

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

Prudential Committee REGULAR Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: November 29, 2018

Location: Main Library Community Room, 2 Canal Street, South Hadley, MA

This session is being recorded

Call to Order: 6:31 p.m.

Prudential Committee Members Present:	Michael Wozniak, Chairman (MIW)
	Kevin Taugher, Clerk
	Bruce Perron, Member
Other attendees:	Chief Authier (RA)
	Kurt Schenker (KS)
:	Monica Walton (MW)

- MIW asked for a moment of silence in memory of John Mikuszewski, Water commissioner, who recently passed.
- Review and approval of minutes of meetings
 - BP moved and KT seconded motion to approve minutes of October 25, 2018. Passed 3-0.
- Computer hack update – Discussion on re-entering data from FY 18, 17 and part of FY16
 - MW hasn't received a final report from the company that performed the forensic analysis of the intrusion. The company reported there was not breach, so there are not any further actions required.
 - MW has only received about \$4,000 in invoices for services related to the hacking event. It took Kari and MW about 70 hours to enter the recovery information for FY 2019 year-to-date. If they are to re-enter the rest of the corrupted data, which is eight weeks of FY 2016 and all of FY 2017 and FY 2018, the insurance company will reimburse the district up to \$500,000 once the deductible of \$10,000 has been satisfied.
 - MW could perform the re-entry work, but she would have to be appointed into an hourly position, since the insurance company will not reimburse for work performed by salaried employees.
 - MIW asked if it was really necessary to re-instate all the corrupted data.
 - BP developed an estimate on the cost of restoring the data, based upon 70 hours to restore 19 weeks vs. 116 weeks for the balance of the data. He calculated 580 hours, and at an estimated rate of \$40 per hour the estimated cost to complete would be \$23,200.
 - Since the district is only liable for the deductible of \$10,000, the cost of data re-entry above the deductible and validation by the district auditor would be covered by the insurance policy.
 - KT asked if a third party could be contracted to perform the data recovery. MW said that there is a expenditure cap on outside services.

- BP said that the recovery of data is not important to him, so he defers to the judgement of others.
- KT expressed his concern that if we go ahead with a merger analysis, and the data is not available, it may not reflect well on the district if we couldn't provide information. Would observers be suspicious if the district did not or delayed in providing financial information.
- MW said that she could perform the data entry work if the PC appointed her to an hourly position in addition to her salaried position, in order to qualify for reimbursement.
- KT expressed his concern regarding MA laws with respect to individuals having two jobs for the same municipal entity. KT asked MW to confirm that having the two positions was in accordance with MA law.
- MW said she would look into it.
- KT said that if MW can get the hourly reimbursement, then MW and Kari can work on this together.
- BP moved and KT seconded a motion to allow MIW to authorize MW to proceed with the data recovery effort once it is determined MW can be appointed to an hourly position for data recovery. Motion passed 3-0.
- MW will have to await a PC appointment to the position before she could begin the hourly work.
- Discussion and update on free cash & other financial reports
 - MIW asked for the information. MW said that due to the data corruption, she is awaiting a meeting with Scanlon Associates, the district's financial auditor, to confirm the free cash by next week.
 - KT asked MW if we could have the tax classification hearing without the free cash number. MW said yes, she had checked it with M. Couture [the SH Assoc. Assessor]. MW said that MC has everything she needs.
 - KT asked MW if other information, like the ambulance reserve account would be available as well. MW said that was on the balance sheet and that she could send it out tomorrow.
- Report and recommendation for adjustments of ambulance receipts
 - KT moved and BP seconded the motion to approve the adjustment of ambulance receipts by the amount of \$122,377.19 for the month of October. Motion carried 3-0.
- Discussion and update on D2 meeting notes of 9/18/18
 - MIW attended a District 2 PC meeting earlier in November where he asked for comments and clarifications on certain items included in those meeting notes, as follows:
 - J. Menard was asked if he had written his Vision. He said that he had not; stating that he wished to rely on the people that run it to figure it out.
 - F. DeToma said that there are serious cultural and operational differences that need to be carefully studied and he wouldn't want a vote unless the people are very well informed of these very complex issues.
 - S. Lemanski stated that he doesn't think the [sic] we've recognized that the document received at the last meeting was disrespectful to us.
 - Rick Constant responded that M. Wozniak has talked to D1 water but hasn't heard back yet.
 - F. DeToma said that D1 has not approached the D2 WC but we could certainly begin that.

