

PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE  
FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1  
144 NEWTON STREET  
South Hadley, Ma 01075

Minutes November 02, 2023

Location: Fire District Headquarters, 144 Newton Street

Attendance: Bruce Perron, Ken Beliveau John Wojciechowski, Kari Scytkowski

Call to order: 4:32pm.

Chief's Report

73 more calls than last year.

Total calls this year: 2521. Last year was just over 3,000.

Between 260-270 calls this month. Projected number is between 3,100-3,200 calls this year.

Tom Stark explains that the Gowrie Group is holding a seminar on injury on duty and that all police chiefs, fire chiefs, and human resources are recommended to attend this. It is free and takes place in Hopkinton, MA on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Bruce notes that he has no objections to Tom Stark, Kari Scytkowski, and Shauna Condon attending. John Wojciechowski agrees and notes that he might also attend.

Clerk / Treasurer's Report

Kari reports that she reached out to Joe Rodio at the library for set meeting days of the week. She says that, according to Joe, as of October 26<sup>th</sup>, for monthly evening meetings in the community room, there is availability on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday and the 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday. He could book it for the next year but would need to know ASAP.

John notes that Ken Beliveau would need to have input on this due to a tight schedule.

MedX rates, as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, will be going up. Currently, they are \$342/month and will go up to \$360. She notes that all retirees should have been notified by the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust, and she has also notified them of what their 25% responsibility will be.

At the last meeting, Janet Stawasz discussed reaching out to the Council on Aging about posting the meetings on their bulletin board. Janet put Kari in touch with Lisa, and this meeting's agenda was posted on the bulletin board.

Discussion about VFIS refunds. John motions to not take the refund and to leave it in the account. Bruce seconds. Unanimous.

Update on and discussion about payroll company. Paychex gave a 30% discount, reducing the weekly average from \$225 to \$160 without making any other changes. There is also an option to switch to a lower-service version of Paychex that would not involve any hiccups or changes for the employees.

Kari recommends switching to the lower-level service. Both Bruce and John accept the recommendation.

Kari completed an online Fundamentals of Municipal Accounting course with Greenfield Community College in October.

Department of Local Services has a municipal cyber security awareness grant program. Kari signed up for an information session on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Bruce notes there is a State Ethics Zoom meeting on November 30<sup>th</sup> for anyone who needs to attend.

September Comstar reconciliation:

For September 2023, motion by John to make ambulance adjustments in the sum of \$177,367.31. Seconded by Bruce.

#### Assessment Center Proposal Discussion

The Fire Chief will be retiring on January 06, 2024. Discussion about proposal from Public Safety Consultants of Pocasset, MA. They will set up a Fire Chief Assessment Center in order to fill the Chief's position. If that company is selected, they will give a recommendation to the Prudential Committee.

Start of Chief search will be tabled until next meeting.

#### Adjustment of Clerk Stipend Discussion

Ken is willing to give up his stipend for someone else to do the minutes at this time.

John questions whether a by-law change would need to take place.

Discussion about getting the minutes done via an outside party.

#### Assistant Clerk/Treasurer Job Requirement Discussion

Discussion about Shauna taking over the responsibility of completing the minutes. Kari suggests talking with legal counsel first.

#### Legal Fees Discussion

Bruce notes that the Clerk/Treasurer's office was responsible for 75% of one legal bill and 54% of another bill. He suggests that Kari should not be able to contact legal counsel without the approval of a Board member. He suggests John.

John explains that he trusts Kari to know when she needs to contact legal counsel. Ken agrees.

#### Meeting Scheduling Future Times/Dates – Next Meeting

Ken will look at his schedule and let Kari know whether the 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month works best for meetings.

#### Election Discussion

Board must decide if the election will be with the town.

John motions to have District elections at the same date and time as the Town elections, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Ken seconds. Unanimous.

#### New Business 24/28 Hours

In 2011, there was a handbook adopted by the Prudential Committee stated that there was a 10-year requirement section.

In 2019, a policy was adopted that stated a 1983 decision had a 20-year requirement.

Bruce anticipates people will approach the board with questions about the policy.

#### Questions

Member of the public inquired about the results of the ADA meeting.

Bruce believes the meeting was cancelled.

Member of the public inquired about combining Fire District 1 and Fire District 2.

Bruce notes a petition would need to be created, and votes from both districts would need to be taken.

Member of the public asked what will happen/who will take the minutes if the Clerk is not re-elected and the new person elected does not want to give up the stipend.

Bruce explains that it is not permanent and the responsibility and stipend can be given back to a Clerk.

Member of the public asked if the Chief position will be open to the public.

Bruce explains that it will be posted in-house first and follow the by-law.

#### Next Meeting

Tentatively December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to adjourn at 5:30pm by Ken. Second by John. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shauna Condon, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer