

DRAFT MINUTES

(Subject to approval by the electors of the Kingston Fire District at the Annual Meeting in May of 2024)

KINGSTON FIRE DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING, KINGSTON FIRE STATION, KINGSTON, R.I. MAY 1, 2023

Call to Order: Moderator Valerie Maier-Speredelozzi called the Kingston Fire District (KFD) Annual Meeting of May 1, 2023 to order at 7:12 p.m. at the Kingston Fire Station, 35 Bills Road, Kingston, RI. She noted that sixteen (16) qualified electors were in attendance, as confirmed in the 2022 Tax Roll for the District and South Kingstown Voter Rolls. Moderator Maier-Speredelozzi declared that a quorum was present.

AGENDA (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Bill Flatley moved to accept the Agenda as presented. Doug Carr seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES OF 2022 (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Tom Vignali moved to accept the Minutes as presented. Sandy Koerner seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. Moderator Maier-Speredelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CHIEFS' REPORT (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Sandy Koerner moved to accept the Chief's Report as presented. Bill Flatley seconded the motion.

Chief Tom Reed presented the Chief's Report. The report was reviewed. He let the taxpayers know that over the last year, KFD completed 720 emergency calls and that this year, we responded to 252 calls so far. Reed noted that KFD's firefighters are the backbone of what we do. He let the taxpayers know that District personnel continue to train multiple times a week to remain ready to respond to whatever the next call may be. Reed let the taxpayers know that fire prevention has been busy with five real estate transfers inspections already completed for 2023 and 28 inspections conducted in 2022 and that planning, meetings and providing input for the multiple projects happening on the University of Rhode Island's (URI) campus continue to be an important part of the Fire Marshal role he also holds. He also noted that plan reviews and business license renewals are conducted throughout the year as well.

Reed let the taxpayers know that the operating budget for this current fiscal year and next year are in solid shape and that he worked with Tom Vignali, KFD Treasurer and Jen Madison, KFD District Manager to track revenue and expenses, project and plan. He noted that our cooperative agreement with URI continues to be a major factor in allowing us to budget and plan over the next couple of years and into the future. Reed let the taxpayers know that he has continued to work on external relations and maintaining the operational readiness of the District's personnel and equipment and that we have hosted and taken part in multiple trainings and lectures with other towns and area departments. Lastly, Reed thanked all of KFD's firefighters and personnel for their continued hard work and dedication to the Village of Kingston and surrounding areas.

Brierley presented the Deputy Chief's Report. He let the taxpayers know that KFD's training hours totaled 4,000 hours over the last year and he reminded the taxpayers that KFD has two scheduled training drills each week and that our older active members help train our probationary firefighters almost daily. He noted that KFD has two upcoming trainings with outside instructors who are well known in their fields and that we are hosting an

advanced elevator rescue class for the third year in a row.

In terms of recruitment and retention, Brierley let the taxpayers know that we have had four probationary members complete their training and become full members of the department since last year and that three of these members have become KFD full-time residents of the station. He also noted that we currently have four new probationary members of which; two are expected to complete their training by the end of this summer and the other two are expected to complete it by the end of 2023. Brierley let the taxpayers know that KFD was once again awarded a SAFER grant towards tuition/education reimbursement for our firefighters and that they will each be eligible for up to \$5,000 in education reimbursement per year. He also noted that since last year's annual meeting, KFD has logged over 7,600 duty shift hours as well as over 3,600 non-duty shift hours. Brierley noted that we are coming up on the time of year, as URI welcomes a new class of freshman, when KFD focuses heavily on recruitment and that we have had some success at this year's URI Welcome Days and that over the summer we will be heavily recruiting during URI's Orientations.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

The motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Elizabeth McNab moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Doug Carr seconded the motion.

Treasurer Thomas Vignali presented the Treasurer's report. The report was reviewed. He gave a brief review of the report which included the District's cash balances, capital assets, long-term debt, fund balances, current grant awards and budgets. He highlighted budget lines that he expected to run over and noted that overall the operating and capital projects for FY2022-23 are trending as expected.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

The motion carried unanimously.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Doug Carr moved to accept the Tax Collector's Report as presented. Bill Flatley seconded the motion.

Tax Collector Susan Axelrod presented the Tax Collector's Report. The report was reviewed. Axelrod let the taxpayers know that the collection rate for 2022 is at 97.5%, six months after billing and that the collection rates for 2021 and 2020 taxes are just under 100%. Axelrod noted that delinquency letters were sent out in March and some of the payments have since come in. She let the taxpayers know that there are six accounts that eligible for tax sale right now

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any further questions. There were none.

