

REGULAR MEETING

SOUTHAMPTON FIRE DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 13, 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 2nd Assistant Chief Rodney C. Pierson. Also in attendance were Samuel Dimon, Rodney B. Pierson, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Maloney, Mike Finocchiaro, Teri Westerhoff, Peter Kirwin, Mike Kampf, Robin Owens, Fred Andrews, Mr. Corwith, Jason Korte, Dave Raynor

Public Participation –

Mr. Pierson asked about the monthly meeting with the Village. Commissioner White said they have requested a meeting for this month. Commissioner Grisnik stated the meetings have taken place the fourth Thursday of the month in July and August. Chief Pierson said they are available for this month too. Mr. Pierson asked if the meeting involved the Village Board. Commissioner White said the Village Board has not yet been involved. Right now the meeting includes the Chiefs and one Village representative. Mr. Pierson asked if this Board feels they are getting cooperation from the Chiefs. Commissioner White stated yes. Commissioner Price said he is optimistic and has seen progress with the Chiefs but the Village Board is the next step once all questions have been answered. Mr. Pierson asked if others could get a copy of the list of questions. Commissioner White said some questions have been answered and it is up to the Chiefs to share the questions and information with the membership. Commissioner White stated some questions are mute such as the question of the antiques; others still have to be answered. Mr. Pierson said the membership doesn't know what questions are being asked and the information is not reaching the membership. Commissioner Grisnik said the membership has to talk to the Chiefs to get their answers. Commissioner Price said he suggested a meeting with the council and then the whole department. He said the Chief is not ready yet because all his questions haven't been answered. He is hoping after the next meeting, information will begin to be passed on to the membership.

Brian Cooke asked if this Board should be talking directly to the Village Board. Commissioner Grisnik said the mayor asked us to work with the Chiefs. Commissioner Price said the Village representative should be at all Fire District and Fire Department level meetings. Commissioner Price said all information must be passed on from the Chiefs to the Council and membership. The Fire District has no way to get information regarding unification out to the membership. Brian Cooke stated the Village owns the antiques; the only question is how to give over the antiques to the District or membership. Commissioner Price said the question presented regarding antiques was about insuring and maintaining. He stated the use of antiques as a bargaining chip would be wrong.

Fred Andrews asked for a presentation about unification and how it would work. He also asked about the lawsuit and what transpired. Commissioner Grisnik said that the lawsuit would be discussed at tonight's meeting and the Board will consider talking about the unification process at one of the meetings.

Peter Kirwin asked all the Commissioners for their vision of a future District. All Commissioners responded they want a unified Fire District under a Board of Fire Commissioners.

Dave Raynor asked about a combined Board with Fire Commissioners and the Village Board. Commissioner Steudte asked why. Mr. Raynor responded; in order to keep the fire department and equipment as is. Commissioner Press said the Village attorney stated the sum paid by the Fire District to the Village can be used at the sole discretion of the Village. A joint District is a different type of Fire District, and it's unclear how the money would be handled. Commissioner Press stated this Board is only looking for a unified District with five new Commissioners from both the Village and the District who would oversee all the funds collected from both the Village and the District.

Mike Kampf asked what will happen if unification doesn't work. What will the District do? Commissioner White said the Village has told them in the past to get fire protection elsewhere. This Board is saying we want to have a unified Fire District with the same firemen and the same trucks, just a different way to manage the money. Commissioner White said the Village records are inept and unclear. The plan is to go forward with unification. A new Fire District Board would be established possibly with firemen as Commissioners just like our neighboring Fire Districts. He stated there is plenty of money to run the Fire District with both Village and District tax money. Mr. Kampf said the membership doesn't know what is going on. The membership sees plans for a fire house and new property. Where is this going? Commissioner White said if this doesn't work the District has to plan for its future. Mr. Kampf said the fire department council is pushing for a department meeting. He stated the 140 member department can address the Village and the Chiefs if they are aware of the issues regarding unification before it is too late. Commissioner Price said since the contract is over at the end of 2009, if we can't get some indication from the Village for unification by the end of 2008 then this District has to look into its own department. Commissioner Price suggested a meeting about unification after the budget hearing on October 16, 2007 in order to get information out to the membership. Commissioner Price said all plans this Board is making will benefit a unified Fire District. The fire service would be better served under a Board of Fire Commissioners.

Peter Kirwin said he appreciates the Board's frankness and doesn't want to see the Fire Department split. He will take this information back to his company. Commissioner Price said all members of the department should come to a meeting to hear information and make up their own minds regarding unification.

Dave Raynor said the fire department needs a new fire house. What is the Board's position regarding a new fire house once we unify. Commissioner Price said if unified the District would have a four million dollar budget and could build a new fire house on the North Sea Road property and renovate the Hampton Road firehouse as well as purchase property in Water Mill with this annual budget for five years. Commissioner Grisnik said this Board would not be involved with those plans at that point. A new Board would be in place and decide what to do with the money raised. Mr. Dimon said all money raised would go to fire department matters only. Commissioner Grisnik stated that was correct.

