

**CONWAY VILLAGE FIRE DISTRICT  
COMMISSIONER'S MEETING  
Thursday, December 3, 2015 3:30 p.m.  
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting was called to order at 3:30

Commissioners present: Janine Bean, Michael Digregorio, Joseph Quirk

Others present: Gregg Quint- Superintendent, Chief Solomon, and Amy Snow-Municipal Bookkeeper, Steve Anderson, water technician

Public present: Mr. & Mrs. William Masters

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

**Mr. Digregorio made a motion to approve items A through E, motion seconded by Mr. Quirk; motion passed 3-0-0.**

- A. Ratify A/P Manifests for checks signed out of session dated 11/26/2015
- B. Ratify Weekly Payroll for checks signed out of session for week ending 11/22/2015
- C. Ratify A/P Manifest and sign checks dated 12/3/2015
- D. Ratify Weekly Payroll and sign checks for week ending 11/29/2015
- E. Ratify Monthly On-Call/Elected officials for month ending 11/30/2015

Mrs. Bean signed the Superintendent's and Fire Chief's time sheets for weeks ending 11/22/2015 and 11/29/2015

**Mr. Digregorio made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes dated November 19, 2015; Mr. Quirk seconded the motion. Mr. Digregorio amended the minutes to state that he told the Superintendent to contact the school regarding the brick building, Mr. Quirk seconded the minutes; minutes were approved as amended 3-0-0.**

Steve Anderson spoke to commissioners in regards to backflow testing. He explained that New England Backflow (NEBF) is doing all the testing currently. All sprinkler risers should be done twice a year and are being done twice a year by NEBF. Steve A. proposed that NEBF continue doing the sprinkler riser backflow tests and he do all the domestic (non-sprinkler riser) backflow tests. He stated that there is a liability for the District if something happens to the sprinkler system after we test it because the downstream valve needs to be shut. Now NEBF is charging the customer directly for these tests.

Amy then discussed the sprinkler riser charge. We have a \$50/quarter charge that only a handful of people are getting charged. She proposed to continue charging \$50/quarter for sprinkler risers but include the two (2) backflow tests. The District would make \$200 a year but then pay NEBF instead of the customers paying them. She stated that Mr. Quint would like to charge only what NEBF is charging us, no extra money made for the District. Steve A. is waiting for a quote from NEBF on what they would charge to do only the sprinkler riser tests. Mr. Digregorio had asked for the loaded labor cost and was presented it (attached). Steve A. stated there are about 96 domestic backflow devices that need to be tested in a year, he said once there it could take 15 minutes or less to do the test. Mr. Digregorio is estimating that it could take up to an hour to do all involved with testing, he thought it impractical to do 4 an hour. Discussion ensued regarding

charges. Chief Solomon feels strongly that CVFD should determine who does the sprinkler riser backflow testing, we are charged with protecting our water system. It was determined that NEBF is doing a good job.

Mrs. Bean stated, to make clear, that CVFD will do the 96 backflow tests that are not connected to sprinkler risers for a charge which is to be determined – this is separate from the sprinklers, and that NEBF will do the backflow tests on the sprinklers and bill CVFD so we need to decide on a charge for that. She does not feel that we should make a profit on that, Mr. Quirk agreed, and Mr. Digregorio disagreed. Mr. Digregorio stated municipalities have limited ways to generate revenue. Discussion ensued regarding charges.

Amy brought up the question in regards to charging for the 96 backflow tests that Steve A. would be doing. He is proposing a \$40 charge – he looked at NCWP who charges \$35 and NEBF who charges \$55, he felt \$40 is a good fee. Amy questioned how to charge customer: do we put it on their quarterly bill and tell them only CVFD can do their backflow testing or charge them as they are done and allow them to choose their own testing company? Both Mr. Digregorio and Mrs. Bean felt that now that Steve is certified, we need to do them all and we need to send out a letter. Chief Solomon stated that that is usually how it is done – either by an approved contractor or in-house. Amy explained how the billing would work – each test would be paid for over the year through the quarterly billing. The question of requirement came up – the commissioners would have to come up with a policy and have a public hearing.

Steve stated that he is now just waiting for his certificate, we already have the testing device. It was mentioned that our insurance company should be contacted regarding liability and sprinkler risers. Steve left the meeting at 4:09.

