

Draft – Minutes

Kingston Fire District
Board of Wardens Meeting
24 June 2021

Present: Wardens Ina Sciabarrasi, Sandra Koerner, Bill Flatley and Mark Barabe . Also present were Tax Collector Linda Mendillo, Treasurer Tom Vignali, URI Assistant Director of Emergency Management and Public Safety Sam Adams (via Zoom), Interim Deputy Chief Erik Brierley, District Manager Jenifer Madison, newly elected Tax Collector Susan Axelrod and Moderator/Auditing Committee Member Valerie Maier-Speredelozzi.

Absent: Warden Elizabeth McNab, Chief Nate Barrington and Deputy Chief Tom Reed.

Call to Order: President Sciabarrasi called the Board of Wardens Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was conducted in person and 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: Flatley made and Barabe seconded a motion to accept the Minutes from the Wardens Meeting on 05/27/21. The minutes were reviewed. There were no questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

Tax Collector's Report:

Motion: Barabe 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 let the Board know that the 2020 Tax Roll collection rate is at about 98% and that it is in "very good shape." She also noted that there was a very small amount due on the 2019 Tax Roll. Mendillo reminded the Board know that we are waiting to see if one vendor with tangible tax due for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 is still in business before deciding whether to abate. There was no further discussion or questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

URI Report:

Motion: Flatley made and Barabe seconded a motion to accept the URI report.

Adams presented the URI Report. The Board reviewed the report. Adams let the Board know that URI Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police Steve Baker retired effective 6/18/21. He also let the Board know that Former Major Michael Jagoda was appointed URI Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police as of 6/19/21. There was no further discussion or questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

Chief's Report:

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

Brierley presented an oral Chief's report. He let the Board know that KFD recently responded to a structure fire with Union Fire District and that the response went well. He noted that the installation of the air conditioners is complete as part of this year's station improvement project and that there are now ductless mini-split units installed in the dorm rooms, kitchen, day room and gym. Brierley let the Board know that in terms of training, KFD is sending some of our firefighters to a conference and is hosting a two-day elevator rescue class this summer. He also let the Board know that we currently have six applicants and probationary members including a couple of incoming freshmen from the New York/New Jersey area. He noted that he has been in touch with the University of RI's events staff and that they plan on hosting in-person events this fall and that KFD plans on being at these events to recruit. There was no further discussion or questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

Treasurer's Report:

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

Vignali presented the Treasurer's Report. The Board reviewed the report. Vignali went over the budget and explained that KFD's total expenditures were within budget and noted why a few specific lines ran over this fiscal year. He noted that he expected a \$20,000 surplus at the end of the fiscal year. There was no further discussion or questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

Finance Committee up-date/report: There were no updates.

Next Meetings:

- August 19, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.
- October 21, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

New Business:

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

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

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

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

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

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

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

- **Review of Warden Assignments for 2021-2022** -- the Wardens agreed to:
 - Assign Flatley and Barabe as Radio Committee Co-Representatives; Adams also sits on the Committee as the URI representative.
 - Assign Koerner as the Nominating Committee Representative
 - Assign Sciabarrasi as the Finance Committee Representative; Barabe will also sit in on meetings
 - Assign Sciabarrasi and Barabe as Review Committee Representatives for KFD's Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

- **Appointment of Chief:**

Motion: Koerner made and Flatley seconded a motion to appoint Tom Reed as Chief for FY2021-2022. Since Reed was absent from the meeting, the Board agreed to hold-off the appointments for the Deputy Chief and Coordinator until the next meeting on 7/22/21. There was no further discussion or questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

- **Results of District Special Election – Tax Collector Position**
 - **Acknowledgement of New Tax Collector:** Susan Axelrod was elected as Tax Collector for FY2021-22 during KFD's Special Election meeting preceding this meeting. The Board congratulated her.
 - Mendillo let the Board know that she is agreed to train and transition Axelrod in the role. She also noted that she does not think we will be using the new tax software for tax collection this year and that it will not be up and running until KFD's 2022 tax collection. There was no further discussion or questions.
- **Chief's Transition Administrative/Housekeeping:** The Board acknowledged that Barrington will be retiring as Chief on 6/30/21. Flatley asked what stays with the Chief and what goes with the Chief. Sciabarrasi responded that Barrington requested to keep his mobile phone number and his KFD e-mail address. She noted that KFD is granting him this request provided that he works with KFD's information technology provider to phase out the use of his KFD e-mail over a certain period of time and that he transfers his KFD mobile number over to a personal account. There was no further discussion or questions.
- **KFD Audit Bid Update:** Maier-Speredelozzi let the Board know that the Auditing Committee met on 6/7/21 to open bids, evaluate and select. She noted that there was only one vendor who submitted a bid, Wadovick & Company, and that they have been selected. Maier-Speredelozzi noted that they conducted KFD's audit the past three years. Madison added that the Office for Auditor General approved KFD's bid selection.

Old Business:

- **Review of KFD of By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation:** There were no updates.
- **Covid-19 Effort and Effects:** There were no updates.
- **Radio System Project Update:** Flatley noted that the town consultant is reviewing bids and getting questions answered by the vendors.

Communications: Sciabarrasi publicly thanked Mendillo for all her many years of service and dedication. She also thanked everyone for attending Chief Barrington's Retirement Party.

Information: There was no information. No motions were made.

Future Planning: Sciabarrasi noted that next steps involve getting the Review Committee up and running and working on getting the changes to KFD's Articles of Incorporation passed by the state legislature and then working on revising the By-Laws

Next Meetings:

- July 22, 2021 at 6:30 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- August 26, 2021 at 6:30 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- September 23, 2021 at 6:30 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- October 28, 2021 at 6:30 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- December 02, 2021 at 6:30 via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting

Adjournment:

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

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, Flatley and Barabe voted to pass the motion. McNab was absent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Madison
District Manager

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The Kingston Fire District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.