

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING (VIRTUAL BY ZOOM)
APRIL 24, 2023**

Present: Charles Eager, Clerk, Ray Pirrone, Treasurer, Seth Burdick, Prudential Committee, Fran Parks, Prudential Committee and Mark Lynch, Prudential Committee.

The meeting was called to order at 6 PM on April 24, 2023 remotely using the Zoom app.

Fran Parks led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Treasurer reports the District is at 75% of the year. Revenues are at 90% and expenditures are at 78% for the year but if you take out the one-time annual expenses the expenditures are way below that figure. Tax revenue are slightly below budget but Water, Fire and Other are all ahead of budget.

Prudential budget is slightly over budget but when take away the one-time annual expenditures of property insurance and worker's compensation the figure is well below the 75%. The Fire Department is below budget at 73%. Looking at the detail there is one variance which is overtime which is at 96 % of budget. It will need to be watched because it could exceed the \$45,000 reserve. The Treasurer is recommending a warrant article be put in the Warrant to cover the potential overage. The amount of overage would be added to next year's tax bill. All the other expenditures of the District are under control.

Special Articles expense paid are \$102,000. This is for the stretcher and Fire Department truck. These will be funded by debt going out in June.

The Treasurer said the District's money is pretty well fully invested. He said the District's funds are protected in case of bank default. He said if either bank has a run being diversified as the District is will help. Even though the funds are protected we would not access to the funds if either bank is taken over. The District in addition, also has the power to borrow.

Fran Parks then went over the Warrant for the Annual District Meeting including the Prudential Committee recommendations for the articles. Mark Lynch requested why the Department budgets are broken out the way they are. The Treasurer said the break out are due to history. Mark told the Treasurer he would like to review the categories before next year Warrants to see if they are worthwhile. He also asks the Treasurer to note for next year how we want to break out expenses for the Water and Fire Department so everyone will know their true costs. The Prudential Committee voted to recommend all articles except the Water Department's operating budget because of over aggressive pay raises for some employees and the Citizen Petition to provide funds to Santuit-Cotuit Historical Society because once you open it up, any group could make the same request. Seth Burdick said he would rather exclude all non-profits then have it open to anyone.

The Treasurer asked how the Prudential Committee like to handle the overtime problem from the Fire Department. He doesn't have the any figures. The committee said a Special District Meeting in June. To handle this problem and decide what to do with the school after the transfer. Seth and Mark think it

would be good idea to have an ad hoc meeting of the Prudential Committee and the all the Commissioners discuss plans for the school property.

The Water Department has decided to put their water rate change on hold. They decided to charge \$40.00 for the first 20,000 gallons instead of \$80.00.

Fran Parks reports Freedom Hall have received the new tables. Of the existing tables all but 2 are junk.

Fran said she attended a Fire Commissioners meeting where they brought computers and held a zoom meeting. She asked the Treasurer if there was money to buy computers for the hall. She asked the committee members what they thought about that idea. Seth asked about the OWL System. Lisa said she looked into using the system. She said the problem is the height of the hall creates feedback. She doesn't believe using computers will help. Seth asked how it worked at the Fire Commissioner's Meeting. Fran reported when they turned off their computers with only the person speaking on it worked fine.

Fran reported the sound system we use the motherboard is no longer functioning. Jerry from Charlie's Music has found a replacement recorder. It costs about \$300. Fran is going to purchase it. The Treasurer said there is money in the budget for it.

Mark Lynch gave timelines for the transfer of the school. The transfer needs two reading and votes to transfer the school. The first reading is scheduled for April 27th and the second May 4rd. It needs 2/3 vote of the Council. Still waiting on oil tank removal. The Town Council will give conservation restriction an up or down vote.

Graham Silliman provided public comment. He requested information for the Civic Association meeting be distributed electronically on the website. He questioned the transfer of the school to District. Also did the District try to get the Town to do the demolition of the school before the transfer or seek other conditions.

Next Meeting will be May 22, 2023

Motion made by Seth Burdick to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mark Lynch and passes unanimously.