

Cotuit Fire District
Prudential Committee
Bylaws Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 28, 2023

The meeting was held by Zoom only. Mark Lynch called the meeting to order at 5 pm. Attending were:

Mark Lynch
Carol Zais
Rick Pisano
Amy Kates
Mark Robinson
Lisa Haven

It was noted that Ray Pirrone, Treasurer of the District, had previously suggested the possibility of adding a gift policy to the Bylaws. His concern related to potential gifts being made to the Fire District, that the District would prefer not to accept, such as real property in disrepair or that required significant upkeep. After a short discussion, the group concluded that this topic should be referred directly to the Prudential Committee for consideration.

Mark Lynch noted that this group proposed several updates to the bylaws last year, most of which were approved by vote at the Annual Meeting. One that was not approved related to Article 11, Section 11. This section deals with ad hoc advisory committees. The group had proposed opening up the composition of such committees to any person with relevant expertise. (The current version limits members of such committees to "citizens"). The proposal was voted down by vote at the Annual Meeting. Mr. Lynch wondered if it would be worthwhile to revisit that Section.

The general consensus of the group would be that the issue would be worthwhile to revisit. (Ms. Kates noted that she had spoken against the proposal last year and remained opposed). Mr. Pisano indicated that he believed there was "a lack of backgrounding" when this issue was raised for a vote at the last Annual Meeting. He noted that the Fire Commissioners used outside experts to assist in the recent search for a Deputy Chief, but that only the commissioners voted. (Outside experts were also used in the search for current Fire Chief Brown but, again, did not vote). Mr. Pisano said that the Fire Commissioners used an outside consultant in the search for the prior chief at a cost of \$28,000.

Carol Zais suggested that the section be amended to allow any person with expertise as long as they were "non-paid and non-voting". Mr. Pisano likewise suggested that anyone with subject matter expertise may be members of an advisory committee in a "non-voting capacity". He noted that he wasn't aware of any advisory committee that takes votes; they simply advise the Commissioners.

Ms. Kates inquired as to whether there was posting and notice in advance of the creation of ad hoc advisory committees. Ms. Kates wanted to ensure that there would be sufficient notice for any citizen to put forward their name in time to be considered for inclusion on such advisory committee. Mr. Pisano said he believed the answer to her question was "yes".

Mr. Robinson raised the issue of creating a Water Department Stabilization Fund. Mr. Lynch noted that that proposal had been tabled at the last Water Department meeting and was therefore not included on

the agenda for this meeting. The matter was therefore not discussed but may be raised again at a later date.

Ms. Kates noted Article 10, Section 1 states that "Acceptance of these bylaws....shall void all previous bylaws...." She wondered at the effect of accepted amendments on prior bylaws as a whole. Mr. Pisano indicated that the language merely indicated that the bylaws are a "unitary entity". The consensus of the group was that the language does not need amendment.

The group decided to meet again to further discuss Article 11, Section 11.