DRAFT

Minutes of the Meeting of
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District
Board of Governors
October 10, 2025
Charlestown police Station
Meeting Room
4901 Old Post Rd, Charlestown, RI 02813

Members in attendance: Al Bartosic, Renee Cohen, Ray Martino, Barry Okun, Ron Ruel, Bill Wilson, and Debbie Dupre.

Members Absent: Mark Alperin, Bob Frazier and Julie Low.

Also in attendance was Liz Pomeroy, Webmaster; and Dede Consoli.

1. Call to Order/Moderator's Opening Remarks **Moderator, Al Bartosic**

Al called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. He thanked everyone and stated that he looked forward to a productive year.

2. Approval of the Minutes **Clerk, Debbie Dupre**

There were no edits or comments to the draft September 13, 2025 minutes other than adding that Mark Alperin was in attendance. A **motion** was made to approve the minutes as amended. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Debbie reviewed the draft 2026 Board of Governors meeting calendar. Discussion ensued around the proposed dates in March and June. A **motion** was made to set the 2026 BoG calendar to include the following dates:

Saturday, January 10, 9 am;
Saturday, March 14, 9 am;
Saturday, May 23, 9am;
Friday, June 19, 8:15 am;
Thursday, July 23, 8:15 am;
Thursday, August 13, 8:15 am;
Thursday, August 27, 8:15 am;
Saturday, September 19, post QCBFD Annual Meeting; and
Saturday, October 18, 9 am.

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

3. Moderator's Report **Moderator, Al Bartosic**

Al raised the failed withdrawal attempt from the Special Events account, which Ray will discuss in more detail in the Treasurer's Report as well as the continued work being carried out by Barry and his team in connection with the financing of the water upgrade project. Stating Barry will address this as part of the Finance committee report.

4**. Treasurer's Report** **Treasurer, Ray Martino**

Ray gave an update on tax collection, stating that there are 8 invoices still outstanding totaling around $24,000. Reminder notices were sent out during the last week of September, and our bookkeeper is continuing with followup emails and other enforcement tactics and feels confident that all outstanding invoices will eventually be collected.

Ray then turned to Washington Trust and the attempted fraudulent withdrawal. He noted that Kathy Alperin noticed a transfer had occurred from the Special Events account into another account last week and she raised the alarm. Washington Trust investigated and believed that the hacker accessed the account via the account administrator pathway. It appears that this transfer between accounts was a test. Next the hacker attempted to make a wire transfer from the QCBFD accounts to another account outside of the bank, but this transaction was denied. Ray clarified that no money was removed but this attempted breach prompted increased security precautions. All user passwords have been changed, and future wire transfers will now require manual two-person authorization. Ray is reviewing the bank's security procedures and will keep an eye on this moving forward. Ray added that the deposits are insured and were never at risk.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Long-Range Planning **Chair, Renee Cohen**

No report. Renee noted that her committee meets tomorrow and she should have an update at the next meeting.

Finance and Budget **Chair, Barry Okun**

Barry updated the group on the status of the two sources of financing for the water upgrade project – stating that the District has around $31,000 plus closing costs outstanding with the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) and has drawn down $299,999 from the EPA grant. He reported that he is working to complete the required compliance filings under these two sources by the end of October. In addition, the District will submit a request with RIIB to cover the District's costs spent before the EPA grant was awarded, taking advantage of the favorable terms (low interest rate and 20-year term) available under the RIIB loan. Barry was asked whether he needs any help and he responded that he would look to find someone on the committee to pitch in. Discussion ensued around the availability of the funds under both the EPA grant and the RIIB loan during the shut-down of the federal government.

Barry next reported that the current financial condition of the District is strong, with over $1M in cash on hand and that no material unexpected or un-budgeted for expenses have occurred so far this year. He expects that we will have an operating surplus at year end allowing us to continue to add to the contingency reserves. Barry responded to a question about where the $1M+ cash is currently sitting, stating that it is spread across several accounts. Ray added that he is tracking the size of the deposits against available FDIC insurance and the most favorable interest rate.

6. Managers' Report

Merchandise Sales **Dede Consoli for Julie Low**

Dede reported that the 2025 merchandise sales proceeds will fund 2026 special events, 2026 merchandise purchases as well as the Merchandise Sales community grants program. The Merchandise Sales community grants task force (Dede Consoli, Kathy Alperin and Jeff Matthews) reviewed and approved the following proposals totaling $82,872:

- $1000 - QCC conservation and preservation programming
- $700 - Sand Mat/Beach Boardwalk
- $600 – Refurbish benches at tennis courts and ball field
- $572 – Add Boat Landing Signage
- $5000 - Redo water fountain (rollover from 2024)
- $75,000 – Tennis courts refurbishment (~$15,000 to fix crack in spring 2026 with balance to be held as reserves to be applied toward the tennis courts depending on community preferences, appropriate approvals and timing).

Dede indicated that the 2025 season was a success an added that $24,000 of proceeds had already been given toward the 2025 anniversary party held this summer. There remains additional money available for community improvement projects and any community member interested should apply through the grants approval process. Discussion ensued around the proposed grants, particularly around the grant for the tennis court refurbishment. Several questions were asked around the status of approval by the Board of Governors to make the initial crack repair next spring (to be addressed at the next BoG meeting), the additional approval to do a total refurbishment of the courts and whether/how to fund that refurbishment more generally. Barry explained how the reserve accounts work and that the refurbishment would need to be approved by the BoG and the necessary reserves to be built up over time - either through budgeting and setting aside tax dollars and/or future merchandise sales grants. Dede clarified that the grant is a one-time gift to be applied toward the 2026 crack repair with the balance earmarked toward future improvements. An additional clarification was made that the refurbishment has not been approved by either the BoG or the community so the balance of the grant will be earmarked for the tennis courts generally pending future approvals.

A **motion** was made to approve the community grants recommended by the community grants task force as modified above by the Board of Governors. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in case of a tie did not vote).

Additional discussion ensued around the need to communicate the awarding of these grants to the community and tightening up the timing of the grants relative to the annual budgeting process. The Board of Governors expressed thanks to Dede, her team and the community volunteers for their hard work and success this season.

7. District Website **Liz Pomeroy, Webmaster**

Liz updated the Board on the status of a new website platform search, indicating that she had received 51 responses to the RFP. Liz with the help of Ray reviewed and rated each applicant based upon the RFP criteria, including relevant experience, location and Automated Clearing House (ACH) payment capacity and narrowed the field to 5 finalists. The bids from the finalists came in between $9000-$14,500. They also checked references and verified financial viability, resulting in a recommendation that the District hire Brave River to migrate the existing website contents, develop, and host the QCBFD website. Liz further recommended that following completion of this work, we should look to evaluate options to add the capability to provide District tax invoicing and payment through an ACH vendor onto the website. A **motion** was made to adopt the recommendation and approve the proposal from Brave River Solutions to migrate, develop and host the QCBFD website for a total cost of approximately $14,500 ($11,000 for the website migration and development and $3500 annually to host the site) and to authorize the District's Moderator or his designee to execute, deliver or take an necessary action in connection with entering into a contract with Brave River Solutions for these services. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

8. Adjournment

A **motion** was made to adjourn at approximately 10:02 am. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Dupre, Clerk
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District