

*Draft – Minutes*

Kingston Fire District  
Board of Wardens Meeting  
23 July 2020

**Present:** Wardens Ina Sciabarrasi, Sandra Koerner, Elizabeth McNab, Bill Flatley (arrived at 6:42 p.m.) and Mark Barabe. Also present were Tax Collector Linda Mendillo, Treasurer Tom Vignali, URI Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police Stephen Baker, Chief Nate Barrington and Office Manager Jenifer Madison.

**Absent:** Deputy Chief Tom Reed.

**Call to Order:** President Sciabarrasi called the Board of Wardens Meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. *The meeting was conducted by Zoom Videoconference due to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

**Information/Comments/Questions from the Public:** There were no questions or comments from the public.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** Koerner made and Barabe seconded a motion to accept the Minutes from the Wardens Meeting on 06/25/20. The minutes were reviewed. There were no questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, McNab and Flatley voted to pass the motion. Barabe abstained since he was absent during the 6/25/20 meeting.

**Tax Collector's Report:**

**Motion:** McNab made and Koerner seconded a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report.

Mendillo presented the Tax Collector's Report. The Board reviewed the report. Mendillo first reviewed the Annual Report for FY2019-20 with the Board and went over the Tax Trial Report and explained the tax payment process. Mendillo then reviewed the monthly Tax Collector's Report and let the Board know that the 2019 Tax Roll collection rate was at 98.3%. Sciabarrasi noted that this is a good collection rate. Mendillo noted that it has been a slow month and that there are about 20 taxpayers left that have not paid their 2019 bill. She let the Board know that next week a second notice of delinquency would go out to those taxpayers which is really the third bill. Mendillo noted that there is one taxpayer that still owes for 2018 as well, and that they contacted KFD and said they would pay but no payment has been received yet. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **URI Report:**

**Motion:** Koerner made and McNab seconded a motion to accept the URI report.

Baker presented the URI Report. The Board reviewed the report. Baker let the Board know based on Barrington's recommendation, URI Police put an electronic message board at Route 138 and Old North Road with information about the recent road closures. Sciabarrasi asked Baker if URI plans to offer classes in person for the Fall semester. Baker responded that that is the plan at this time. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **Chief's Reports:**

**Motion:** Flatley made and Barabe seconded a motion to accept the Chief's Report.

Barrington presented an oral Chief's Report. He let the Board know that Firefighter Rachel Gomes has passed her Engine driver's test and has been cleared to take primary duty. He noted that Gomes is the first female to complete Engine clearance at KFD. He let the Board know that Rescue 6's hydraulic line needed to be replaced and is expected back on Saturday. Barrington also let the Board know that the station has been painted and that some of the letters are getting replaced. He also noted that the offices have been painted and the carpeting replaced. He let the board know that recruitment is going to be difficult with the continuing pandemic and that we are looking into online platforms to allow recruits to start training remotely. He noted that we continue to have good solid crews and coverage for calls. Barrington also noted that there have been well placed notices on Facebook for residents regarding the construction on Flagg Road. He also let the Board know that the South Kingstown Firefighters Relief Association put up a firefighter appreciation banner.

Barrington let the Board know that during a town public safety meeting last week the Town Manager mentioned that the Town of South Kingstown may need to pay for fire services in the future. He noted that both he and Union Fire District (UFD) Chief Steve Pinch are on the same page and disagree with this. Flatley suggested that some KFD Wardens may want to meet with some UFD Wardens regarding this issue on an informal basis. It was discussed that no more than two KFD Wardens could be present for these meetings due to Open Meetings Law. Barrington suggested that Sciabarrasi may want to reach out to UFD's Board to see if there would be interest; Koerner noted that she thinks it is a good idea. Sciabarrasi said she will reach out via e-mail and see where it goes. Barrington also let the Board know that the Town Radio System went out to bid and the Charlestown radio tower will be up in a few days. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **Treasurer's Report:**

**Motion:** McNab made and Koerner seconded a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report.

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Vignali presented the Treasurer's Report. The Board reviewed the report. Vignali presented a budget report for FY2019-20 and let the Board know that there is a surplus and it is higher than expected due to unusually high miscellaneous income from HazMat incident fees and plan review fees. He also let the Board know that the budget for FY2020-21 is trending on track. Vignali let the Board know that Robert Civetti has reached out to schedule time to come to the station to conduct audit prep work; he noted that he hoped that this year most of the prep would be remote but that some would be onsite. He also let the Board know that the FY2019-20 audit will probably start after Labor Day. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Finance Committee up-date/report:** There were no updates. Sciabarrasi confirmed that the Committee would be meeting on 8/20/2020.

Next meetings:

- August 20, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.
- October 15, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

**New Business:**

- **Election of President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Board of Wardens**

**Motion:** McNab made and Barabe seconded a motion to nominate Sciabarrasi as President of the Board of Wardens.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Sciabarrasi made and McNab seconded a motion to nominate Koerner as Vice-President of the Board of Wardens.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Koerner made and Flatley seconded a motion to nominate McNab as Secretary of the Board of Wardens.

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Review of Warden Assignments for 2020-2021**

**Motion:** Flatley made and Barabe seconded a motion to:

- Appoint Sciabarrasi as the Finance Committee Representative
- Appoint Sciabarrasi as the Nomination Committee Representative
- Appoint Flatley and Barabe as Radio Committee Co-Representatives

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Appointment of Chief:**

**Motion:** Flatley made and McNab seconded a motion to re-appoint Chief Barrington for FY2020-2021.

Barrington recommended that Deputy Chief Reed be re-appointed for FY2020-21. He also recommended that Erik Brierley remain KFD's Training and Recruitment and Retention Coordinator and Will Summerly remain the Maintenance Coordinator. Sciabarrasi asked Barrington to let Reed, Brierley and Summerly know that they are doing a great job. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

- **Covid-19 Efforts and Effects:** Barrington let the Board know that KFD is in good shape regarding personal protective equipment (PPE), that KFD's Covid-19 related expenses have been minimal and that there have been no cases among our firefighters. Barrington also noted that KFD is working on a plan for reopening the office. Vignali asked about getting estimates for a cleaning service to come in on a regular basis and sanitize. Baker offered to have URI Emergency Management come to the station to help consult on our office reopening plan based on URI's approach. This was positively welcomed. Koerner mentioned maybe being able to use the URI Welcome Center as a meeting spot for Wardens Meetings in-person since it is bigger than KFD's conference room. Baker said he was not sure this would be a possibility and that any event being hosted there needed to be approved by URI. Barrington mentioned that the KFD garage bays could be another potential in-person meeting spot. It was decided that KFD would wait to hear updates to RI Governor Raimondo's guidelines. Barrington also noted that plans would need to be put into place regarding 2020 fire district tax payments if the office is not open yet. It was decided that this would be coordinated by Mendillo, Madison, Barrington and Reed.

**Communications:** Sciabarrasi suggested that Madison invite all KFD Officers and elected Officials to our Open Meetings via e-mail to get them more involved. Barrington suggested that we first invite them to a meeting when the meetings are back to being in person and serve refreshments. Sciabarrasi said that she would do so as the representative for the Nominating Committee, and Madison noted that she would update the KFD Contact List for 2020-21 and distribute in preparation.

**Information:** There were no updates. No motions were made.

**Next Meetings:**

- August 27, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- September 24, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- October 22, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting

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- December 03, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Koerner made and Flatley seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Madison  
Office Manager

DRAFT