- C. Gavagon stated that it is important to point out the two cultures. The fear is that we will lose the call force in D2 and possibly D1.
- Scott Brady, Fire Chief of District 2, spoke to the fact that any two separate organizations would have cultural differences. BP took issue with calling these cultural differences, BP believes they are better described as operational differences. BP and Scott Brady debated whether cultural or operational issues were meant by this observation.
- MIW said that this effort to consider merging the districts was just at the beginning, and we have to start somewhere.
- MIW explained the six scenarios that were developed by Chief Authier, his officers and MIW.
- MIW recognized Todd Calkins, D2 assistant chief. Todd Calkins said that MIW didn't start out on a very good note with D2 with the paperwork [D1 vision] that was transferred back and forth. Todd Calkins would have a different attitude if the process had involved everyone from both D1 and D2. Instead, he felt insulted.
- MIW explained that he had been working with Rick Constant to communicate
- MIW has no problem with having a working group looking for a solution.
- KT stated that the latest effort to investigate a merger began at a combined D1 and D2 meeting, held around October 2017 or so, where both districts voted to accept any contributions that Mt. Holyoke College considered providing to both districts. MHC had the intention of encouraging the districts to work more closely with each other and consider merging. There was a subsequent meeting scheduled among the chairs of the fire and water departments of both districts to confirm what the expectations were of a merger. Expectations to save money and maintain services were expressed.
- KT explained that while a lot of data has been gathered, there are issues with timing (calendar year vs. fiscal year) that have yet to be sorted out. This includes ambulance calls and mutual aid numbers.
- KT said it makes no sense to commission a study and spend thousands of dollars unless we already have a sense that a merger would work.
- BP expressed his opinion that a merger would end the existence of both D1 and D2, and that everyone would have apply for positions in the new, single district.
- MIW said that he has been trying to concentrate on the fire operations first, so as to not overly complicate things.
- KT said that the D1 Water Commissioners wanted to see a business plan of the combined water district in order to decide if it made sense. Everyone seems to agree that the water operations are less complicated than fire operations.
- SB explained the concern about retaining call firefighters and the fact the several D2 call ff's also work full time for other local fire departments and may not continue contributing their service.
- MW asked about the 22 D2 workers that were in the Hampshire County Retirement System.
- RA brought up the fact that a merged district with more than 22 full time firefighters may not need as many call ff's.
- MIW said that at the November meeting he attended in D2, Scott Brady got up and stated that he was against the merger.
- Scott Brady reiterated that he was against the merger. Scott Brady said he supports regionalization.

- MIW quoted the following from the September 18, 2018 D2 minutes: "T. Calkins stated that the moral[e] in D2 is as high as its been in 30 years and in D1 it's as low as it's ever been."
- TC cited the fact that, "20 people have left D1 in the last ten years." TC's point to his comment was that he doesn't want anything to happen to the excellent morale in D2.
- MIW asked RA and KS for comments regarding the morale in D1. KS attributed rumors of poor morale to naysayers, which every department has. RA said that many of the people leaving D1 were for promotions, or for higher pay.
- Discussion and vote on the procurement of a replacement of the 2006 ambulance
 - KS said that the salesman has not returned a quotation yet for the replacement ambulance.
 - The demo ambulance is not available at this time
 - This item was tabled until the next meeting.
- Discussion of financial documents submitted by D2 along with a vote on submitting the press release to local newspapers
 - KT said that we have received some documents from Barbara Miller, Clerk of D2, including some financials and some fire and ambulance calls data. There is a problem in that we don't have an apples-to-apples comparison, since some of the data is by calendar year, and some by fiscal year. Details on types of calls is inconsistent in descriptions, with different level of details. The point is that we need to see the same data from both departments for the identical time periods. KT said that SB stated that 35% of D2 calls are for MHC. We need to know the nature of the calls. With better records, we could determine the overlap in instances where both D1 and D2 respond to the same call. Also, what equipment responds to a fire call. What is the protocol for D1 and D2.
 - KT said that for ambulance calls, we need to know all calls from the call log, even those who refuse transport, etc. and that calls volumes between D1 and D2 are identical. Also, the insurance collection data like was received from Comstar a month or so ago.
 - KT said that we must thoroughly document how each District responds to fire and ambulance calls, because when someone states they have the best service and their protocol is to respond to a fire call with an ambulance, KT would like to see where that is considered appropriate.
 - KT said that one of the financial reports from D2 had September 2018 payroll information which is intended for the FY 2020 retirement contribution, instead of the payroll information intended for the FY 2018 retirement contribution, which would be the September 2016 payroll information.
 - KT said he would compose a memo to Barbara Miller to better define the financial information D1 is looking for, but that RA has to contact Scott Brady to get apples-to-apples data on fire and ambulance calls. Including mutual aid, time of arrival, response times, etc.
 - It was agreed that RA would handle the fire and ambulance data, and that KT would contact Barbara Miller for the financial data.
 - KT said that any press release intent to inform the taxpayers that we are looking into merging the districts and will be seeking funds for a study. KT said that after tonight's meeting, that would be putting the cart before the horse. We need to know what services the districts are currently providing, and how those services would change as a result of the merger.

