

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING (VIRTUAL BY ZOOM)
APRIL 26, 2021**

Present: Seth Burdick, Ray Pirrone, Charlie Eager, Paul Haenle, Fran Parks

Fran Parks led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Treasurer went over the District's current year expenses. Tax collections are down about 3% for the year. If the trend continues, we will come in under what was estimated by as much as \$100,000. Water revenues are up for the year about 23% due most likely to rate hike implemented. Fire revenues are down to reduction in medical calls. Treasurer believes it is due to Covid related issues. Other revenues are up due to Covid-19 reimbursements received. Prudential Committee expenses are going to be slightly over budget. Fire Department expense are coming under budget. Water Department expense are also under budget. Freedom Hall expenses are coming in under budget also. Streetlight coming in under budget. Library has been given it money and came in on budget. Debt Service has a variance due to the refinancing approved by the Special District Meeting. Benefits are estimated to come in \$20,000 under budget. Transfers has come in under budget. The Appropriations only the Water Department's Security System upgrade and Fire Station repairs are ongoing. Prudential Chair Fran Parks asked if the Water Department was going to dispose of the truck purchase due to Covid. Treasurer said the Water Department have not said anything to him. He will look into the matter. Ms. Parks also asked if there will be anymore Covid reimbursements coming in. It was reported \$106,000 will be coming in from FEMA but some reimbursement from the Cares Act will need to be paid back due to FEMA change in policy in refunding 100%. Paul Haenle asked the Treasurer if he knew why tax collection were down. Treasurer doesn't have an answer but will look into it.

Next, the Committee reviewed the Warrant. Fran Parks explains Article 16 has been amended to add the White Pines Forest to the transfer. The total acreage is 8.5 acres. Paul Haenle asked if Articles 16 and 17 pass but the District doesn't approve the land transfer what will happen? Fran Parks says if Article 16 approves the transfer of the property. If it doesn't pass then Article 17 will be pulled. Seth Burdick question what is the threshold for expected. Fran Parks explained that the committee has seen some committees meet two or three times in a month so they may not have business discuss in the next meeting so there would be a need for a meeting. Fran Parks said she believes the requirement was put in when a committee didn't meet for a number of months. Seth and Paul Haenle said that is the problem with article because a committee could choose not to meet at all. The Prudential Committee makes a motion to recommend Articles 1 through 23, and have the Treasurer and Clerk edit the Warrant as pointed out during discussion. Motion was seconded and passed. Article 24 was not recommended.

Fran Parks has been in contact with the Town representatives about using the Cotuit Elementary School for the Annual Meeting. She and the Fire Chief have been working on logistic of the meeting with an estimated 100 voters being present. Setting up the chairs in the auditorium. At least one classroom will

be set up microphone and television allowing us to zoom into that room for overflow. There will be a handicap porta potty will be providing where the school's restrooms haven't been used in two years.

The election will be at Freedom Hall. People will come in the front door and out through the parking lot side door similar as the Town Election. The Prudential Committee will have postcards sent out informing voter of the meeting and election locations. Also, have signs made up informing voters of the meeting to be put up around town.

The School subcommittee will be meeting tomorrow night and will be discussing offering open house tours of the school. They will also be discussing options for the school. The committee asked for a breakdown of the cost. Chief asked if the vender could supply a general cost for each section of the options.

Chris Dauley has resigned as Secretary of the Prudential Committee and the person in charge of booking Freedom Hall. Charlie Eager will be doing the meeting minutes. Fran Parks has the ability to post minutes, agendas and other materials to the website. She will be taking over any rental questions for Freedom Hall for the time being. At the moment there is no custodian for the Hall. Christina Dauley did the weeding and mulching of the Hall last year. Fran Parks got a price from Outlander to get a price for to weed, mulch and prune the boxwood in front of Freedom Hall. The cost is \$549.00. The Prudential Committee made a motion to authorize the payment of \$549.00 to weed, mulch and prune at Freedom Hall by Outlander. The motion was seconded and passed. Outlander has a contract with the District to do their landscaping services.

Motion made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes of the March 29, 2021 minutes as written.

Seth Burdick representing the Policy Advisory Committee proposes to require all committees to put public comment on their agendas. Also, recommending public comment be allowed at both the beginning and ending of all meetings. Fran Parks says she believes public comment should be left to the authority of each committee. She believes there are times when public comment is not warranted such as when a committee is only opening in public session then adjourning to executive session. Also, there are times when the Prudential Committee have met for minutes just to sign documents for the Treasurer and she see no need for public comment at these times. Fran believes one public comment session is sufficient. Having it at the end of the meeting allow anyone to discuss anything that has come up during the meeting. She believes how the committee are run and operated should be left up to the individual committee. Seth Burdick and Paul Haenle both think public comment is important but also agree there are time when it is not appropriate. Fran Parks said she doesn't believe this should go in the by-laws because this not the purpose of the by-laws. Seth Burdick said he will comeback with a revision at some time in the future.

During public comment Cythera Gardner request how the donation of the Deputy Chief's old vehicle got on the Warrant. She said it wasn't discussed by the Fire Commissioners. Fire Commissioner Chairman Rick Pissano said it was discussed at their meeting and no voted on but recommended for the warrant. Her second concern was on public comment. She wished that it would have gone to a vote. She

expressed her desire to have public comment at every meeting. Carol Zais said she wished she could have been able to question some of the warrant articles. She was wondering if she could talk to anyone about her questions. Fran Parks said all their phone numbers and email are on the website. She expressed her support for public comment at the meetings. She also requested what meeting the Deputy truck donation was discussed. Rick Pissano said he can't remember the exact meeting when it was discussed but was during budget discussions. It might be either March or April.

Motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 26.