Amy asked the commissioner to consider the following changes to the rate schedule:

1. Change late fees from current to 3% per quarter
2. Change Bad check fees to \$30.00
3. Disconnect/reconnect fees for nonpayment – this is not being charged now, if people are struggling to pay their bills, another \$75.00 only makes it worse for them. Mr. Digregorio thinks that this waiver should come from the commissioners but Mrs. Bean believes this was discussed at a prior meeting some time ago. Discussion ensued regarding turn on/off charges. The commissioners discussed maybe waiving the first two (2). Discussion was tabled until next meeting

The commissioners signed the request for tax payments from Albany and the Town of Conway. Mr. Quirk asked about unemployment insurance – Chief Solomon explained that there is no additional cost other than the premium – we are a reimbursable employer and we pay on the back end based on history. The commissioners signed the letter to Primex accepting proposal starting July 1, 2016 and asking to be billed on a calendar year starting January 1, 2017.

#### BOC INFORMATION

The commissioners discussed Mark Hounsell's letter (attached). Mr. Digregorio feels that if we can't afford to maintain sidewalks we should not build them he would rather see a wider road than sidewalks on Pollard St. this would be very simple to maintain and leave an area for people to walk. Mr. Digregorio agreed with the chief that sidewalks are safer. Mrs. Bean listed many roads in the village that do not have sidewalks and does not feel Pollard is any different.

### FIRE CHIEF'S BUSINESS

The chief had write-offs but this was tabled until next meeting. He handed out his updated budget his bottom line is up \$45,000 and the tax impact is the same as 2015 provided the commissioners use \$25,000 of fund balance. Revenue is up most likely do to increased call volume.

Discussion ensued regarding covering other ambulance services. The chief explained that mutual aid is just that – we put patient in our ambulance and bill as if it was our call. Paramedic intercepts however involves more and the contract does not require the other services to provide paramedics. The Conway Village Fire District tax payer should not have to pay a private company to do its work. They use our paramedics then **they** bill for paramedic service. It was felt that the private service needs to be billed for our paramedics. \$500 per call is what the Concord area charges, discussion ensued. The question was asked what would happen if the billed entity doesn't pay? The commissioners would have to decide this. More discussion ensued around the fire budget and pay raises. The Chief is asking for a 2.5 increase for some on call and full-timers, 4.1 for the chief and another long time employee. Amy asked if everyone would have to apply for their job if the town took over the district. It was felt that that would be part of the negotiations. Discussion ensued around the fact evaluations are not being done. The commissioners will review the budget for a future meeting.

The Chief presented what the town feels about the contracts – they do not like the numbers. Lilli wants the ambulance separate from fire. Discussion ensued regarding the formula for the non-precinct contract.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Masters presented the statutes regarding dissolving the district – RSA 52:21. In a nut shell, the District is still liable for all debt but cannot incur any new debt. About 10% of the total town tax valuation lies in this area (the district). Mr. Masters discussed his view on the ability for the district to continue. He stated that Earl Sires sees the town taking over the district as a window of opportunity to begin to move towards consolidating services and is interested in opening a conversation. Mr. Masters talked about all the pluses for the town as a whole and a cost savings to the district. The commissioners would have to write a letter to the selectman asking to open a dialogue and he feels that this is the way to go. The commissioners are looking at handing over the fire department and not dissolving.

The Chief stated that Earl Sires asked if the commissioners were talking about dissolution and that that is the cleanest way and that the town would not have a say in it. Breaking off a piece allows the town to decide. Mrs. Bean said that if we vote in March to dissolve the fire department, the town would have to pick it up or contract it out. The chief wants to insure that District residents are still covered properly. Mr. Quirk stated that if we elect to dissolve the fire, the town has to pick up fire. Mr. Digregorio stated that they don't have to take our fire department, they could contract with Center Conway then we would be left with an empty building. Mr. Quirk said we could then sell everything. Mrs. Bean said that we would draft something so they would take over the existing facility. Mr. Masters stated the town council verified that the 1997 warrant article was intended to have the town step in immediately if a district dissolved or went bankrupt but not immediately for separate service the districts can operate. Discussion ensued regarding our Charter and how to abandon services. Mr. Digregorio mentioned that we need to understand the impact to the employee's retirement etc. Chief Solomon stated that it is all the same system. Mr. Digregorio asked about insurance for and retirees and Amy stated they can stay on our policy but they pay 100%. Mr. Master's asked if the Board is interested in a conversation with the town and the Board answered that they are not at this point. He has drafted a letter for the Board to use. He does not feel it is in the best interest of

