

REGULAR MEETING

SOUTHAMPTON FIRE DISTRICT

MAY 10, 2007

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Southampton Fire District was called to order by Chairman Grisnik in the Library of the Tuckahoe School, 468 Magee Street, Southampton, New York, in accordance with the notice provided to the news media, copy of which is attached hereto. The meeting opened at 7:32 PM with the salute to the flag followed by a moment of silence.

PRESENT: Commissioners Robert Grisnik, W. Mark Press, David Price, Harald Steudte, Tom White, Treasurer Michael Hadix and Secretary Nicole Hadix

GUESTS: Southampton Fire Department Chief Joe Corr, 1st Assistant Chief Roy L. Wines IV and 2nd Assistant Chief Rodney C. Pierson. Also in attendance were Samuel Dimon, Abdullah Aamir, Richard Grodski, Fred Andrews and Rod Pierson.

Chief's Report – Assistant Chief Pierson reviewed the NFPA Survey Report, no copies were available however the Chief will provide one to the Fire District Board as soon as possible. (The report is attached herein to these minutes). The Chief stated 55 calls for the month, 282 calls total since beginning of the year. The Chief also stated they are currently working on the breakdown between the village and town. Mr. Grisnik asked for a report regarding the plans for the new firehouse. Chief Pierson stated he would not be giving that report at this time.

Public Participation – Mr. Pierson questioned why the board is asking for a presentation regarding the new firehouse when 2 board members were at the Village Board meeting. Mr. Gisnik stated they would like the information stated at the Fire District meeting for all board members as well as the general public to hear.

A motion was made by Mr. Press and seconded by Mr. Steudte to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 12, 2007, with one correction. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye
Mr. Price	Aye		

VH4-54

A motion was made by Mr. Steudte and seconded by Mr. White to approve the eleven plus two vouchers presented by Treasurer Hadix for payment. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye	
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye	
Mr. Price	Aye			<u>VH4-55</u>

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed (a copy attached herein). A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Steudte to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, with one correction. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye	
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye	
Mr. Price	Aye			<u>VH4-56</u>

The Secretary reviewed the correspondence sent and received over the last month. A list is attached herein.

At this time Chairman Grisnik read in full a letter from the Fire District Board sent to the Village Board, also a letter to the Fire District Board from Chief Joseph Corr. (Copies are attached herein).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fire District Budget – At this time \$491,834.16 is still due to the Fire District from the Town. The 2nd contract payment is due by May 31, 2007 in the amount of \$412,500.00.

A motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. White to authorize the treasurer to make two (2) payments by the end of May 2007. The first payment to the Village in the amount of \$325,000.00 and the second payment to the Fire Department in the amount of \$87,500.00.

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye	
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye	
Mr. Price	Aye			<u>VH4-57</u>

Fire Protection Contract – No report

Long Range Planning – Meetings with Fire Chiefs, Town of Southampton and Village of Southampton will determine long range planning.

Wells, Hydrants & Water Mains – Mr. Press stated there are currently three ongoing projects to install public water to the Water Mill area. One is to Seven Ponds Towd Road, the second is Rose Hill Road, and the third is North Sea Mecox Road. Signatures are being collected by homeowners to allow for the SCWA to install water to these roads.

Mr. Press spoke regarding the emergency repair to the Highland Road well. Gregor Well is in the process of fixing the drop pipe to the well. The well on Deerfield Road has been decommissioned and removed. The electric deep wells on Farmstead Lane, Blank Lane, Deerfield Road and Edge of Woods road have been inspected, cleaned and painted. The locks on all the electric deep wells have been checked and are in working order. Mr. Steudte asked the board to consider buying a weed-wacker to be used by community service workers to keep the wells clear of brush.

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Press to purchase a weed-wacker for the express use of the Southampton Fire District to keep the wells free of overgrown brush.

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye
Mr. Price	Aye		

VH4-58

Public Participation – Chief Pierson asked why copies of the financial statements were not made available to the public. Mr. Grisnik stated copies were available by request once they have been approved at the meeting by the Commissioners. Also when the Fire District’s website is up and running, this information will be posted for the public.

Mr. Pierson spoke of importance of having a unified district and working out an agreement with the Village. He believes the majority of the fire dep’t members do not want to see the department split. Mr. White stated he agreed it was time to unify, he said the reason the Fire District was formed was to make fire protection more equitable between the town and the village.

Mr. White stated the firemen work for the village. Chief Pierson strongly stated he did not work for the village but he worked for the fire department and for the community. Mr. Dimon stated he volunteers for the community and does not work for the village, he found that statement an insult.

Mr. Grodski spoke of the village long ago and stated it has been running fire protection the same way for many years. The village contracts out services to the outlying areas and has a right to make a profit and it will be hard for them to agree to change. He also stated the firemen all joined to help the community and they are all upset with the issues between the village and the town over the fire district.

