

Williamstown Fire District Prudential Committee

October 23, 2013 Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Prudential Committee of the Williamstown Fire District was held on October 23, 2013 at the Fire Station. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Present: Prudential Committee Chairman John J. Notsley, Committeeman Edward M. McGowan, Committeeman Edward B. Briggs and Clerk/Treasurer, Corydon L. Thurston. Also in attendance were Chief Craig A. Pedercini, Engineers, Robert E Briggs, Michael Noyes, Richard F Daniels and Daniel Bryant. There were 14 other citizens of the Town in attendance. (The sign in sheet is attached to the file copy of the minutes)

Voted: To approve the minutes from the September 18th Prudential Committee meeting.

Voted: To approve the minutes of the September 26th Prudential Committee meeting.

A misspelling of Acting Moderator Parese's name was noted in the minutes presented for the Special District Meeting of October 15th. It was **Voted:** To approve the minutes of the October 15th, Special District Meeting, with that correction.

Voted: To approve the Treasurer report as presented.

The Treasurer provided the Committee with payroll figures for the first quarter of the fiscal year which heretofore had not been included in the warrants due to the transition to a new payroll service. Revised warrants for July and August and the September warrant were reviewed by the Committee and;

Warrants were signed.

Old Business:

There was none.

New Business:

Chairman Notsley made an opening statement regarding the results of the Special District Meeting noting that the article fell short of the required two-thirds majority by only 14 votes. Although disappointed, he felt the meeting was a good one and provided the Committee with some good feedback. There were a few issues of concern presented that he felt the district didn't adequately address and he felt that a number of folks may have voted differently had some type of compromise been offered. With this feedback in mind and the fact that the opportunity to purchase, a right sized parcel of land in the heart of the Town is rare if not impossible, he felt that the committee should return to the voters with a refined plan in order to secure the property for the future opportunity to build a new fire station or possibly a joint public safety facility.

An active discussion followed with members of the community sharing their support and their concerns with the committee. There was no apparent objection to the need for a new facility but those who explained their opposition to the first vote summarized their major issues as being; The timing of this project in relationship to other identified capital needs in the community and the priorities of each; The need to be more specific with the request/article, it's costs and tax impact; The need to be open, supportive and cooperate with the upcoming Town studies on shared facilities that may save money for everyone.

Those in support recognized the need to seize the opportunity to acquire the land now, when available, in order to secure an adequate location for the future needs regardless of when the construction of a new station might be authorized. Most believed that large parcels in the center of town are scarce and would be rarely available for sale and making that investment now for the future was essential. They shared some constructive feedback as to the process and communications of the facts to the public. They urged the committee to seek compromise and try again to seek voter approval.

When the discussion concluded a motion was made and it was **Voted:** To draft two new warrant articles to bring before another Special District meeting to be targeted for early December. The first article would seek financing for the property acquisition only and pledge cooperation with the Town for studying this site and others on the feasibility of it supporting a combined public safety facility. The second article would seek bare minimum funds for the demolition and site work necessary to mitigate safety and liability concerns but not include fill or infrastructure improvements.

Voted: To hold a special Prudential Committee meeting at 7 pm on November 6th to approve warrant articles and to fix a date for a Special District Meeting targeted toward the first two weeks in December.

Chiefs Report:

Chief Pedercini indicated that four more candidates were interested in joining the department.. He then reviewed the fire reports and incidences; there were 37 calls in September. He also reported the following:

- 36 permits were issued September
- A Dry Hydrant is being installed at the Five Corners, Rt. 7, in South Williamstown.
- The Open House on Oct. 12th, during Fire Prevention, week attracted a fabulous turnout of over 150 people

The Chief also reviewed training events, and community outreach initiatives that occurred since the last meeting. (a copy of the Chief's report is attached to the file copy of the minutes)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm

Respectfully Submitted:

Corydon L Thurston
Clerk/Treasurer