

**PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE FIRE DISTRICT #1**  
**144 Newton Street**  
**South Hadley, MA 01075**

Prudential Committee Meeting Notes

Date: 3/21/18

Location: Fire District Headquarters, 144 Newton Street

This session is being recorded

Call to Order: 6:30:p.m.

Prudential Committee Members Present:     Kevin Taugher, Chairman  
   Michael Wozniak, Clerk  
   Bruce Perron, Member

Guest: David Eisenthal from UniBank

- Call to order
- Signing of warrants authorizing payroll and expense payments.
- A General discussion was held on financing the new fire truck. Dave Eisenthal presented two versions of financing through General Obligation Bonds along with a timetable for executing the bonds. The key dates for the Prudential Committee are: April 19, 2018 when the PC Committee will sign the Bond Anticipation Note (temporary bond) so we can pay for the truck on April 25<sup>th</sup>. On June 21, 2018 the PC Committee will vote on, and execute the bonds.
- Motion made by Bruce Perron, seconded by Michael Wozniak to approve the 3/1/18 regular meeting notes. Unanimous Affirmative Vote.
- There was a general discussion regarding the sale of defective equipment. While there is no minimum bid requirement, the District reserves the right to reject a bid. Motion made by Bruce Perron, seconded by Mike Wozniak to sell Engine 3 to Amy's Landscaping for \$1,000. Unanimous Affirmative Vote.
- Motion made by Bruce Perron, seconded by Mike Wozniak to make ambulance adjustments for February 2018 in the amount of \$126,806.16. Unanimous Affirmative Vote. Kurt Schenker presented an Ambulance Billing Account Reconciliation Report from Comstar. Kevin would like to add a line to see how much money is assigned to the collection agency. Kurt indicated that Comstar was currently pursuing approximately \$90,000. Chief Authier is to check with other fire departments to see how they handle their ambulance collections. Kevin would also like to see what percentage the collection agency takes along with an aging of accounts.
- Monica provided the election warrant and the warrant for the Annual District Meeting. Motion made by Bruce Perron, seconded by Mike Wozniak to accept and sign the warrants for the

election. Unanimous Affirmative vote. Motion made by Bruce Perron, seconded by Mike Wozniak to accept and sign the warrant for the Annual District Meeting to be held on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Unanimous affirmative vote. The warrants will be posted on April 11<sup>th</sup> and a notice will be placed in the water department bills.

- Tighe & Bond is recommending Marr Scaffolding out of Springfield to do the temporary shoring for the floor project. The quoted cost is \$17,504 and will cover 30 weeks. Kevin stated his concern that the completion of the project will not be until sometime in October. Kevin stated that had we known that the project would take that long, the PC Board might have decided to put off the purchase of the new truck. We did not become aware of this until Bob St. Martin informed the Board on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Chief Authier read an email he received from Jason Henske on 3/31/18 which states in part: "Captain Stark advised that your construction project is moving along at a slower pace than expected. We can certainly work around this to ensure that the truck does not arrive earlier than is convenient. The simplest way to accomplish this is that when things are complete, inspect the truck at the dealership and effectively take delivery of the apparatus there, arrange for payment and then we will store the apparatus for you at no charge. This will take care of the financial and administrative details without inconveniencing you as construction takes place." Based on this new information, it doesn't appear that we need to deal with the temporary shoring. Kevin questioned when the warranty starts; when we pay or when we take delivery? The Chief is to check with Tighe & Bond for a work around if we don't take delivery of the truck. Bids for the flooring project are due on 3/28/18.
- Kevin met with Shannon Gurek from Mt. Holyoke College and there are no issues with the MOU. Mt. Holyoke College will provide us with the money when we pay for the truck. Once we get the information from Chief Authier regarding the truck and the flooring issues, Kevin will contact Shannon regarding publicity.
- Chief Authier presented an Opioid report. Since 2009, naloxone has been used 103 times. In 2017, it was administered 17 times. The cost of naloxone ranges from \$26 to \$40 per 2ml syringe. We are required to have a minimum of 10 syringes per ambulance and we also keep a minimum of 10 syringes in storage. Since we are not a big user of naloxone, it decided not to pursue the Mass. Opioid lawsuit. Motion made by Mike Wozniak, seconded by Bruce Perron not to pursue the Opioid lawsuit. Unanimous affirmative vote.
- Mike Wozniak gave an update on the merging of the fire districts. At this point in time there are no new developments other than the fact that both districts have shared information with each other. Mike suggested that it might be time for a joint Prudential Committee meeting to see what the next steps are going forward. It was pointed out by all the members of the Board that there has to be a financial advantage to both districts in order to move forward with a merge. Kevin is to talk to Ken McKenna about setting up a joint meeting with the idea of identifying cost savings in the first year, other than one-time costs, and developing a business plan for the merge.
- There was a general discussion on the proposal from SHELd for fiber optic phone and internet service. Monica and the Chief will report back at the next meeting regarding any progress.

