

## *Minutes*

Kingston Fire District  
Board of Wardens Meeting  
27 May 2021

**Present:** Wardens Ina Sciabarrasi, Sandra Koerner, Bill Flatley and Mark Barabe . Also present were Tax Collector Linda Mendillo, Treasurer Tom Vignali, URI Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police Stephen Baker (via *Zoom*, departed at 6:58 p.m.) Chief Nate Barrington (departed at 7:32 p.m.), Deputy Chief Tom Reed, Interim Deputy Chief Erik Brierley (via *Zoom*) and Office Manager Jenifer Madison.

**Absent:** Warden Elizabeth McNab.

**Call to Order:** President Sciabarrasi called the Board of Wardens Meeting to order at 6:31 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.

**Farewell to URI Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police Steven Baker:** KFD said goodbye to Baker, as he retires next month, and thanked him for his commitment and dedication to KFD. Baker let the Board know it has been nice working with KFD over the past 16 years and that URI is safer because of KFD.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** Flatley made and Koerner seconded a motion to accept the Minutes from the Wardens Meeting on 04/15/21. The minutes were reviewed. There were no questions.

Sciabarrasi, Koerner, and Flatley voted to pass the motion. Barabe abstained since he was absent from the 4/15/21 meeting. McNab was absent.

**Tax Collector's Report:**

**Motion:** Koerner made and Barabe 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 there is very little due on the 2019 Tax Role. Mendillo suggested to the Board that they consider abating the tangible tax from one account left for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. Reed interjected that the vendor is back in business; Mendillo then stated that she is therefore is not recommending the abatement of that tangible tax. Mendillo let the Board know that she found out through Union Fire District's Tax Collector that there is a new requirement for new Tax Collectors to be certified and it requires a test; she let the Board know that this does not have to be done right away by whoever becomes KFD's next Tax Collector. Mendillo noted that she contacted Vision about reopening credit card payments through our old vendor Point & Pay until September when Vision will be recommending a new vendor due to technical difficulties with Point & Pay. She also let the Board know that she spoke to Vision about training for the

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new Tax Collector on the tax software; Vision responded that it would be helpful for the new Tax Collector to get in touch with them right away when they begin the position. 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 Koerner seconded a motion to accept the URI report.

Baker presented the URI Report. The Board reviewed the report. Baker let the Board know that commencement ceremonies were held at Meade Stadium during the weekend of 5/21/21 through 5/23/21 and that there were good crowds and no problems. There was no further discussion or questions.

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

**Chief's Report:**

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

Barrington presented an oral Chief's report. He let the Board know that the Chiefs' transition is going well, and Reed is doing a good job. He also let the Board know that Reed has been coordinating lots of station upgrades. Barrington let the Board know that he and Reed are meeting tomorrow to discuss the District's insurance policies and needs. He noted that KFD's current insurer, VFIS, is very responsive and has kept their rates very stable and he feels what KFD pays for risk is very reasonable. Barrington stated that another vendor has been soliciting fire departments in the state and is offering to undercut rates; he cautioned the Board to vet this vendor and any others very carefully. Mendillo asked if the Tax Collector is bonded; Barrington responded that the Tax Collector, Treasurer and Office Manager positions are all bonded for district business, including driving.

Reed presented an oral Chief's Report. He let the Board know that calls are slow, and that URI's graduation went off without incident and that KFD put extra firefighters on to cover those shifts. He also noted that seven firefighters from KFD graduated this year. Reed let the Board know that the new air conditioning units are getting installed in the bunk rooms, fitness room and Day Room/Kitchen next week. He noted that KFD's annual flow tests were done yesterday. Reed also let the Board know that KFD is converting from the software program *Firehouse* to a new system to track inventory, training hours, responses, duty shifts, maintenance and plans, and that he and Brierley are working together on this project. Reed noted that recruitment and retention is going well and we have had six new applicants start training and are seeing a lot more interest from incoming URI freshman as compared to last year. There was no further discussion or questions.

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

**Treasurer's Report:**

**Motion:** Flatley made and Barabe 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 noted that while certain line items are running over or under this late in the fiscal year, overall the budget is trending as expected. He noted that he expected a \$30,000 to \$40,000 surplus at the end of the fiscal year.

Sciabarrasi suggested abating the three aging nuisance call fees on the accounts receivable report based on prior feedback from Baker regarding the status of the students involved.

**Motion:** Barabe made and Koerner seconded a motion to abate the nuisance call fees for the Eddy Hall Incident, Fayerweather Dorm Incident and Garrahy Hall Incident.

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

There was no further discussion or questions.

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

**Finance Committee up-date/report:** Sciabarrasi presented the information that was discussed at the 5/20/21 Finance Committee Meeting. She noted that the Committee reviewed the Treasurer's Report which is the same as the one presented today. She also noted that Baker let the Committee know that URI is conducting its last round of interviews for Baker's replacement as he retires. No motions were made at this meeting. There were no other updates.

**Next Meetings:**

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

**New Business:**

• **Policy for Review:**

- **KFD Human Resource Policy:** Barrington let the Board know that this policy is up for review because he is recommending that Madison's title be changed to District Manager to better reflect the job being done and that the title then needs to be revised in the Human Resource Policy. The Board reviewed the changes.

**Motion:** Koerner made and Barabe seconded a motion to approve the updated policy.

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

The Board also discussed having the Auditing Committee review other KFD policies for accuracy and updates needed.

- **KFD Audit Bud Update:** Madison let the Board know that KFD put a bid out for our 2021, 2022 and 2023 fiscal audit on 5/31/21 and that the due date for proposals is on 6/7/21 when KFD's Auditing Committee will open bids and evaluate and select the vendor.

- **Status and Updates to Open Positions:** The Board discussed qualifications that need to be met for the new Tax Collector. Sciabarrasi noted that two candidates have expressed interest in the Tax Collector position. She let the Board know that according to KFD's Articles of Incorporation and confirmed by District Attorney, Noelle Clapham, the District would need to hold a Special Election and that a letter calling for the Special Election would need to be drafted and signed by 12 electors. A draft letter was presented for the Board to review. The Board determined that they would like the Special Election to be held before the next Board Meeting on 6/24/21. The Board also agreed to letting Mendillo train the new Tax Collector after 7/1/21 and paying a fee for service.

**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:** There were no updates.

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

**Information:** Reminder – Chief's Retirement Party 6/12/21 at Yawgoo Bakes

**Future Planning:** Sciabarrasi let the Board know that we are adding *Future Planning* as an agenda item going forward so that the Board can use this time to review and discuss items, they would like to address at future meetings. She noted that it will allow the Board to better communicate about items and issues.

**Next Meetings:**

- June 24, 2021 at 6:30 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – *Special Election Meeting*
- June 24, 2021 at 7:00 PM via *Zoom* and at the KFD Station – *Monthly Wardens Meeting*
- 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:** Barabe made and Flatley 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 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Madison  
Office Manager