Mr. Grodski stated the village writes the contract for fire protection and the town signs it and that has been going on for years. Mr. Steudte agreed when he was on the Village Board as the Fire Commissioner, he wrote the contract giving the village the best deal he could since that was his job. However, the town decided they had enough; they didn’t want to pay such exorbitant prices anymore and created the Southampton Fire District.

Mr. Grodski stated the Fire District is trying to split the fire dept membership. Mr. Steudte stated the District wants to unify and keep all members together under the Southampton Fire District.

Mr. Andrews asked what Mr. Steudte’s position would be today if he was still on the Village Board. Mr. Steudte stated he disagrees with the members of the Village Board who feel the village would be paying too much. He spoke about sitting down with the village and exploring the options.

Chief Wines speaking as a tax payer stated since the days of the volunteers is limited to 10 or 20 years why would the board be looking to start a new fire department. Mr. White stated the board does not want two fire departments but they cannot continue to pay the exorbitant fees to the village.

Mr. Pierson asked about the Westhampton Beach Fire District unification and why that worked. Mr. Press stated they had a mayor and fire department that supported it. Chief Corr asked what terminology is used to describe the Westhampton fire dept. Mr. Press stated there used to be 3 Districts, one Fire District and two Fire Protection Districts which united to form the Westhampton Beach Fire District.

Chief Corr also asked if the original purpose of the board was to own property in Water Mill. Mr. Press stated the town wanted to buy a piece pf property and discovered it was illegal to do so, the property could however be purchased by a Fire District.

Mr. Price stated as a unified district all money for the fire department will be spent on fire services only. Currently the village is not handling the money that way. He also stated owning this new property on North Sea Road is important in negotiations with the village. Chief Pierson stated the chiefs want to meet and everyone is in agreement. Chief Pierson said the membership feels uncertain about their future ever since the district was established. The Chief also stated his taxes have increased since the formation of the district. Mr. Grisnik explained the tax rate has not changed but the property assessments have.

Mr. Press stated in the past it was impossible to meet with the Chiefs. He is now happy with the new Chiefs and their willingness to meet and discuss a unified district. Mr. Press stated the problems in the past four years that the board has had to endure like nasty phone calls, obscene gestures, being left out of communications. Mr. Press stated the board had a meeting three years ago with Mayor Epley, Nancy McGann and Roger Blough and they stated if they were elected, they would address the issues of unification. Mr. Press stated he spoke to Mayor Epley recently and Fire District Board hadn't gained any ground regarding unification with the village. Chief Pierson stated he doesn't want to look backwards; he only wants to go forward. Mr. Press stated again that no one on this board wants a separate fire department. Mr. Press stated problems with the Village Trustee Paul Robinson who has made inappropriate statements about the Fire District. Chief Corr stated all three Chiefs wish to move forward for the benefit of the department. Mr. Grisnik thanked Chief Corr for his letter and will choose a date for a meeting with this Board and the Chiefs. Chief Wines stated they are continuing with the plans for a new firehouse but this does not change any plans they have regarding unification. The fire house plans can be used at the new site in North Sea and the referendum can be cancelled if need be.

Mr. White suggested that it would be better for the Chiefs to have support of both the Village Board and the Fire District before going forward with the plans for a new firehouse. Mr. White agrees a new fire house is needed but cannot support this plan until after unification discussions take place. Chief Pierson stated the Fire District Board is in contract to buy property on North Sea Road and didn't talk to the fire department or village. The commissioners disagreed, stating the plans to purchase the property have been in place for two years.

Old Business – No Report

New Business – New York State is requiring all Fire Districts to adopt a code of ethics which must be in place by June 1, 2007 (a copy is attached herein).

Mr. Press spoke about the code of ethics explaining why they were initiated and how they will affect the Fire District. Mr. Grisnik read aloud the first three paragraphs of the Model Code of Ethics. He stated that this code of ethics as well as policies and procedures will be available on the website as soon as the website is up and running.

A motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Press to adopt the Model Code of Ethics presented by the New York State Controllers Office.

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye
Mr. Price	Aye		

VH4-59

A motion was made by Mr. Steudte and seconded by Mr. Press to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm.

Mr. Grisnik	Aye	Mr. Steudte	Aye
Mr. Press	Aye	Mr. White	Aye
Mr. Price	Aye		

VH4-60

The meeting was then reopened at 9:02pm in order to hear a presentation by Chief Wines regarding the new firehouse plans. The plans are for the Hampton Road firehouse. A committee consisting of Fire Chiefs, Captains and fire department members participated in the plans. The plans include keeping the structure appropriate to the neighborhood, having the ability for overnight use including a kitchen, bathroom with showers and extra rooms which could be converted into bunk rooms if needed. This new building will have what the fire department will need for the future. SEQUA reviews have been completed and they are currently waiting on another set of plans and a cost analysis.

Mr. Grisnik thanked Chief Wines for his report and thanked all the members of the Fire Department and community who came to the meeting.

Chairman Grisnik declared the meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Hadix
Secretary