The motion carried unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (SEE HANDOUT)

MOTION: Tom Vignali moved to accept the President's Report as presented. Sandy Koerner seconded the motion.

President Bill Flatley presented an oral President's report. He thanked the Fire Chiefs and KFD's firefighters, noting that they are the backbone of the District. Flatley also thanked the Treasurer, District Manager and the other Wardens. He noted that he is grateful to URI Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police, Mike Jagoda for the excellent working relationship that KFD has with URI. He also acknowledged Larry Fortin, who recently resigned as KFD's Clerk, for his long-time service and dedication to KFD. Flatley let the taxpayers know that the Radio System Upgrade Project that KFD shares with the Town of South Kingstown and Union Fire District will hopefully be completed by next year. He also let them know that he and Warden Doug Carr attended a Rhode Island State Senate Committee hearing last week to modernize KFD's Articles of Legislation and to fix some clerical errors and that Carr testified in front of the Committee.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi stated that according to last year's minutes there were no motions tabled or carried forward to attend to at this year's meeting.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there was any other official business under the category "Old Business." There was none.

FY2023-2024 BUDGET MOTION (SEE HANDOUT)

Tom Vignali presented the Budget. The FY2023-2024 Budget was reviewed. Tom Vignali let the taxpayers know that he worked with Tom Reed and Jenifer Madison on planning and preparing the proposed budget.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

MOTION: Doug Carr moved the following Budget Motion: "I move that the budget be approved as presented, and that the Board of Wardens be directed to calculate the tax rate, based on the valuation of assessed property according to the South Kingstown Tax Assessor's rolls as of December 31, 2022, so as to meet the amount of money specified in the budget to be raised by taxation, plus or minus five percent (5%), to account for authorized abatements and additions to the tax roll throughout the tax year." The motion was seconded by Tom Vignali. Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

The motion carried unanimously.

FUND BALANCE POLICY (SEE HANDOUT):

Tom Vignali presented the proposed Fund Balance Policy and the taxpayers reviewed it. Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none.

MOTION: Tom Vignali moved the following Motion: "I move that the Kingston Fire District approve the proposed Fund Balance policy." The motion was seconded by Bill Flatley. The motion carried unanimously.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT (SEE HANDOUT)

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the taxpayers to review the Nominating Committee Report.

MOTION: Bill Flatley moved to accept the Nominating Committee Report, as presented. Sandy Koerner seconded the motion.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none. The motion carried unanimously.

NOMINATIONS FROM FLOOR

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any further nominations from the floor.

MOTION: Tom Vignali moved to nominate Eric Axelrod as Clerk. Bill Flatley seconded the motion. Eric Axelrod accepted the nomination. There were no further nominations from the floor. The motion carried unanimously.

RESIGNATIONS:

Andrew Arsenian announced his resignation as Auditor.

ELECTION

MOTION: There being no further nominations or discussion, Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked for a vote to elect those individuals nominated in the Nominating Committee Report (excluding Andrew Arsenian) and from the Floor. Sandy Koerner moved to elect the individuals nominated. Tom Vignali seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS (SEE HANDOUT):

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the electors to refer to the Resolutions to be approved under “Other New Business.”

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the electors to review the first resolution, *Resolution for Emergency Contingency Fund for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.*

MOTION: Sandra Koerner moved to accept the Resolution for Emergency Contingency Fund for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, as presented. Elizabeth McNab seconded the motion. Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none. The motion carried unanimously.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the electors to review the second resolution, *Resolution Transfer of Smoke Detector Funds.*

MOTION: Bill Flatley moved to accept the Resolution Transfer of Smoke Detector Funds, as presented. Elizabeth McNab seconded the motion. Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none. The motion carried unanimously.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the electors to review the third resolution, *Resolution Transfer of Fire Detail Funds.*

MOTION: Elizabeth McNab moved to accept the Resolution Transfer of Fire Detail Funds, as presented. Tom Vignali seconded the motion. Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked if there were any questions. There were none. The motion carried unanimously.

Moderator Maier-Sperdelozzi asked the electors if there was anything else to be heard under “Other New Business.” There were no further questions or discussion. There were no motions.

MOTION: Tom Vignali moved to adjourn. Doug Carr seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Madison
District Manager
Kingston Fire District (On behalf of Eric Axelrod, District Clerk)

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