



PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE FIRE DISTRICT #2

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

Minutes of February 25, 2020

Convened: 5:30

Adjourned 7:55 p.m.

Present:

Prudential Committee Chair: Kenneth McKenna

Members: James Menard & Kenneth LeBlanc

South Hadley District #2: Asst. Chief Todd Calkins

Treasurer Barbara Miller

Others Present:

Collin Mick

Linda Young

Kim Prough

Meeting called to order by Chairman McKenna. He announced that the meeting is being recorded.

Payroll and Vendor Warrants were reviewed by J. Menard and K. LeBlanc. Per Sections 57-58 of the Municipal Modernization Act and PC vote of 12/15/2016 warrants were previously approved by K. McKenna PC Chair.

Election

B. Miller stated that she received confirmation from District counsel that the term for the officials elected on March 3, 2020 will begin the day after the election.

OPEB Declaration of Trust

B. Miller stated that she met with Attorney O'Toole and they are working to have the OPEB Trust in place by the Annual District Meeting.

Asst. Chief Calkins Report

Asst. Chief Calkins stated that he and Lt. Moore attended an active shooter drill at the college. Mary Walsh and Eugenia Montsaroff have been hired as on-call FF. E. Montsaroff has been here as a third-rider so she is familiar. M. Walsh is a certified EMT and a registered nurse. He and R. Moore met with Ellen Rutan from MHC regarding calls to the college. They are in the process of revalidation for MassHealth which includes CORI checks and other documentation. Lt. Moore, Lt. O'Neill, Cpt. Fernandes and Lt. Lemanski to Indianapolis for FDIC training, it was arranged prior to Chief Brady's retirement. They are paying for their room and their car and the District is paying for the training and flight. It is the largest conference in the country for fire EMS. They are going for three days of classroom. Two active shooter bags have been created; every departments' bags are being made the same. He provided a report with the breakdown of calls and a shift coverage cost sheet indicating the amount saved by having call-FF cover shifts rather than paying OT.

Ambulance Revenue

K. McKenna met with Ellen Rutan, Comptroller at MHC. He said her comments were, "We cannot pay all the back invoices that we never received. We will try to pay all the bills for 2019 provided we received them on time, 90 days per MOU agreement." He said he met with Julie

Chestnut of Comstar, in 2018 she received two reports for the year and in 2019 she received one report. He recommended a meeting with her and T. Calkins. She said she will work with us and try to collect some of the back invoices. The disposition report has two boxes, write off approved or transfer to FFR, which can be checked and the report signed and returned. If we don't return the report there is nothing Comstar can do.

J. Menard stated that he spoke with Chief Keefe and received a detailed explanation of the process, further saying that Keefe said he had informed his assistant at the time. J. Menard said he then spoke with Chief Brady and received a less detailed explanation and Brady said he hadn't been told to bring reports to MHC. At some point there was a miscommunication from one chief to the other.

L. Young asked who the Chief's backup is. K. McKenna stated that it is in the Treasurers agreement. She is responsible and she receives the reports also. B. Miller said that she no longer gets all the reports, she used to but recently she has not. She said she spoke with Comstar when she stopped receiving the reports and informed them that she needs the deposit report and the reconciliation reports. L. Young asked what are we doing as a District going forward. K. McKenna stated that the Chief and R. Moore would be going to Comstar for education and the Chair of the PC will be more involved. K. Prough asked if the Treasurer has authority to ask where the funds are why wasn't she asking. B. Miller stated that she does not have access to the individual amounts due, she balances to the bank to the penny. She has the committed amount. The money is reported to her. She does not oversee the collection of water bills and she is not the collector for the ambulance. She said her job is oversight of the funds as a whole, not to micromanage. Asst. Chief Calkins stated that the first line of his monthly report to the PC will be the collections number. J. Menard asked for a monthly summary report.

K. McKenna stated that there is nothing to report regarding dispatching. MHC is looking forward to working with the District on renewal of the annual \$20,000 for equipment and also discuss dispatch services. They would also like to have a discussion about what happened to ambulance revenue and going forward. He offered to continue meeting with the college.

J. Menard made a motion to have K. McKenna upon his retirement from the board, finish off the process of working with MHC setting up dispatch services and renegotiating the \$20,000. K. LeBlanc second. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

T. Calkins made a request to be included in the discussions, he has thoughts to help MHC not have to take on full blown dispatch.

Strong Chief Act Discussion Chapter 48 Section 42

K. McKenna said the Strong Chief Act was recommended by Chief Duggan of MRI. He said under the strong chief once the money is appropriated on the floor the fire chief has the authority to spend the money any way he sees fit. Chairman of the Water Commission and the Chairman of the Prudential Committee are the finance board according to the Treasurers agreement. The PC has the authority to appoint the Fire Chief under either strong or weak chief as well as the compensation for the chief. The Strong Chief Act was adopted at a Special District Meeting on October 4, 2007. We will need a warrant article if they wish to present changing back to a weak chief at the ADM. K. McKenna said PC should be responsible for the money, promotions happened without discussion with the PC. K. LeBlanc said the financial commitment is what the PC is basically here for, they need more of a say in that. Asst. Chief Calkins said that FY19 they returned \$63,500 for free cash and he intends to give back as much as possible this year as well.

K. LeBlanc made a motion to have a warrant that would move forward with removing the strong chief in favor of the weak chief. J. Menard second. Vote unanimous.

J. Menard said that it would have to be voted on the floor with a majority vote. K. McKenna agreed.

Budget

The PC reviewed the budget in detail. B. Miller stated that the HCRS number is based on the employees' wages. The health life and dental insurance amounts are based on current coverage, there is no rate increase, but the budget number went up due to the potential for new hires to require more coverage than those that have left were carrying. There was discussion regarding savings to the District if the percentage of the premium paid by the District were reduced and the impact to the employees if their portion of the premium were increased. K. Prough said that she appreciates the PC having this discussion. The legal account name to be changed to Legal/Consulting and the line item was reduced by half. PC reserve fund was reduced to \$20,000.

Fire budget was reviewed with the Asst. Chief. There was discussion regarding the amount to use in the Fire Chief salary account line because they will be hiring a new chief and discussion regarding the different wage account lines. The expense lines were discussed with reductions to several line items.

Battery on recording device stopped. Meeting discussion halted while the device was plugged in to the wall which changed the camera angle.

Ambulance budget was discussed with Asst. Chief Calkins with reductions to several line items. Asst. Chief Calkins left the meeting due to another commitment.

The PC discussed how the financing might be presented in the warrant if a fire truck is included at ADM. There was discussion regarding the condition of the existing trucks.

The next Prudential Committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Miller, Treasurer

Minutes approved _____