

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District
Board of Governors
held on Saturday, August 5, 2017
in the Charlestown Police Station Community Room
4901 Old Post Road
Charlestown RI 02813**

Members in Attendance: Brewster Blackall, Tom Farrell, Charlie Freedgood, Tom Frost, Julie Low, Jim Mara, Julia Mathews, Vinny Reppucci, Randy Thornton and Tom Wildman

Members Absent: None

Also in attendance were Peter Rettig, Manager of Beach and Dunes; Katherine Huntington, Manager of Special Events; Kathy Alperin, Manager of Merchandise Sales; Susan Wales, Manager of Tennis; Nancy Matthews, Chair of the Nominating Committee; Sally Devin, Assistant Clerk; various committee members, and members of the public.

I. Call to Order

The Moderator, Randy Thornton, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m.

II. Approval of Minutes; Clerk's Report

A **motion** was made to approve the draft minutes of the July 1, 2017 meeting of the Board of Governors. The motion was seconded and **passed**, with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor of the motion (other than the Moderator, who under the District by-laws only votes in the case of a tie).

The Clerk, Tom Wildman, reminded those in attendance that the District's 2017 Annual Meeting will be on September 16, as mandated by our Charter, and that reports of the Managers and Committee chairs are needed by August 26 in order to be included in the packets of materials required by our by-laws to be sent to the voters in advance of the meeting.

III. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Julia Mathews, reported that George Prior has agreed to monitor the Town of Charlestown records and tell the Treasurer when a building permit for a con-

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struction project in the District exceeding \$50,000 is issued so that she can send bills for the District's road impact fee and construction bond.

Julia reported that the two defibrillators that the District ordered have arrived and that there already has been one group training session on their use. Using one of the defibrillators, Julia then demonstrated how the defibrillator itself gives step-by-step instructions so that, if necessary, it can be used by someone with little or no advance training. The current plan is to locate one defibrillator at the QCBFD tennis courts and one on the beach parking entrance block.

IV. Nominating Committee Report

Nancy Matthews, Chair of the Nominating Committee appointed by the Moderator and consisting of herself, Kate Thornton, Diane Consoli and Tom Frost, Jr., stated that the committee does not contemplate proposing any changes in the positions elected by the voters (members of the Board of Governors, officers and tax assessors) except for nominating an individual to replace Julia who is stepping down as Treasurer and nominating an additional Assistant Treasurer. Nancy said that the Nominating committee expected to finalize soon its recommendations to the Board of Governors for appointments as Managers and Committee chairs and members and again contemplated few changes. Nancy noted that Kathy Alperin was stepping down as Manager of Merchandise sales and that the Nominating Committee might propose spreading the responsibilities of that position among two or more individuals, one responsible for merchandise procurement and others responsible for sales.

Nancy concluded by noting that those involved in our merchandise sales activities believed that these would be greatly facilitated by the placement of a new shed that could be used for storage and possibly sales at or near the ball field. She indicated that she and others intended to develop and make a specific proposal to the Board of Governors soon.

V. Committee Chair Reports

A. Vinny Reppucci, Chair of the Public Works Committee, provided updates on various matters as follows:

- The nitrate levels in our water system have held steady over the past few years and are slightly down.
- Installation of the seven new stop signs approved at our 2016 Annual Meeting is nearly complete.
- No recommendation on the proposal to replace our streetlights with LED lights will be made until this Fall after Charlestown switches to LED lights and interested in-

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dividuals, including members of the Board of Governors, have had an opportunity to view these lights in use.

- General road resurfacing does not appear to be necessary until the Fall of 2019 but the conversion of two speed “bumps” to “humps” is planned for this Fall.

Julia noted that we had received some reimbursement from National Grid apparently for past incorrect streetlight billing.

Vinny concluded by stating that the Board of Governors has apparently never formally approved the practice of Public Works Committee members, and/or designated agents approved by the Public Works Committee Chair, entering and inspecting, with the homeowner's approval, on behalf of QCBFD, ALL water hookups connected to the QCBFD water system for cross connection and other connection compliance issues in order to assure the protection and integrity of the water system, with the failure of the homeowner to allow for such inspection possibly leading to temporary water shutoff until compliance can be confirmed. Vinny stated that he believed that this practice, which is consistent with the procedures followed for new hookups, should continue and be formally authorized by the Board but, after brief discussion, indicated that he would defer requesting approval until the Board's next meeting in order to allow for more discussion and consideration.

B. Tom Farrell, Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee, reported that members of the Committee have had discussions with various groups on Quonochontaug Neck about QCBFD applying to the RI Water Resources Board for a grant that would permit the State to purchase land North of Route 1 that could be a source of substantial amounts of water for all of Quonochontaug Neck. East Beach Water Association and others originally explored the possibility of making such an application but learned that the applicant must be a governmental entity such as QCBFD or the Town of Charlestown. They are encouraging the District to act as the Town has not moved to do so.

