



PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE FIRE DISTRICT #2

20 Woodbridge Street, South Hadley, MA 01075
Tel: (413) 534-5748 - Fax: (413) 517-6054

Minutes of January 11, 2022

Convened: 5:35 p.m.

Adjourned 7:18 p.m.

Present

Prudential Committee Chair: Kenneth LeBlanc

Members: James Menard
Robert Bak

Water Commissioners Chair: Frank DeToma

Members: Kate Bedard
Dan Luis

Clerk/Treasurer: Barbara Miller

Others Present:

Linda Young

Mary Beth O'Meara

Lt. O'Neill

Virtual meeting called to order by Chairman LeBlanc. It was announced that the meeting is being recorded.

Payroll and Vendor Warrants were reviewed by J. Menard and R. Bak. Per Sections 57-58 of the Municipal Modernization Act and PC votes of 12/15/2016 and 3/10/2020 warrants were previously approved by K. LeBlanc, PC Chair.

Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of December 7, 2021 made by J. Menard, second by R. Bak.

Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

PC Chair Discussion Items

Elmer Brook, Lithia Springs Access/Bridge Proposal Concept

J. Menard reviewed the history of the Elmer Brook, Lithia Springs area, including the solar discussions, demolition of the pump house, harvesting of trees and the Elmer Brook Bridge Proposal Concept by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation. The Prudential Committee and the Water Commissioners had a lengthy discussion regarding the future of the Elmer Brook Property. K. LeBlanc stated that if the bridge is done, a trailhead should be created and we need to commit to it with a responsible plan. K. Bedard express the need for continuity between now and the final plan for the property, her concern is that we are sending mixed messages. M. O'Meara expressed concern that the District would be taking on an big responsibility for future boards to deal with. D. Luis suggested selling the property on the open market. There was discussion regarding eliminating access to the area until a determination is made for the property.

F. DeToma made a motion to establish a sub-committee to look into the several possibilities for the utilization of this land, either recreation or sale or whatever, and gather the information needed to make a decision. J. Menard second. The motion passed unanimously. Sub-committee members: D. Luis, F. DeToma and R. Bak.

Budget Discussion

J. Menard proposed a minimum of 3% COLA increase, stating there was no increase two years ago and a 2% increase last year. Further stating that the people that work for the District have done a great job in these last two years. K. Bedard stated that the WC have a meeting Thursday.

F. DeToma adjourned the Water Commissioners from the meeting.

J. Menard reviewed the PC reserve fund line on the budget. B. Miller explained that the reserve fund line will always show zero expended; when the PC approves an amount to be taken from the reserve fund account, a journal entry is made taking the funds from the PC reserve account line and adding to the expense line appropriated amount. B. Miller will provide a history of the amounts taken from the PC reserve fund for the prior three years. B. Miller stated, at this point, the only amounts in the requested column are HCRS, OPEB and the debt.

J. Menard stated that the Chief talked about buying a new pickup truck at a previous meeting. Adding that he would agree to replacing the car [Ford Explorer] with a pickup truck. He understands the need for a pickup truck but he doesn't see a need for a car and a pickup truck. Further stating that when PC discussed setting up a funding program for fire trucks, they changed the description of the car; it is not a Chief's car it was the District's fire car to be used for whatever they need.

R. Bak expressed concerns regarding the FD accounts in wages and salaries being better than 50% expended. B. Miller explained 28 out of 53 weeks had been paid from accounts 5100 and 5101. There was discussion regarding the OT & Shift Coverage and Calls and Drills account lines and the measures to be taken if there are additional funds needed.

Treasurer Discussion Items

Treasurer OPEB Bond

B. Miller stated that it is necessary to obtain a Bond to cover her as Trustee of the OPEB Trust Fund. She spoke with Bruce Paquette of Metras Insurance and the Treasurer's Bond does not cover the OPEB Trust Fund. She received a quote for a \$300,000 bond at \$1,500 annually and a reduced value bond at \$200,000 at \$1,000 annually. There is currently \$300,000 in the fund with \$50,000 added annually. She stated that there are provisions within the trust for expenses, so the cost could come from the trust if we wanted to handle it that way. The PC members were all in agreement that the trust should be issued at \$300,000 and the cost should be taken from the budget.

The next monthly Prudential Committee meeting will be Tuesday February 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Miller, Treasurer

Minutes approved _____