- MIW suggested that the last paragraph of the press release be removed. KT said that there are disparities between the district, particularly with regards to age and application of fire apparatus.
 - Both KT and BP said they were uncomfortable with sending out the press release. MIW will inform D2 PC.
- Discussion of OPEB liability – Review of large budget items to see what can be diverted to the OPEB account
 - KT asked if the FY 2020 budget was available yet. MW said it wasn't, particularly health insurance. KT said the intent of looking at the big budget items was to determine what could be done to squeeze money out in order to increase our OPEB set aside.
 - KT said that the OPEB liability was around \$300,000, but part of that number could be covered by the district contributions for retirees. MW wasn't certain but would look into it.
 - MIW understanding that we were going to look through the current budget. We should look at health insurance, retirement, overtime, and possibly some of the smaller accounts. For that we need the details and we don't have them to talk about tonight.
 - MIW said we'll have to table it for tonight but have it ready for the next meeting on December 19th.
 - MW said that MEDEX is up 2.6%. Hampshire County Health Insurance may be between a 4 – 8% increase.
- Follow up and discussion on mutual aid and mutual aid agreements for both fire and ambulance runs
 - There was no report from RA or KS on this item. KT read from the minutes of the October meeting under the topic, "Follow up on mutual aid and mutual aid agreement" where the details of what was expected were listed.
 - KT said that individuals cannot rely on meeting minutes, issued days before the next meeting, to identify action items. KT said that people that have action items should take notes. MIW agreed.
 - RA explained the emergency reporting system and that he would print the reports requested.
 - RA said that D1 informed Granby that D1 would not respond on mutual aid calls if any one of our ambulances was out. When D1 has a four man crew, sending two to Granby on ALS was leaving D1 in a critical situation for manpower. RA said he has had six conversations with Chief Mitchell of Granby in the last two days. Granby will have to call Ludlow and Belchertown.
 - MIW asked what do we need for follow-up. RA said he can send MIW the emergency report tomorrow with all the active mutual aid activity.
 - KT marked up a copy of the October minutes listing all the action items under the topic, "Follow up on mutual aid and mutual aid agreement" and handed it to BP who handed it to RA. The report from RA with these action items will be required for the next PC meeting.
 - KS suggests that the intercept fee for ALS services go up \$50 across the board for the next fiscal year. KT said we need an analysis of what ambulance services cost the district and make a decision on fees based upon actual numbers and not incremental increases.
 - KS said that he had asked around what others were charging. KT said that we're losing thousands a year on ambulance services, and we're the one providing ALS to other districts. KT said we're subsidizing these districts.

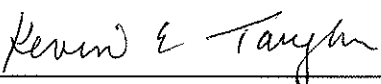
- KT asked if this report would be on the agenda for the next meeting, and MIW said yes, and asked if RA was good with that, and RA agreed.
- Chief's report
 - The chief's report was reviewed. KT asked about the nature of the service calls. RA identified the service calls as not a fire. The YTD was reviewed. RA explained how the log was filled in and the nature of the different calls. RA confirmed that all responses were with fire apparatus.
 - RA confirmed that the plan is to get the same information from D2.
 - RA said that mutual aid is included in a separate report.
 - MIW asked for an explanation of medical control program which was provided by RA.
 - RA confirmed that medical control was updating the procedures, but has not been finalized.
 - RA made some observations on the salary and reimbursement methods employed in D2.
- Commence the formal review of the Fire Chief using forms given out at the Sept. 27th meeting

We have reached the 8:30 p.m. deadline where we do not want to extend the meeting

 - KT said that he had marked his evaluation "Draft" because he was not provided enough information to fairly evaluate the Chief. KT also had to identify several "Not Observed". MIW said he had the same issue.
 - KT gave an example that the Chief should provide on responsiveness, for submittal to the PC.
 - KT also wanted a response on the actions toward fulfilling the "Position of Fire Chief" document. MIW said he had incorporated those items into the evaluation form. KT agreed, but because there was no documentation from RA, KT could not evaluate performance.
 - MIW said he had forwarded the evaluation form to RA, and asked him to fill it out, but that MIW did not get a response.
 - RA said that because MIW's email was addressed to all the PC members, RA was not sure if it was an Open Meeting violation. RA said that now that we're discussing it in an open meeting, he will be able to fill it out. KT said that he needs a response to the items on the evaluation form in order to do a performance evaluation.
 - RA asked for clarification on the term in which the evaluation would count towards a raise he requested earlier this year. MIW said he had only been on the PC for a year and a half, so he wasn't aware of what transpired before his term. MIW said that as far as any raises go, they would be decided based upon a performance review.
 - BP spoke to some minutes he ran across from 2015. BP said that RA should have received a 1.5% raise, based upon a vote at this meeting. BP mentioned article 6.
 - KT said that raises are subject to approval by the PC.
- Motion to adjourn
 - KT moved to adjourn, seconded by MIW. 3-0 motion passed. Meeting adjourned 8:36 p.m.

Voted and approved by the Prudential Committee on December 19, 2018.

A true copy, attest:



Kevin E. Taugher, Clerk