

Fire District #1 Prudential Committee

Open Session Meeting March 1, 2016

Call to order @ 6:30pm

Members present- Kevin Taugher, Ray Miner & Greg Sheehan

Signing of the Warrants

Review and approval of minutes of previous meetings

No minutes to approve

Ambulance Director Report and recommendation for ambulance receipts, including update of receipts and adjustments by month

- GS-motion to adjust the ambulance receipts ending January 31, 2016 in the amount of \$84,878.92
- RM-2ND
- UA

Update from Chief and Ambulance Director on process to collect pass due ambulance fees / or abatements

Chief said that he learned that they had been playing phone tag with the Medi-compts for the past month and as it turns out the company was renovating its offices and hadn't left a forwarding number to be reached at. No one was answering the phone. Capt. Schenker said he finally connected with our contact at which time they said they would put a package together for us to review and we should see it in the next couple of weeks. It is at that time that we would send it along to the collection agency. KT asked if we sign a contract, or how do we proceed. Capt. said that we would talk with the collection agency to get a better idea of what percentage we may be able to collect.

Review updates to FY2017 Budget including insurance and retirement costs

KT said he had a number of discussions with Monica on the budget. KT review reductions made from original budget and the result. The total reduction was 105k with the biggest reductions coming from the front entrance work. KT said he thought we still had to do something there but perhaps putting something a side in connection with a plan would make more sense.

KT said that we also had to correct the salaries which we said in a previous meeting should be 0 but were still on the updated sheet as 3%. KT said we needed clarification from Capt. Schenker why his ambulance number went up 13.8% from last year; the initial assumption is that he is carrying more cost than he did last year. Chief couldn't add anything to that discussion at the time even though he is technically the ambulance director.

KT said the biggest items that he can see are captured on the last page and they have to do with the FY16 TAX RATE vs potential FY17 RATE. We currently show a 2.62% increase in the rate assuming that the value of the district stays the same. It's likely to go up. The other uncontrollable expense is the insurance costs, and OPEB costs. There is a 22k increase in retirement costs, a 21k increase in health insurance costs. These 2 increases represent more than 2/3 of the amount of the rate increase. These costs are increasing at a quicker rate than other controllable expenses. KT said he spoke with Monica and she would like to have everything finalized for the annual report by March 17. KT wants to have another meeting in 2 weeks to finalize the budget. In the meantime he wants to sit down with Monica and Chief to look at the free cash, straighten out some of the numbers, and take another look at the ambulance receipts.

A meeting was set for Tuesday March 15, 2016 at 6:30pm

KT said that things he would be looking to restore is money for a front entrance study, increase in the building improvement account and perhaps a few other items.

Review status regarding scope of OPEB (retirees, health insurance, pension)

Other Post-Employment Benefits-according to a draft report the district actuarial accrued liabilities for just the fire department are 6 million dollars just for health insurance. KT said that we really need to have a meeting with the actuary and Monica to make sure that we are looking at the report correctly. KT figured the retiree insurance alone is over 100k a year right now. The current annual retirement contribution from the district is equal to about 25% of our base payroll.

Review and sign amended lease agreement for cell tower on water department storage tank

- GS- motion to approve proposed lease agreement
- RM-2nd
- UA

Roll call vote to enter executive session- in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 30A, section 18(a) (exception #3) and return to open session at the conclusion of executive session

- Discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with South Hadley Fire District 1 Professional Firefighters Association

Entered executive session at 7pm

Return to open meeting

At 7:14pm

Review of Chief's time out communication plan

We didn't review the plan at the last meeting. Chief handed out a one pager basically stating that anytime he was going to be out 4 days or longer he would let the Prudential Committee and Captain's know he would be out.

KT commented that we were really looking for something more than what was presented. Chief said he didn't know what else to include in his policy. KT said in previous meetings we had discussed vacation days, having things for approval of trainings, sick time and how that gets reported. KT asked how these things get reported. Chief explained that for example sick time is recorded the day it is taken in a book. So if someone calls in sick it gets recorded right there and then as that person being out sick. Chief confirmed. KT asked about time sheets and whether or not employees filled out time sheets. KT wanted to know how the Chief was accounting for all of his hours in the course of a week. Chief explained that the ambulance has its own sheet, overtime has a sheet but there are no sheets for normal shifts. KT said the problem becomes that unless an employee can enter their own time they could come back 1, 2, 6 months later and dispute the fact that they really weren't out that day. However if there was a procedure in place that required signed confirmation from the employee then a future dispute is not an option. Chief said that they sign slips for the day they are out and it is tracked in the book. KT said that he wants to establish standard practice especially since we are beginning labor negotiations, there has to be no room for question around policies and procedures.

KT went back to the Chief out time communication plan. KT asked for instance what the Chief's normal work hours were. Chief responded that there are no set hours. KT said we have to have set work hours. Chief said his old contract had no set work hours, KT disagreed and said even his old contract had set work hours. KT said we should have a meeting to set expectations for the Chief going forward and in absence of a communication plan the Committee will just structure on ourselves. Chief said he would give the PC the communication plan we asked for. KT said we have been asking for one for a couple meetings now and still don't have one. KT said we also requested a plan for vacation and sick time. If he's out at the gym during normal work hours how is that being accounted for. All we got in return was a few sentences about how the Chief was going to communicate when he was out for more than 4 days. KT said that was unacceptable.

Discussion and scheduling for update of the fire department handbook

KT wants to make sure this get done and pulled together in a way that it is clear and understandable. Chief wasn't sure if we should be talking about a handbook given the labor negotiations. KT said he confirmed with labor counsel that we are not approving any handbooks right now. We are trying to get a handbook that clearly outlines all of our policies and procedures ready to go so we aren't starting from scratch when we are ready to sign contracts. KT handed out a list of 15 items and asked the Chief to pick 5 to work on and have ready for the next meeting. We aren't adding anything new but clearly documenting what we are doing right now.

New Business unforeseen 48 hours before this meeting

No new business

Confirmation of agenda items for future meetings and next meeting date

Next meeting March 15, 2016 at 6:30pm at the Fire Station

KT said we may have a separate meeting to discuss the Committees expectations of the Chief going forward.

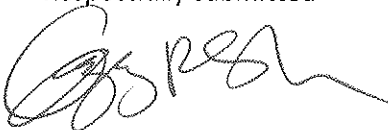
KT said that we may have an item about the recent inspections at the schools but he had more information to gather before deciding if it needs to be an agenda item.

Motion to adjourn

- GS- Motion to adjourn
- RM-2ND
- UA

Meeting adjourned at 7:41pm

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Sheehan', written over a horizontal line.

Greg Sheehan

Prudential Committee, Clerk