



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 1:00 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

David Basler; District Clerk
Scott Turner; Three Rivers Fire Chief
Nicole Newberry; Three Rivers Water Superintendent
Guy Bellefleur (Recording the Meeting)

Roll call finds Prudential Committee Treasurer, Lorinda Baker, and Recording Secretary, Sherrie Bellefleur, absent from this meeting. The minutes will still be prepared by the recording secretary using the recording and reports obtained from this meeting by Guy Bellefleur.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the April 13, 2022, Open Meeting.

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEGLO): To approve the April 13, 2022, minutes to the Open Meeting. 3-0-0

Committee Reports

None

Report of the Treasurer

Chairman Steve Chiacchia read the Report of the Treasurer for the Month of April 2022.

WATER DEPARTMENT:

- Expenses are up along with the revenue also being up similar to the prior year. The Water Department is currently operating at surplus even though our expenses are up. Expenses are up primarily due to repairs that the pump station and meters that have been added.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

- Operating expenses have not exceeded their budget being in good shape.

DISTRICT:

- Getting better and better each year. The District is becoming stronger financially leaving us in great shape. There are going to be some major capital expenditures that will be looked at down the road like water tank restoration keeping in mind any possible emergency that was not expected. The Fire Department will need to be looking at equipment soon also, the current equipment is aging.

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEGLO): To accept the Report of the Treasurer for April 2022. 3-0-0

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEGLO): To approve the Treasurers Warrant for April 2022. 3-0-0

Report of the Fire Chief

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

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF:

Incidents picked up for the month of April are about average. Members currently in the Call/Volunteer Academy, and Monson Basic Firefighter Class continue to do very well with testing and practical exercises.

Three members were added to the roster in April.

OPERATIONS:

- 28-Emergency Incidents
 - 4 fire calls, 9 EMS incidents, 1 hazardous condition, 5 service calls, 6 good intent calls and 3 false alarms.
- 32-Non-Emergency Assistance

APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT:

- All vehicles were Inservice with the exception of the brush truck, this went out of service 4/20/22. The Rescue Truck 1 is out of service until the 19th of April.

QUESTION FROM THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE:

- Prudential Committee Member Mr. Pobieglo inquired on the three new members that were added to the roster in April, how many are from the Palmer area. Chief Turner responded that none of them are they are from Wilbraham and Belchertown. Chief Turner has received no applications from anyone in the Palmer area. Mr. Pobieglo adds it's tough when you do not go out there and try.
Chief Turner confirms to Mr. Pobieglo that he recruits on social media including Facebook, Instagram and on the Three Rivers Fire Department website.
- Question from Mr. Pobieglo also in reference to Narcan and if certification and training are in place. Chief Turner responded yes.

MOTION (POBIEGLO; CZECH): To accept the report of the Fire Chief Scott Turner for April 2022. Approved 3-0-0

Report of the Water Superintendent

Nicole Newberry read the report of the Water Superintendent for April 2022.

STATUS OF WATER SYSTEMS:

- Well #1 has a few leaks that are being worked on. Nicole feels these are the result of being turned off for so long. Parts are on order and should be fixed shortly.
- A leak near a hydrant on the corner of Springfield Street and Park should be repaired within the next few weeks.
- A request to recognize Mary Ann and Rich for going above and beyond was asked to be considered. Nicole has been working without the help of a secondary operator for nearly 6 months leaving both Mary Ann and Rich doing much more work than is normally expected of them.
- Due to the added challenge to work within budget constraints Nicole is faced with some issues on how to repair the 2008 truck now and ask to be billed in the next fiscal year. She has asked the Board to consider making sure there is enough "wiggle room" in the budget for the next fiscal year so she does not have to work like this in the future. Chairman Stephen Chiacchia says the budgets for the new fiscal year were submitted back in March but has assured Nicole that they could hold a special meeting if for example a new truck is needed. The possible issues with the 2008 truck are the alternator and the exhaust system. Norman Czech reviewed the financials and notes that there is still money in truck maintenance in the amount of \$4,200.00. Nicole is urged to repair the truck if it needs to be done.

STATUS OF HIRING SECONDARY OPERATOR:

- The interviews are complete, and ready for review whenever the Board is ready to discuss.
A meeting in Executive Session will be called to review more personal details of the applicants within the next couple of weeks.

DISCUSS IF THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STATE AUDITOR'S SURVEY. THIS SURVEY WILL HELP THE STATE TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL NEEDS:

- The board has been asked if they are interested in this survey and if so, will they share their contact information with the state auditor.

Each member can respond to this individually. No action is needed at this time. Chairman Chiacchia will not be here when that time comes but Mr. Czech and Mr. Pobiegló see no issues with this at all.

VOTE ON AND SIGN A LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION, DESIGNATING THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ACT AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE APPLICANT REGARDING THE DISTRICT'S DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND PROJECT:

- A request to determine an Authorized Representative for this water department project. Possibly vote to authorize the Water Superintendent as the "contact person" then sign a letter accordingly.
Chairman Chiacchia did attend a webinar with Nicole on this and has assured all that he will continue to work on this with Nicole if they would all like him to. Steve's involvement on this project would be on the financial side of things. In regard to signing documents that would need to be Nicole and/or the Prudential Committee.
Mr. Pobiegló has added that in speaking to our former Water Superintendent, John Sasur he also would be very interested in assisting with this project.
The Board will file a motion to make Nicole Dewberry the Water Superintendent the Authorized Contact Person on this District's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Project.
The Board will also file a motion to appoint a committee of Nicole Dewberry, John Sasur and Stephen Chiacchia to work on this project.

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEGLO): To name Nicole Dewberry, Water Superintendent the Authorized Primary Contact for this District's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Project. Approved. 3-0-0

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEGLO): To appoint a committee of Nicole Dewberry, John Sasur and Stephen Chiacchia to work on this District's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Project. Approved. 3-0-0

MOTION (POBIEGLO; CZECH): To accept the report of the Water Superintendent for April 2022 as read by Nicole Dewberry. Approved. 3-0-0

Annual Meeting-Annual Election

- The Annual District Meeting was held May 3, 2022. Chairman feels the meeting went smoothly. All Articles passed with two of the Articles being amended as a result of increasing expenses. The budget was put together by the department heads back in January 2022. We all know about inflation in the past few months, increasing fuel prices, energy, and electricity. Mr. Czech made a motion to increase the budgets slightly to cover those additional expenses for next year.
- There will be an election on May 17th from 3-7pm.

Board Members Comments:

- At this time Prudential Committee Member Mr. Pobiegló handed out an "Open Meeting Law Complaint Form" stating a complaint has been filed against Chairman Stephen Chiacchia, Vice Chairman Norman Czech and District Clerk David Basler for specific dates of April 30, 2022 and May 2, 2022. Basically, states a District Meeting was posted with less than 48 hours notice to the voters and residents in the town of Three Rivers Massachusetts. This complaint reads the participants did so knowingly and willingly.
The complaint would like the participants to acknowledge that this meeting was held in violation of the State's Open Meeting Laws and is therefore not valid.
It was stated by Norman Czech that Mr. Pobiegló was in violation of the Open Meeting Law at this time, during this meeting. He is taping the whole meeting and did not ask permission to tape this meeting. Chairman Stephen Chiacchia officially informed Mr. Pobiegló that he did not ask for any permission to tape this Open Meeting on May 6, 2022.

Public Comment

- John Modak asked about a comment made by John Sasur at the end of the Annual District Meeting. This consisted of asking why the Voting and the Annual District Meeting are not on the same night any longer. Mr. Basler answers saying years ago the vote and meeting were on the same night but after the Prudential Committee decided to change that feeling it would be better to separate the two and hold them on different nights. When the Bylaws were rewritten this change was added in those Bylaws. There will be voting on May 17, 2022 between the hours of 3 – 7 pm.
- John Modak also asked about a comment that was made by Mr. Pobiegló in the Journal referencing making the Three Rivers Fire Department Great Again. Modak is confused because he feels the department is doing great things already and cannot understand that comment that was made. He would like it explained. Mr. Pobiegló had no comment.

- John Modak also says that on this day he was accused by Mr. Pobieгло that he was drunk. Mr. Pobieгло informs John that he took what was said out of context and that is not what he stated.
- A Firefighter had been spoken of at a previous meeting for “drinking at a local establishment in uniform” This Firefighter is present today and stood and spoke of this accusation. Samantha J. Hoy a Private with Three Rivers Fire Department addressed Mr. Pobieгло and his accusations. The day in question she states going into the establishment to speak to someone about canceling something. She then states Mr. Pobieгло accused her of drinking and saying he had proof she was. She adamantly states not only can she attest to not drinking this day she can attest that she does not drink at all. She has asked Mr. Pobieгло for an apology. He refuses to apologize being he’s done nothing wrong.

Samantha Hoy also verified that Mr. Pobieгло accused a resident present at this meeting, John Modak of having alcohol on his breath at the start of this meeting. She will attest to this comment made because she heard him. He denies having said this.

- Clerk and voter Mr. Basler speaks in saying that since last June 2021 things have gone bad with this Council. Mr. Pobieгло states that he does not steal money from the board. Mr. Basler continues in saying that Mr. Pobieгло comes in like a pit-bull making accusations and it is not right. Whether it is legal or not it is not right. People that Mr. Basler is speaking to (some in this room today) are saying this is just like six years ago. We did not work like we did to change that, and to then turn around and go back there. Mr. Basler asks Mr. Pobieгло to please think before you speak, think before you attack someone and think before you make accusations because it has been at every meeting since last June. Mr. Basler attests to being present when Mr. Pobieгло referred to Chief Scott Turner as Hitler at a past meeting. Mr. Basler goes on to say that Mr. Pobieгло is on the Prudential Committee and has to have the ability to treat the voters of this village as human beings without attack or then we have recourse on that as well.

Mr. Pobieгло reminds all that he was put in his position by the people for the people.

Mr. Basler says Mr. Pobieгло may not make the next election. If there is a recall provision in the bylaws. Mr. Pobieгло also says he does not even need to show up at the monthly meetings but still will be paid. “If a lawsuit is brought up the town pays” says Mr. Pobieгло.

Also requested by Mr. Pobieгло is a copy of our Bylaws. Mr. Basler will provide him with these.

Chairman reminds all present that there is a code of conduct that talks about being respectful towards the District employees and others in the District. Printing articles in the newspaper and letters to the editor as the “Prudential Committee” are not supposed to happen. Mr. Pobieгло states he wrote he is a Member of the Prudential Committee.

New Business:

- None

Old Business:

- None

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

- None

MOTION (CZECH; POBIEГЛО): To adjourn from the Open Meeting at 2:00 p.m. Approved 3-0-0

Submitted by:

Approved as to Form and Content:

 Sherrie Bellefleur, District Recording Secretary

 Stephen Chiacchia, Chairman

Date: _____

Date: _____