wilbraham which are on 800 frequency band and any other community that operates on 400. This is three different frequency ranges any time. If called out for mutual aide, going to their headquarters to ask for a portable radio or have someone ride along that has one would not be necessary any longer. These radios are very expensive to purchase at \$6,000 to \$7,000 but leasing would cost \$80.00/month. Also available are pro band for the base radios to be used at the station or in the apparatus for \$57.00/month. Chief Turner has not signed any agreement. This is just a trial period to make sure the program works and that there are not any changes to any agreement that will be signed. There is money in the radio budget.

Apparatus and Equipment: The only "out of service" is the Rescue 1 truck which is need of a starter.

Chief has applied every year since 2013 for a Federal Grant, not looking promising for smaller call volunteer departments to get approved. A State Grant is based on population with a max of \$12,500. Another is the Governors Bond Bill but this one has not been signed yet is mainly for stations upgrades. Chief plans to apply for both Grants.

Rick Pobiegló asked for an updated roster and attendance at last months meeting. Chief has included with this report a Department Roster/Qualifications.

FOOD TRUCK VENDOR FEES:

- A meeting took place between Three Rivers and Palmer to see if they could combine the fire prevention and inspection fees of the Food Truck Vendors. Each district needs to do their own inspection which usually includes a fee. The board is recommending waiving the fee. If a food vendor comes to the event as a onetime thing Chief will do the inspection and not charge them. It is the food truck vendors that operate on a consistent basis as their own business that will be charged a fee. Chairman Chiacchia feels that Chief should continue trying to work together and combine Three Rivers, Bondsville and Palmer.

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To accept the report of the Fire Chief Scott Turner for February 2022. Approved 2-0-0

Report of the Water Superintendent

Nicole Newberry read the report of the Water Department for February 2022.

STATUS OF WATER SYSTEMS:

- Monthly bacteria and chlorine samples are complete for the month of March and are all fine.
- Stonkus Hydraulic performed yearly maintenance on the Parco valve at the pump station for Well #3.
- Well #1 remains turned off. Approval is pending from DEP regarding Chris McClures' engineering plan for the addition of chlorine.
- Nicole Dewberry has received Grade T1 and D2 Temporary Emergency Certification and now is officially acting as the primary operator. This certification is valid March 1, 2022 – September 1, 2022. This will allow time for Nicole's applications for the permanent licenses to come through.

VACATIONS:

- Mary Ann is on vacation the week of March 14th.

JOB LISTING:

- Revisions were completed to the job listing by Nicole and the Committees thoughts are requested. This is for an entry level position unless we are fortunate enough to find someone who has experience in the field. Chairman Chiacchia suggest that the description seemed somewhat detailed for an entry level position and asked Nicole to run the job description by Chris McClure. The Committee agrees that after review by McClure, Nicole can move forward with posting the position. Some specific questions were asked, one was about the salary. Some examples of rates offered by other towns were given to the Board. Chairman asked if Nicole would consider listing "salary negotiable" in the posting. A second question Nicole had was considering hiring full-time vs. part-time. Examples and reasons why it would be good to hire full-time was presented to the board. The approval to advertise for part or full-time was given. Third was vacation time. Nicole requested amending the employee handbook to include vacation time of 1 week for employees that have been employed for less than 1 year. Currently there is no vacation time in the first year and the handbook will be left alone but if time is requested the Committee will hear it and consider it.

USDA – PROJECT PLANNING GRANT:

- The grant would cover the design cost which is not covered in the State Revolving Fund; Chris McClure estimates the cost at \$20,000, the project planning grant is a match grant so they would pay \$10,000 and this department would pay \$10,000. A Notice of Intent to File must be published in a local newspaper. The Committee thinks Nicole should move forward with this. Norman Czech will sign the form to submit this application and will be attending a virtual meeting on March 15 at 10:00 am to learn more about the application process.

MASS DEP – STATE REVOLVING FUND (SRF) LOAN:

- DEP has recommended the State Revolving Fund loan program for 1.5 million dollars to restore both 50' high water storage tanks on Baptist Hill. If the water department stays on schedule, we are in line to get this money. The schedule has been handed out by Nicole that shows the timeline for this loan process. There are many steps over the period of 3 years. Step 4 is the loan application deadline of October 14, 2022, being the step that USDA would cover (not covered by the state revolving fund). There may be Grants involved because of the American Rescue Plan. The federal money that would be coming through is with a condition to buy domestic made items which tend to be more expensive. The 1.5 million estimate was with that in mind. Steve Chiacchia is very glad that the water department is moving forward with this being that the tanks are approximately 80 years old.

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To authorize Nicole Dewberry to post the job listing. Approved. 2-0-0

Steve and Norman also mention the extra responsibility that Nicole is taking on and what a good job she is doing. A raise is being recommended but the amount as of right now will not be determined. This can be discussed further with the whole Board but even before a contract is drawn up for Nicole Steve would like the authority to give Nicole an increase in her hourly rate. The Board would like to sit with Nicole for her input on a contract soon. Steve will add this to the agenda for the next monthly meeting.

MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To accept the report of the Water Superintendent for February 2022 as read by Nicole Dewberry. Approved. 2-0-0

New Business:

- None

Old Business:

- None

Discuss and/or take action on any business unknown/unavailable prior to the posting of this agenda:

- None

Board Members Comments:

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MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To adjourn from the Open Meeting at 7:25 p.m. Approved 2-0-0

Submitted by:

Approved as to Form and Content:

Sherrie Bellefleur, District Recording Secretary

Stephen Chiacchia, Chairman

Date: _____

Date: _____