



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

# Prudential Committee Minutes

Chairman Richard Pobieglo called a meeting of the Prudential Committee to order at 6:31 p.m.

## IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Pobieglo; Prudential Committee Chairman  
Stephen Chiacchia; Prudential Committee Vice Chairman  
Norman Czech; Prudential Committee Clerk

Chris Connolly; Water Superintendent  
Lorinda Baker; District Treasurer  
David Basler; District Clerk  
Sherrie Bellefleur; District Recording Secretary

Not present at this evenings meeting was Scott Turner; Fire Chief, he was excused.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

## Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the March 13, 2019 Open Meeting.

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH): To approve the March 13, 2019 minutes to the Open Meeting. 3-0-0**

## Public Comment:

None

## Committee Reports:

In reference to the Bylaws, Dave Basler looked at Codes of Conduct which was what was discussed in the last months meeting. He put together something that the committee could review and handed it out to all members. Dave feels this was the best alternative without complicating the already established bylaws. The newly submitted bylaws have not officially been approved, but Chairman Pobieglo states that if they are not approved within 90 days then they are automatically approved.

## Report of the Treasurer

### Review of February and March 2019 Financial Statements:

Treasurer Lorinda Baker presented the February and March 2019 Financial Statements.

### February 2019:

#### Water Department:

- Water revenue was \$35,859. This is below last year however, because there were \$37,716 in bills for the water treatment issue last February, this year's bottom line improved by \$19,896. Revenue drop is due to timing of billing/collections.
- Year to date revenue is down; \$32,832 but the bottom line with a loss of \$15,192, is \$22,583 better than last year.

#### Fire Department:

- Extra duty is a budget for the year through February.
- FICA likely to be over budget for the year.

#### District:

- No change from January.
- No budget problems.

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH): To accept the Report of the Treasurer for February 2019. 3-0-0**

## **March 2019:**

### **Water Department:**

- Water revenue was \$21,567 below last year. This decrease was due to the \$21,000 annual charge for hydrants being billed in March 2018 vs. April 2019.
- Year to date revenue is down; \$54,399 (\$21K is due to the hydrant billing).
- Year to date expenses exceed revenue by \$19,878. Factoring in the hydrant billing the water department is breaking even through March 2019.

### **Fire Department:**

- No significant issues.

### **District:**

- No significant issues.

Accepting the Treasurers Warrant will be revisited next month once the board can review the emailed report.

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH): To accept the Report of the Treasurer for March 2019. 3-0-0**

## **Report of the Fire Chief**

### **Calls and Activity for the month of March 2019:**

Fire Chief; Scott Turner was excused from tonight's meeting but left his "Report of the Fire Chief" to be read by the Board for the month of March 2019. Norman Czech read the report.

### **Operations Calls/Incidents:**

- **15 incidents:**
  - 2 Fires; 1 Rescue & EMS; 2 Hazardous Condition (no fire); 3 Service Calls; 2 Good Intent Call; 5 False Alarm/False Call.

### **Administration:**

- Chief: Junior Firesetters program, furnace meetings, Annual Legislative Breakfast.

### **Fire Prevention:**

- 7 Pre-sale Home Inspection.

### **Training:**

- **Department**
  - Hazardous Materials Annual Refresher; First Responder Annual Refresher; Wildland Fire Behavior; Search & Rescue.
- **Duty Crew**
  - Rapid Intervention (RIT); Knots; Hydrant Training; EMS.

### **Events:**

- Wake for Assistant Fire Chief James Gustafson-Bondsville Fire Dept; Hampden County Mutual Aid Dinner (TRFD Hosted, Amvets); Welcome Back Event at Palmer High School.

### **New Command Vehicle:**

- The new command vehicle is still in the process of being built at the factory. Should be delivered to Global Public Safety for installation of lights, sirens, radio and graphics this week or next.

### **Old and New Vehicles:**

- There is still one interested buyer for the red pickup and it should be removed by the end of the week.

### **Heating System Update:**

- Asbestos is scheduled to be removed on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **Station Spring Clean-up:**

- Once the furnace project is completed the station will look like new again.

**MOTION (POBIEGLO; CHIACCHIA): To accept the report of the Fire Chief. 3-0-0**

## **Report of the Water Superintendent**

Water Superintendent Chris Connolly was present at this evenings meeting to give the Report of the Water Superintendent.

### **Status of water systems:**

- There are no distribution or treatment problems to report.
- Monthly and Quarterly water samples and chemical addition forms required by Mass DEP are all up to date and have been submitted.

### **District Records Overflow:**

Chiacchia recommends purchasing a quality scanner to start scanning the district records. A short discussion took place on how long the records should be held for.

### **Capital Improvement:**

No updates on this yet.

### **Rate Increase:**

Chris Connolly put together a projection with a \$0.50 per thousand gallons used increase. Current rate is \$4.50 per thousand gallons. The proposed increase would make this an 11% increase. Chiacchia recommends the water rates increase by \$5.00 per quarter (this is the \$0.50 per thousand gallons used) with the 50/50 split taking place. With this increase the additional revenue would be approximately \$20,000 more per year.

The rate increase will not affect the July billing. It will be seen first on the October billing. Residents/consumers will be notified about this increase as soon as possible.

Discussion on the bulk sales of water took place. In normal situations bulk water is cheaper. We would hate to lose any commercial customers. Keeping in mind Thorndike and what is sold to them. The bulk sales discussion will be tabled for the next meeting.

**MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA) To increase the water rates 11% beginning with the October 2019 billing. 3-0-0**

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH) 50% goes to a stabilization fund with the remaining 50% going to operating expense. 3-0-0**

Gallons pumped this year compared to last year is down about 20%. This is mostly due to having repaired water leaks.

Chris also states that anyone that owes over \$300 past due on their water bills will be receiving a shut off notice. There are some residents that not only are late paying their water bills, but some have never paid at all.

Currently 60 to 80 meters have been replaced so far, this is approximately 15%. There are about 800 left to replace.

### **Water Agreement with Bondsville & Thorndike:**

Chairman spoke with David Lavalley but no response on setting up a meeting has taken place yet.

Bridge work on Main Street was discussed some. This work is happening in 3 sessions. There is an eight-inch water main running under the bridge. Water Superintendent has talked with the bridge workers but as of right now what they are doing has nothing to do with the water department yet.

A letter was received from Eric Duda of Pathfinder in reference to using the fields near the pump station on 181, both sides of the street. The field would be used for soccer practice. If they practice outside of a 400 ft. radius of Zone 1 there should not be a problem. The request was to let them practice approximately 2 hours per day.

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH): To allow Pathfinder to utilize the land off 181 near the pump station as long as it's legal.**

**Approved 3-0-0**

### **Misuse of Water Department Credit Card by a former employee:**

An issue arose with one committee member feeling he was not informed of recent actions that took place. The issue has been ongoing according to Chairman Pobieglo since 2017. Vice Chairman Chiacchia felt that this issue had been resolve a long time ago. Apparently, it had not. The Chairman took the issue to small claims court on the recommendation of the Wilbraham Police Department. Neither of the other two (2) committee member was aware of this step or agreed together to take these measures. After a lengthy debate nothing really was resolved. As far as we know a check was delivered to one committee member in hopes to settle the issue. The issue being the former employee charged items on the town credit card that were

personal and not business related. Chiacchia also questioned whether all the charges were in fact personal as Pobieglo claims. Pobieglo is certain all items are not Water Department expenses and personal. Chiacchia asked to make a motion to dispense of this and go into executive session at the next meeting. Pobieglo stated he went to the Wilbraham Police on the recommendation of the Palmer Police due to the wrongdoing of the former employee taking place in the town of Wilbraham. He spoke with a Sergeant saying that all he wanted was for the town to get their money back to do right by the District and Water Department. He suggested taking this to small claims court and that is exactly what Pobieglo did. Czech states "without the boards knowledge"

**MOTION (CZECH; CHIACCHIA): To accept the report of the Water Superintendent as read by Chris Connolly. Approved 3-0-0**

**New / Old:**

None

**Public Comment:**

John Mowdak questioned what the board is "letting go" as far as not collecting what they consider the full amount that was misused on the town credit card. He feels there was some wrongdoing among the board in this subject and wanted an answer.

**MOTION (CHIACCHIA; CZECH): To adjourn from the Open Meeting at 8:02 p.m. Approved 3-0-0**

Submitted by:

Approved as to Form and Content:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherrie Bellefleur, District Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Pobieglo, Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_