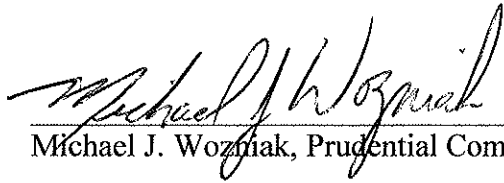
- Chief's Report: As of March 21<sup>st</sup>, there were 27 fire calls and 102 EMS calls. YTD fire calls are at 121, and YTD EMS calls are at 495. Inspections as of March 21<sup>st</sup> were Business: 6, Smoke/CO: 13, Oil Burners 1, Lockboxes 3. Captain Stark, FF Baker and the Chief traveled to Walpole to see the new apparatus. They met with Jason Henske and measured cabinets, discussed lettering and graphics along with radio installation. There was some damage that occurred to the bucket and once the damage is repaired, the Chief will ask an engineer to certify that the bucket is up to inspection. Kevin asked the Chief to check with Pierce to see if there is any damage to the hydraulic system based on the damage to the bucket.
- The Chief provided an update on the "Position of Fire Chief" document and the Chair reviewed each item listed on the 4 page document with the Prudential Committee.
  - Regarding professional development, Kevin stated that, as chairman, he has received no requests for training. The Chief stated that he had attended several training courses and is to submit a written report to the chairman as to what he attended.
  - The Chief was asked to submit a report stating his office hours and normal work times. Regarding time sheets, the Chief does not submit those but provides payroll information to Monica for the warrants. According to the expectations document, Page 2, item #9, bullet 3, it states: "The Chief will submit a time sheet to the District Clerk/Treasurer on a weekly basis. The time sheet will include a record of the regular and extraordinary hours worked, sick, vacation, compensatory and personal time."
  - On page 3, item #2 under "Other Expectations" it states: "All reports by the Chief, with the exception of those considered exempt under Mass. General Laws, will be submitted to the Chair via email in the native Microsoft format." Kevin stated that he has not received any of these reports other than the occasional email from the Chief.
  - Regarding the budget document, Bruce stated that the Chief did prepare the budget, presented the budget and explained the rationale behind the budget. The Chief, however, did not submit it to the Board electronically as stated in item #2.
  - In regards to item #2 (b) on page 3, the Chief is to submit by 3/22/18 the following reports in electronic format: i. Inventory of Fire District property under the control of the Chief and it's condition, ii. Inventory of current hydrants and their condition, iii. An index of all personal records, and iv. All compensatory, sick, and vacation time for fire department employees on a weekly basis, submitted to the District Clerk/Treasurer at the time of payroll submittal. All reports are to be submitted to the Chair and Board members.
  - On page 4, item #3 it states: "The Chief will investigate and develop a method to store documents securely in electronic format. The Chief stated that it was investigated but no report was issued.
  - On Page 4, item #4 Kevin referred to the information On Page 3, item #1 which states: "If no direction from the Chair is received prior to 72 hours before the scheduled meeting, the Chief will post the standard template." Kevin stated that this has never been

done and, as Chair, he posts the agenda because he does not receive any information from the Chief 72 hours in advance.

- On Page 4, item #5 it states: “The Chief is expected to attend all meetings of the Prudential Committee. All agreed that the Chief is in compliance with this item.
- On Page 4, item #6 it states: The Chief shall develop a policy and procedure that holds all staff accountable for attending and participating in department drills. The Chief is to send a copy of the policy to the Chair.
- On Page 4, item #7 it states: “The Chief shall have procedures in place to ensure that labor and expenses for ambulance service are properly managed and invoiced. Kevin stated that this has not been managed very well over the last 2 years since costs have exceeded budget in that period of time. The Chief explained that at times we were short of personnel due to sickness or people leaving which accounted for the increase in overtime expenses. Bruce stated that within the 2 year period in question, there was a “hiring freeze”. Since he was Clerk during part of this time period, he is to find the meeting notes that stated that and submit them to the chair.
- On Page 4, item #8 it states: “The Chief is expected to identify the minimum education and certification requirements that are necessary for all new hires, and ensure these requirements are being met and maintained by all employees. This is being done and the Chief is in compliance.
- On Page 4, item #9 it states: “The Chief will not participate in the use of personal social media during work hours.” The Chief stated that he does not engage in social media during work hours.
- On Page 4, item #10 it states: “The Chief is expected to successfully complete 20 hours of qualified continuing education on an annual basis as it relates to fire and EMS along with administration and finance subject to the approval of the Chair of the Prudential Committee. The Chief had not requested approval of any courses including administration and finance.
- On Page 4, item #11 it states: “The Chief is expected to promote the District and its mission in a positive manner when interacting with the public. The Chief is in compliance with this item.
- On Page 4, item #12 it states: “The Chief is expected to apply a consistent form of discipline towards all members of the department.” The Chief is in compliance with this item.
- On Page 4, item #13 it states: “The Chief is expected to follow and carry out the instructions of the Prudential Committee regarding fire district policies. The Chief is in compliance with this item.
- The Chief is to submit the reports and information as outlined above to the Chair and Committee members and a further review will take place at a later date. If there are issues with the “Position of Fire Chief” document, they can be addressed at that time. Kevin stated that since the Chief does not have a current contract, then this review can be done

in open session. While the Chief does not have a current contract, Bruce pointed out that the Chief is protected under the “Strong Chief” law and as the current Chief, he is “grandfathered” in. The “weak Chief” law voted in by District voters, only applies to any future chief that would be hired by the District.

- There was a general discussion on Fire Department attrition. The Chief stated that since 2011 the District lost 6 firefighters. They were Michele Choquette, Jeremy Simmons, Josh Clegg, Brian Morris, Evan Briant, and Jose Vasquez. There were 4 people who have retired during this time period. The Chief provided reasons for some of the members leaving the department. While there were some informal exit interviews, no formal exit interviews took place. Mike Wozniak stated that he believes the department should have a formal exit interview process and policy in place and passed out “exit interview questions” that he obtained from the internet. The Union would have to be notified of any “policy” changes. This issue could be addressed at a future PC meeting to see if the District wants to move forward on this. The Chief stated that of late, there’s a lot of “contract shopping” going on with local fire departments as there is a high demand for Paramedics.
- Motion made by Michael Wozniak, seconded by Bruce Perron to adjourn. Unanimous Affirmative Vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.



Michael J. Wozniak, Prudential Committee Clerk, FD1