Tom said that the Committee had many questions, including ones relating to QCBFD undertaking to act on behalf of persons outside the District, but believed the possibility of a Water Resources Board grant was worth exploring and that the only practical way to do so was to begin the application process, which would require approval by the Board of Governors. A lengthy discussion, involving Board members and members of the public residing both within and outside the District, followed.

Many expressed the belief that this was an opportunity that should be pursued by the Town (which includes all of Quonnie Neck) rather than QCBFD (which is less than one quarter of the Neck). Virginia Lee, President of the Charlestown Town Council, was introduced. She stated that the matter has not been brought to the Town Council and that she viewed this as an opportunity for QCBFD to have greater control over a

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potential significant water source. She also explained her understanding of the requirements of the Water Resources Board, including that any application would need to be for the benefit of about 600 or more homes.

Following discussion, it was the consensus of all Board members that the Long Range Planning Committee should continue to explore the application process but that it should take no further action without Board approval.

Before concluding, Tom distributed the timeline of the West (Fresh or Middle) Pond phragmites remediation project that members of the Long Range Planning Committee had prepared as a result of inquiries about the status of the project. The timeline concludes with a letter from CRMC indicating that the QCBFD application has been cancelled without prejudice. In consequence, it appears that any effort to pursue the project will require a fresh start.

C. Charlie Freedgood, Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee, presented a proposed budget for 2018, as approved by the Committee, and compared the proposed budget to 2017 budgeted and projected actual numbers. Charlie noted that the increased charges for fire protection under our new contract with Dunn's Corner caused both the projected actual 2017 expense for fire protection to be over budget and the proposed 2018 budgeted expense for fire protection to be over projected actual 2017 expense.

Following discussion, Charlie made a **motion** that the 2018 budget proposed by the Finance and Budget Committee be approved and that the Board of Governors recommend its adoption by the voters of the District at the 2017 Annual Meeting pursuant to the following resolution:

Resolved, that the 2018 budget, including an approximate \$294,200 in Tax Revenue (4% above 2017), as approved by the Board of Governors, be adopted and approved.

The motion was seconded and **passed**, with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor of the motion except for the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie.

Charlie next made a motion that the Board of Governors approve and recommend adoption of the following tax resolution by the voters of the District at the 2017 Annual Meeting:

Resolved, that the electors of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District qualified to vote in the District Meeting legally assembled on September 16, 2017, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on ratable property of said District in the sum of no less than \$293,200 nor greater than \$295,200.

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Said tax is for ordinary expenses and charges for the interest and indebtedness in whole or part of said District and for the purposes authorized by law. The Assessors of Taxes shall assess and apportion said tax on the inhabitants and ratable property of said District as of the 30th day of June 2018 at 12:00 noon, according to the law, and shall on the completion of the said assessment date, certify and sign the same and deliver the same to the Collector of Taxes on or about the 1st day of August 2018. The Collector of Taxes, on receipt of said assessment, is hereby commanded to proceed and collect said tax on the persons and estates liable therefor. Said tax shall be due and payable on or before the 30th day after the date of certification by the Assessors of Taxes, and all remaining unpaid balances after such due date shall carry interest until collected at a penalty rate of 12% per annum upon such unpaid taxes.

The motion was seconded and **passed**, with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor of the motion except for the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie.

D. Jim Mara, Chair of the Community Property Committee, reported that arrangements have been made to repaint and refurbish 28 District street signs over the next year.

Jim also noted that, using information from the digital mapping project, he was working with the Public Works and Long Range Planning Committees in evaluating possible well sites.

V. Manager Reports

A. Julie Low, Police Liaison and Manager of Beach Gate Monitors, reported that so far this year there have been no major problems on the beach or in the parking lot. The hours that parking lot gate monitors are on duty have been increased to reduce use of the parking lot by non-residents. The parking lot gate is approaching the end of its useful life and Julie will work with Community Property to develop a proposal for a replacement.

B. Kathy Alperin, Manager of Merchandise Sales, reported that the season is going well and that she anticipates about the same net results this year as last year.

C. Katherine Huntington, Manager of Special Events, commented on the many successful events this season. She noted the high turn out for, among others, the fun run and the pig roast.

D. Brewster Blackall, Manager of the QCBFD Marina, stated that, given the diminishing available storage space at the boat landing, he would likely ask that all boats be

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removed from the landing this fall so that any abandoned boats can be identified and removed. Brewster also commented that some using the boat storage area needed to show greater consideration and courtesy by not placing their boats too close to others. He noted that wheeled assemblies that would permit easy movement of a boat around the storage area were available relatively cheaply.

VI. Adjournment

A **motion** was made to adjourn the meeting at approximately 11:15 a.m.. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas R. Wildman, Clerk
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District