

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District
Board of Governors
held on Saturday, August 11, 2018
at 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, Roberta Peet, Vinny Reppucci, Randy Thornton and Tom Wildman

Members Absent: Jim Mara

Also in attendance were Julia Mathews, Assistant Treasurer; Sally Devin, Assistant Clerk; Katherine Huntington, Manager of Special Events; Peter Rettig, Manager of Beach and Dunes; DeDe Consoli, Manager of Merchandize Sales; Kate Thornton, representative of the Nominating Committee and E-Blast Coordinator, 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

A **motion** was made to approve the draft minutes of the July 28, 2018 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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

III. Clerk's Report/ Proposals

The Clerk, Tom Wildman, noted that the Board had previously designated the new shed adjacent to the QCBCFD tennis courts as the District's "principal office" in order to establish a fixed location within the District where postings required by Rhode Island's Open Meetings Act could be made rather than continuing to make such postings at varying locations depending on the place of a meeting. This move was intended to both facilitate OMA compliance and provide better actual notice of meetings to the public. Unfortunately, one individual has elected to dispute the intended change in posting location so, in the absence of clear authoritative guidance, we will continue for now to make OMA postings at meeting locations as well as at our new principal office.

Tom distributed a proposed form of proxy for use at the 2018 Annual Meeting and asked that the form be approved in accordance with our by-laws. All members of the Board of

Governors in attendance voted to approve the form (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Tom then moved that, in accordance with past practice, the Board recommend to the voters at the 2018 Annual Meeting adoption of the following resolution ratifying acts of our Officers, Committee Chairs and Managers:

Resolved, that each and all of the resolutions, acts and proceedings of the District Officers, Committee Chairmen and Managers, as shown by their respective records, in carrying out and promoting the purposes, objectives and interests of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District, be and the same are approved, ratified and hereby made the acts and deeds of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District.

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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

IV. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Roberta Peet, reported that invoices for the 2018 District property taxes have been mailed and the taxes are due on September 7, 2018.

V. Nominating Committee Report

Kate Thornton presented the nominations of the committee to be presented to the voters at the 2018 Annual Meeting for members of the Board of Governors, including the Clerk and Treasurer, and also for Tax Assessors, Assistant Clerks and Assistant Treasurer. She also reported to the Board the Committee's recommendations to the Board for the appointment of Committee chairs and members and managers. The Nominating Committee's report will be included in the packets sent to voters prior to the annual meeting.

VI. Managers' Reports

Katherine Huntington, Manager of Special Events, reported that she and volunteers assisting her are already thinking about events for next year. She then made various suggestions, including a proposal that the Manager of Special Events or someone else heavily involved with special events be a member of the Board of Governors. There was a brief discussion but no action was taken.

Peter Rettig, Manager of Beach and Dunes, reported that the current service provider that rakes our beach weekly has not committed to providing this service next year and that he is not comfortable with the reliability of the alternative providers we whom he has talked. Peter remains hopeful that our current provider will continue.

Julie Low, Manager of Beach Gate Monitors, stated that she will ask (a) all the monitors at the boat landing and (b) the beach gate monitors between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. to record the number of cars checked during their shifts for the remainder of this season in order to help evaluate whether the perceived benefits justify the cost of continuing these shifts. Julie noted that the use of the boat landing depends on the weather and begins to decline as the season advances.

DeDe Consoli, Manager of Merchandize Sales, expressed great satisfaction with how the new shed has helped manage inventory this year and with sales activities in general this year.

Brewster Blackall, Manager of Boating, stated that parking at the boat landing has not been a problem but that the boat storage areas are near capacity.

VII. Committee Chairs' Reports

Finance and Budget. The committee chair, Charlie Freedgood, presented the proposed 2019 budget, noting that it differed only slightly from the draft discussed at the prior meeting. Charlie moved that the budget be approved by the Board and that the Board recommend its adoption by the voters at the 2018 Annual Meeting as follows:

Resolved, that the 2019 budget, including an approximate \$306,110 in Tax Revenue (4.0% above 2018), 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 (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Charlie then moved that the Board approve and recommend that the voters at the Annual Meeting adopt the following tax resolution:

Resolved, that the electors of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District qualified to vote in the District Meeting legally assembled on September 15, 2018, hereby order the assessment and collection of a tax on ratable property of said District in the sum of no less than \$305,110 nor greater than \$307,110. 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 2019 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 2019. 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 (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Public Works. The committee chair, Vinny Reppucci, reported that the committee recommended prohibiting the use of District water for pools. After discussion, a **motion** was made to prohibit the use of District water to fill and maintain pools (other than small children's pools). 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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie). It was noted that notice of this restriction should be placed on the website.

Vinny next referenced the Board's prior discussions of a proposal to change the street lights in the District to LED lights at a cost of approximately \$6,700 less any rebates or incentives that might be available. Assuming no rebates or incentives, the time to recover the conversion cost would be approximately 6-7 years with continuing savings thereafter. Vinny indicated that Charlestown has made the conversion and it would be appropriate for us to decide whether or not to proceed. After discussion, a **motion** was made to proceed with the conversion. 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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Turning to another matter previously discussed, Vinny indicated that the committee believed it was appropriate to proceed with a further evaluation of the two deep wells previously drilled. The cost of this evaluation would not exceed \$7,500. After discussion, a **motion** was made to proceed with the evaluation. 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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Vinny concluded by explaining the committee's proposal to institute a service fee of \$50 for curbside water shut-off and turn-on (\$25 for shut-off and \$25 for turn-on) and to place such fees in a curb stop fund. The Board discussed the proposal and the negative impact the proposed fees might have on the District's desire to have the water to seasonal houses turned off during the winter and possible alternatives. No action was taken.

Long Range Planning. Tom Farrell, the committee chair, presented a proposed survey of property owners to help the committee determine the matters or topics on which it should focus. The survey would be done electronically by a third party. A number of comments and suggestions were made about various questions on the survey. After discussion, a **motion** was made to proceed with a survey of the type described at a cost not to exceed \$500. 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's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

VIII. Other Updates

Tom Frost summarized his prior report that Weekapaug has decided to require a minimum payment of \$450 (including district property taxes) in 2019 from property owners who wish to use the district facilities, including beach facilities, in order to address the perceived unfairness that results from the owners of lots with low assessed values using these facilities while paying very low district property taxes. Tom understands that Shelter Harbor is going to discuss implementing a similar policy at its annual meeting but he does not know if any vote is planned. Tom noted that if we were to implement a similar \$450 requirement, 21 properties would be impacted but for various reasons it is likely that fewer than half of the owners would elect to pay the additional fess and the likely revenue gain would be only \$2,500. Under these circumstances, it seems that the prudent course is to watch to see what reaction there is to the steps taken by the other two fire districts.

Tom also stated that we are continuing to collect information in order to help us determine how best to rectify a situation involving the receipt of QCBFD water by a house outside the District.

IX. Adjournment

A **motion** was made to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:55 a.m.. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously.

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