

COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
Prudential Committee
January 24, 2011

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Amy Kates. Members Rick Barry and Laurie Hadley were present. The Chairman then called for any public comments.

Ms Paula Fay read a letter into the record which she then presented to the Prudential Committee (see copy attached) regarding Article 10 in the warrant of the District Meeting held in May pertaining to health insurance for elected officials.

Ms Jessica Grassetti volunteered to become a member of the by-law committee. She also questioned whether or not the Moderator had the ability to remove an article from a district meeting warrant based on a legal opinion or whether a vote of the District should have been taken.

Ms Dolores Lowe asked if the 2009 audit had been completed.

Alison Lowe, the Moderator, stated she had sent a request for public records to the District Treasurer by registered mail and the request had never been picked up from the Post Office. She then delivered a copy to the Treasurer, Ms Agnes Murray.

Ms Diane Fay brought to the attention of the Prudential Committee the fact that the Governor has a plan that will allow municipal employees to become part of the GIC (Group Insurance Commission) insurance plan. Because of the large number of people in the plan, it has lower costs and includes \$1,700.00 every three years for hearing aids, a benefit not found in other plans. This would of course require negotiation with the Firefighters union.

The minutes of the December 22 and January 12 meetings, as well as the January 6 non-meeting, were approved with one correction.

Ms Kates explained the reasons that the health insurance issue regarding active and retired officials had not yet been acted upon by the Prudential Committee. Opinions were received from the District's counsel, Mark Boudreau, from Attorney Edward Gargiulo and the Massachusetts Retired Employees Association. It appears no action can be taken regarding former Fire Commissioner Michael Lloyd's insurance. She also covered some of the history leading to the May District Meeting warrant articles and what had transpired since.

After much discussion between members of the Committee and members of the public, a motion was made and seconded that the Prudential Committee to reduce the elected officials insurance from 75% to 50%. The motion passed on a vote of two to one.

A motion was made that the Prudential Committee vote to petition the legislature through a home rule petition to remove the elected officials from the benefit of receiving health insurance. The motion was amended to include wording that would allow elected officials to remain in the health insurance plan by contributing 100% of their costs. The motion was seconded and passed on a vote of two to one.

At that point discussion was held on when to make effective the cut from 75% to 50% percent which had been voted earlier in the meeting. That motion was rescinded by the mover, Mr Barry, and a motion was made containing the same wording, with the addition that it become effective with the swearing in of

newly elected officials after the District Meeting to be held on May 25th, 2011. A motion was made and seconded to rescind the earlier vote and passed on a two to one vote. The motion to reduce the District's contribution to the health insurance for elected officials from 75% to 50%, to commence at our next District Meeting, May 25th, 2011, was then made and seconded and did not pass on a two to one vote.

The next subject discussed was open meeting postings. Ms Kates had some information on outdoor bulletin boards which was made available to the other members. No action was taken and further information will be sought. Use of the District's existing web site was also discussed. Apparently the Water and Fire Departments also have web sites, so the District may be paying for three individual web sites.

With regard to Freedom Hall, the present custodian, Steve Murray, wishes to stay on. Apparently some of the groups using Freedom Hall have keys, and we're not always aware when it's being used. Any group using the hall needs to go through the Prudential Committee. A motion was made and seconded that the locks on Freedom Hall be changed, and passed unanimously. A third estimate on the much needed clean-up has been requested. One company who had submitted an estimate is no longer interested. Ms Kates will be contacting an additional company.

It was suggested that the level of custodial service for Freedom Hall needs to be clarified. Previously there has been no set number of hours required, and with a major cleanup to be undertaken soon, this may be a good time to determine what's required on an on-going basis. There was also discussion on removing a lot of the material that is now in Freedom Hall, renting a dumpster, and throwing out the "junk" that's there. The members of the Prudential Committee will do a site inspection of Freedom Hall on Monday, January 31st. A motion was made and seconded that the Prudential Committee coordinate with the Chief in his capacity as Scout Leader to select a date when the Scouts will remove all their items, assist with removal of the District's unneeded articles, and a dumpster will be provided for their material as well as the District's, with work to be completed by March 1st. The motion passed unanimously.

No one volunteered for the by-law committee so none were appointed at the District Meeting. The Moderator stated that the by-laws specify the appointments are to be made at the District meeting so no members can be appointed until the next meeting. The committee can meet with only the three members from the Boards.

The street light on Old Kings Road has not yet been fixed. Republic Electric is the company who now has the contract. If service continues to be unsatisfactory, the Prudential Committee will consider a change. The Treasurer added that she believes the contract will be up this year.

The Chairman wanted to get an estimate of the cost of fulfilling the response to the request for Public records. Ms Lowe stated she would do the copying required. Ms Murray was unable to give an estimate of the time that would be required researching the records as she hadn't had time to study the request. However, a response is required by statute within ten days of receiving the request. After much discussion, it was agreed that Ms Murray would provide an estimate of the earliest date she could comply with all the parts of the request.

Mr Barry was nominated and unanimously elected to attend the Fire Department contract negotiations with their union.

The Treasurer made available to the members the investment report for December 2010. Mr Barry questioned the Treasurer as to whether all accounts were insured and received the answer that they

were. The appropriations and expenditures report for December 2010 was also made available.

Bills for legal services were discussed. The Fire Department budgeted \$30,000; has spent through September \$30,376; and has a pending bill of \$6,000. There is no insurance reimbursement for these costs. There is reimbursement through a policy that is the equivalent of Workmen's Compensation that partially reimburses the District for money paid out to an injured firefighter. Last year the amount was \$48,000 and \$3,000 the year before that.

The 2009 audit has been completed and the draft form is available.

A question was asked regarding the cost to the District for sending out the separate District tax bills. The cost is estimated between \$7,500 and \$13,000. This could come out of the reserve fund if so voted by the Prudential Committee.

A motion was made and seconded to go into Executive Session, not to return to a public forum, for the purpose of negotiating with nonunion personnel. Ms Murray indicated she would prefer it be done in Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted

LAURIE C. HADLEY, Clerk
Prudential Committee