Rodney Pierson said that the fire department members feel they have their hands tied. They don't want to jump ahead of the Chiefs. He feels the Village Board is dragging its feet. He suggested this Board attend a Village Board meeting and question why Board members don't attend unification meetings. Commissioner White said this Board doesn't live in the Village and our presence won't carry any weight. Mr. Pierson said the Village is going to drag their feet and after 3 years nothing will be done. Commissioner Steudte said this Board is planning for the future. We are purchasing property and we know what it costs to purchase equipment. Commissioner Steudte said he spoke to Mr. Andrews and told him we would like to see the District unify with the Village but the Board has to also plan for the future in case that doesn't happen.

Dave Raynor asked if the District could generate enough funds to support its own department. Commissioner Steudte said yes it could but the problem would be the membership. Where would the membership pool come from? Commissioner Steudte said he didn't know if the Village could support its own department.

Brian Cooke asked if the District was to go on its own, would the tax payer save money. Commissioner Steudte said short term no, but over the long term yes. Mr. Cooke said he doesn't believe that. He said according to the Districts financials, the reserves are going up. Commissioner Steudte said that money is to purchase property. Mr. Cooke said the Board is purchasing properties the taxpayers said they didn't want. Commissioner Price said the taxpayers turned down a bond to purchase property. Mr. Cooke and the Board do not agree on this issue.

Chief's Report – Chief Pierson supplied 3 reports for this month. A year to date report, a monthly report and a run report. Chief reported from 8/15/07 to 9/13/07 there were 58 calls, 32 false alarms, 4 rescues and 13 others. He reported the annual antique muster at Agawam Park was a success. Commissioner Grisnik asked the Chief to read the report regarding calls for the District verses the Village. Chief Pierson refused.

A motion was made by Mr. Press and seconded by Mr. Steudte to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 9, 2007. The motion was approved by the following vote:

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

A motion was made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Price to approve the sixteen 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>VH4-83</u> |

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed. A motion was made by Mr. Steudte and seconded by Mr. Price to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was approved by the following vote:

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-84</u> |

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

Committee Reports

Fire District Budget – New York State Law dictates the budget process. This year the law has changed requiring the District to have a budget hearing on October 16, 2007.

- The proposed budget must be adopted by Sept 25, 2007.
- Notice of Budget Hearing must be posted on District website and provided to Town Clerk between Sept 26 and October 1, 2007.
- Publish Notice of Hearing in Southampton Press and provide copy of proposed budget to Town Clerk by October 11, 2007.
- Budget must be adopted by November 4, 2007.
- Adopted budget must be delivered to Town Clerk by November 7, 2007.

Commissioner Grisnik stated three Commissioners attended a conference on September 6, 2007 at Cornell Cooperative Extension in Riverhead hosted by the New York State Comptrollers Office. Commissioner Grisnik listed the panelists and gave a brief overview of the meeting.

Fire Protection Contract – Within the first year of a 3 year contract.

Long Range Planning – Currently working with Chiefs and Village on long range planning for this District

Wells, Hydrants & Water Mains – Commissioner Press said the water main is being installed on Rose Hill Road and Rose Hill Court to the end. It may be extended to David’s Lane and Halsey Lane due to MTBE found in some wells in the area. Due to the efforts of Commissioner White the town, while redoing Old Mill Road, will extend the water main under the railroad tracks and install a hydrant on the east side of Old Mill Road and the north side of Montauk Highway. Commissioner White said there will now be a hydrant on the north side of Montauk Highway next to Water Mill Square.

Old Business – Commissioner Grisnik said the Board would review and compare the adopted version of the Code of Ethics with the recommendations from Mr. Glass. Treasurer Hadix said the website is ready to go online. Some changes have been made to the maps and he is waiting on the Commissioners input and approval. Treasurer Hadix stated he has the ability on go into the website and add information as needed.

New Business – The budget will be discussed in executive session tonight. Commissioner Steudte said he and Commissioner White met with a PR company who handles brochures for Fire Departments. The Commissioners would like to discuss hiring this company to help get the Districts information out to the public. The company is called American Fire Fighters USA.

A motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Steudte at 8:41 PM to recess to executive session to discuss budgetary matters. The motion was passed by the following vote.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-85</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Steudte and seconded by Mr. Press at 10:10 to adjourn the executive session and return to the regular meeting. The motion was passed by the following vote.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-86</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Press and seconded by Mr. Steudte to approve and accept after having reviewed the amended 2005 and 2006 CPA audited financial statements prepared by Hulse & Company CPA’s, P.C.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-87</u> |

The treasurer reported that the Board has adopted the recommendations outlined in the audit performed by Hulse & Company CPA’s, P.C.

A motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. White to authorize the previous chairman, Mr. Press to sign the managements Discussion and Analysis letter associated with the amended 2005/2006 audited financial statements.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-88</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Press and seconded by Mr. Steudte to adopt the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2008.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-89</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Press and seconded by Mr. White to authorize the activation of the Southampton Fire District website (www.southamptonfiredistrict.org) with Hampton On-line.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-90</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Steudte and seconded by Mr. Press to hire American Firefighter USA of Levittown, NY for public relations as per the proposal to send out brochures on the Southampton Fire Districts behalf.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-91</u> |

A motion was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. Press to draft a letter to all Chiefs, Council and Captains of the Southampton Fire Department regarding organizing a meeting to discuss unification.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|---------------|
| Mr. Grisnik | Aye | Mr. Steudte | Aye | |
| Mr. Press | Aye | Mr. White | Aye | |
| Mr. Price | Aye | | | <u>VH4-92</u> |

Chairman Grisnik declared the meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Hadix
Secretary