the Village Taxpayers and the village has nothing to offer and the (water/sewer) bills will get higher. Mr. Digregorio stated that by dissolving the district we will save money in administrative costs and the precinct will not bear the entire cost of the fire but the debt will stay in the precinct. Mr. Quirk stated that the difference between North Conway water precinct and us is that that they have many businesses and we have the non-profits. Mr. Digregorio has a suggestion to get the non-profits to help pay for the debt, Mr. Masters named it as a "Special Assessment District." Mrs. Bean thanked Mr. and Mrs. Masters for coming and told them that we would be in touch with them and will e-mail him the numbers the chief gets from the town. Mr. Masters left the meeting at 5:34.

Chief Solomon informed the commissioners that he is still in negotiations with the town for the ambulance and non-precinct fire contract and he told the Town Manager, who informed the Selectman, that the contracts have no chance of being renewed in their current form. The commissioners agreed that the price is going up.

#### SUPERINTENDANT'S BUSINESS

The commissioners reviewed the water budget. Questions revolved around office expense and operating expense line items. Mr. Quint said he believes Dave Mercier is putting West Main St. out to bid on the 28<sup>th</sup>, bids will be mid January and the bid opening will be mid February. This may affect the operating expense line. Office expenses are down in part to Pitney Bowes. The commissioners want a letter sent stating that we are done with them and they need to come get their machine if we get another bill. Discussion ensued around revenues. The elderly housing has not paid their connection fees and a call was made to Mr. Davies and he is coming in to get application and make a payment. Discussion ensued around breaking out Demand Fees as a separate line item in the bookkeeping system. The building maintenance line item is up because the boiler needs a chimney, the cost being split 50/50 water and sewer. Mrs. Bean reviewed the Capital improvement plan and asked why this can't be paid for with the Short Lived Asset account – Amy stated this money can't be used for anything except the Force Main related maintenance. Discussion ensued regarding capital improvements and money in accounts. Mr. Quint will call Dave Mercier to see where he is with the Asset Management Plan.

The Commissioners reviewed the Sewer budget and looked at the electricity line and wants it increased in case we do not go off-line as soon as we are hoping and it is unknown how much electricity the new grit removal building will consume. Mr. Quint stated that we lost a bearing in one of blower motors at the treatment plant that may cost \$1,500. The question was raised if this is liquidated damage; Mr. Quint will ask Dave Mercier. Discussion ensued regarding timeline for budgets and hearing, CVFD is usually the first Tuesday in February. Discussion ensued regarding the State Aide Grant revenue we are getting now. More discussion ensued regarding the Elderly housing and Mrs. Bean presented her proposal for a betterment assessment for large projects:

1. Pay in full
2. ½ at start of project and ½ 6 months later
3. 4 quarterly payments at no interest

This now takes Derry Betterment Assessment off old and Pending

#### OLD AND PENDING

Amy asked if the commissioners are going to meet with the Selectman for the sidewalks and Mrs. Bean feels the ball is in their court.

Office Position – Mrs. Bean and Mr. Digregorio will look at applications outside of the meeting. Mr. Quint relayed that we had 3 interviews and will contact 3 more.

FUTURE DATES

- A. Next Commissioner's meeting 12/10/2015  
Mr. Digregorio will be on conference call due to having to be out of town for work.
- B. The ensuing meetings for December will have to be on Wednesdays due to holiday eves.

NON PUBLIC

**Mr. Digregorio made a motion to go into non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(c), seconded by Mr. Quirk; motion carried by roll call vote 3-0-0.**

The Board went into non-public session at 6:33 p.m.

**Motion to come out of non-public made by Mr. Digregorio; seconded by Mr. Quirk; motion carried 3-0-0 at 6:40 p.m.**

Public session was reconvened at 6:40 p.m.

**Mr. Digregorio made a motion to seal the minutes of non-public session, seconded by Mr. Quirk; motion passed by roll call vote 3-0-0.**

Meeting was adjourned without objection at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amy Snow, Municipal Bookkeeper