

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
REMOTELY BY ZOOM
978 MAIN STREET
COTUIT, MA 02635
SEPTEMBER 25, 2023**

Present: Ray Pirrone, Treasurer, Seth Burdick, Prudential Committee, Mark Lynch, Prudential Committee, Fran Parks, Prudential Committee and Charles Eager (late entry).

The meeting was called to order at 6 PM by Fran Parks on September 25, 2023 at virtually by zoom.

Fran Parks led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no public comment at this time.

No Treasurer's report this month.

Next there was a discussion what email address the Water Commissioners should use. The question was whether to use their personal email or cotuitfiredistrict.org. Prudential Committee said they could use either but coordinate with Assistant Treasurer Lisa Haven.

Fran reported she got a quote for repainting the parking lines at Freedom Hall. It was the same company that did them last time. It would be \$625 for repainting the lines and if they sweep the parking lot before doing the lines it would cost an additional \$250. Fran recommends to sweep the parking lot first before repainting the line for a total cost of \$875. **Mark Lynch makes a motion to expend the funds to sweep and repaint the parking lot for a better finish. Seth Burdick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Fran requested that the Committee adopt a parking policy for Freedom Hall. Seth asked about the signs posted in the lot. Fran said the signs say NO OVERNIGHT PARKING. Seth asked how we would enforce the policy. Fran said she thought sending a letter stating there is no parking in the lot other than those people having business at the Hall should do. **Seth Burdick made a motion to send a letter to abutting homeowners of Freedom Hall to remind them no personal parking is allowed in the parking lot. Mark Lynch seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Mark Lynch gave an update on the progress with the Cotuit School transfer. Town attorneys had a potential issue with the deed sent to them by our counsel because it didn't contain a right of way over the property from Main Street to Old Oyster Road. Mark said the Town is looking at setting a closing date. Mark said the updated figure to refurbish the school is between 3.5 -5 million dollars with the caveat that the figure is to bring it up to standard as a school. The cost could be less than quoted but it is the best we have it this time.

Fran Parks asked if there was any public comment.

Carol Zais asked about the District records being currently unavailable due to an injury of the Clerk. The records are kept outside the District in the basement of his home. Clerk said once he is given the okay to go in the basement, he will provide the information available. There was a discussion about storing the records in the District. Lisa Haven said that the records could be digitized like some of the other records are.

There was question if there was a way to keep the integrity of the building before it can be repaired? Fran replied that the repair of the roof would not be a patch job. She said we would have to go out and get RFPs to get someone to look at the roof to determine the cost to fix. She didn't believe this was the time for that. Both Mark Lynch and Seth Burdick agree with Fran. They would like to see what will happen to the building once it is transferred before expending money in repairs which could be costly.

Mark Lynch asked to let him explain how the Prudential Committee envisions what will happen. First there would be another public meeting. Then there would be a Special District Meeting. There could be an article to demolish the building. Another article could be to refurbish the building. District voters could propose their own articles. These articles will have a cost figure associated with them. At this meeting the Prudential Committee will make its recommendation which the voters will elect to follow or not. The meeting will happen either late 2023 or early 2024.

Carol Zais said she believes there need to be more meetings and she doesn't see a vote until at least the next annual meeting. She asked whether the vote could be done by ballot. Fran Parks said there could be a ballot vote but because there will be an expenditure of funds it would have to go to a meeting. She cited the recent Chatham meeting on the Senior Center.

Joanne Massaro agreed with Carol Zais that there needs to be more participation. Not just in numbers but in details before making a decision like this.

Seth Burdick said he doesn't agree with the assessment. He said the Prudential Committee has been meeting on this issue for two years now. We have opened this up to the public every time the meetings have occurred. The initial plan when the process began it was based on protection of the water source and demolition of the building. The Committee has been waiting on alternative plans to come. Now that some have come up, the District will look into having more participation to discuss these ideas.

Mark Lynch said from his perspective he is of the opinion the District should demolish the building and let it go natural. Mark said what the Prudential Committee is looking for any group proposing an alternative use to come to them with details, how the alternative would work.

Fran Parks said before any ideas of uses for the property, the District would need to decide what will happen to the building. Will it be demolished or will a group come up with money to refurbish it. Any change must be related to our enabling legislation which is fire and water.

Seth Burdick said the Prudential Committee can make a recommendation but ultimately the decision is up to the voters.

Carol Zais said it was good to say there will be another meeting but could you set a date for it? Also, to help publicize it you could put it in the Cotuit Currents.

Mark Lynch said when we have the next meeting would the people with alternative ideas to come to the meeting with some level of detail.

Motion made by to adjourn the meeting, seconded and passes unanimously.