

MINUTES OF THE 948th BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING March 8, 2022

The meeting was called to order by President Nancy Crozier at 19:05
Pledge of Allegiance

Board Members Present: B. Appell, B. Baldwin, J. Borges, N. Crozier, R. Deming, J. Farzinzad, G. Kline, T. Post, K. Shaw, and James Speich. Excused: J. DiPace

Other Members Present: Chip Carpenter, Dave Costill. Peter Delap, Connor Goldie, Sue Jansen, Nick Mathein, Dave Theriault, Robert Theriault and Mark Wilson.

Minutes of the 946th Board meeting were approved.
Minutes of the 947th Board meeting were approved

Communications from Members:

- **None**

Board Representative Reports:

- Company 1 – Joe Farzinzad No Report
- Company 2 and Fire Police – Gina Kline No Report
- Company 3 – Jeff Borges No Report
- Company 4 – Brian Baldwin
 - Emailed the members about the last board meeting discussions.
- HQ – Kristen Shaw
 - A member asked Kristen about getting gym reimbursement for doing Zoom classes through her gym membership. Kristen was told that if she has proof of attending these classes and proof of her gym membership dues, she will get reimbursed.
 - A member asked Kristen who would be getting back to the companies regarding suggestions put into the suggestion boxes. Gina Kline told Kristen that the suggestions are discussed at the officers meeting and the captains should be talking to their companies with what was discussed and decided.
- Explorers – Tom Post
 - Tom and the other advisors are going over the roster for the Explorers and talking to the ones that are not participating much and will give them their options.
 - Red tee shirts have been ordered for all Explorers. These shirts will be their uniform of the day so that all Explorers are the same.
 - Ramona is working with the Explorers to get them gear and she is doing a great job.

Treasurer's Report – Ryan Deming

- The partner that was doing the 990 for the department has moved on and the new partner is not willing to do this service per bono. Ryan estimated that for his company to do this they could charge anywhere between \$4,000 and \$9,000. He suggested that the department goes out for bids to see if this can be done for a better cost. He would like this to be added under new business,
- Lock Box – Simsbury Bank never charged the department for the lock box, but Liberty bank is charging us. Ryan has talked with the bank, and they did reverse some of the charges, but they are going to continue charging us these bank fees. If we stay with the lock box, the bank told Ryan that for September when a lot of our donations go through the lock box the service charge would be \$1,100. Ryan suggested this should be brought under new business to keep the lock box or do away with it.

Bring Under New Business:

- Ryan Deming made a motion to bring under New Business with Jeff Borges seconding the following items:
 - Eliminating the lock box and encouraging people to donate through PayPal which they can reach through our website.
 - Soliciting bids to accounting firms to file the department's 990.
- Both motions were voted on and approved.

Treasurer's Report cont.

- Corporate:
 - Here is a breakdown of our cash balances:

	Current	Prior Year
	2/28/2022	2/28/2021
Total Cash	\$771,795	\$644,443
Restricted Cash		
Town Grant	\$565,180	\$437,336
EB Trust	\$ 14,903	\$ 14,904
Temporarily Restricted Funds	\$ 32,653	\$ 57,625
Total Restricted Cash	\$612,736	\$509,865
Cash Free of Restrictions	\$159,059	\$134,578

- As of February 28th, there is \$32.6k of temporarily restricted funds. These consist primarily of funds restricted for EB Trust (\$20.3k), Explorer Funds (\$5.3k) and Restricted Health/Wellness Donations (\$2.5k).
- non-Grant revenue is \$29.7k and Non-Grant Expenses are \$63.2k for a new loss of \$33.5k.
- Budget:
 - Total budget spend year to date (July-February) is \$303 (\$385k prior). There is \$483k as of February 28th remaining of Town grant funds for the 2021/2022 budget year.
 - Overall, we have only spent 38.6% of the total budget as of February 28th.

Town Representative Report – James Speich

- Jim reported that the town will be financing separately a tanker and ladder. The options they are looking at is lease, bank loan or bonding (Jim feels bonding is not an option the town wants to take). For the town to do this it will take a special meeting with the public stating their opinions on this issue,
- Jim has talked to Laura Ward who was our public relations person in the past about what she did for us and what we expected her to do. He now has a good idea of what to put into a proposal to go out to bid. Jim feels very strongly that the board needs to have a public relations person/firm and he would like the board to give him the approval to proceed.

Recruitment and Retention Committee Report – Jeff Borges

- The committee would like to know what funding they have so they can proceed with planning events and possibly printing and other ideas they would like to work on. Jeff was told that they do have money in the operating budget. Grace Bianchi will email Jeff and Lt. Wright the operating budget for Recruitment and Retention.
- Right now, they are keeping the retention part of this committee but will be looking into separating this from the recruitment part. To do the separating a plan will have to be developed to have certain jobs for retention to be responsible for.

President's Report: Nancy Crozier

- Thank you to Jim Speich and Chief Joe Speich for presenting the town with the need of replacing the ladder truck and the tanker.

Chief's Report – Bruce Appell

- Study Survey has been sent out and is due back March 9th. So far out of roughly 150 members 56 members have completed the survey.
- Chief Appell is working with a representative from ISO on an updated rating for the town of Avon.
- Chief Appell has not heard anything from the architects. Hopefully he will hear something soon.
- Chief Appell and Chip Carpenter met with Hartford Country Regional about a canteen service.
 - Salvation Army did have a few canteens but with COVID they were not responding.
 - Working with a group for a list of canteens and all categories of support.
 - Salvation Army supplies coffee and light refreshments and can respond within 20 to 30 minutes.
 - Wethersfield has light snacks.
 - We will be using the ARGO trailer because it is able to keep firefighters warm or cool and it has the capability of making coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. There will also be light refreshments.
 - Canteen 51 out of Farmington and has a full kitchen but their lead time is 90 to 12 minutes.
 - We could see some funding, but Chief Appell wasn't too sure about this.
 - As of right now it has cost roughly \$50 to make the ARGO trailer usable for this program.
- Chief Appell reported to the board that the town has received grant money for a new Dial A Ride Bus and he has been in contact with Alex Trujillo to see if it is possible to get the old bus for the Explorers. He will keep the board informed of any developments.
- Chief Speich is working to get a Fire Instructor Program FF I in the high school. Some towns are doing it and some schools are interested in doing the program.
- Peter Buonomo is working on the program and a presentation for the board of education/superintendent to have this in Avon High School.

Unfinished Business:

- Annual Points Reimbursement – Do to understaffing the points reimbursement will be given out only once this year, but a survey will go out to the members for their feeling on whether to keep it twice a year or go back to annual payouts.
- Tax Abatement -No report currently.
- 2022 Goals and Priorities – Brian Baldwin suggested a special planning session to get these going. The top 10 are:
 - Outline and implement plan for Chief selection process.
 - Prepare and submit capital budget.
 - Prepare and approve operating budget.
 - Update and streamline AOG's to clarify and remove contradictory language.
 - Review and update job descriptions and position criteria as necessary to support leader selection and succession.
 - Develop plan to monitor and improve member satisfaction and retention.
 - Engage a public relations person to help market the department.
 - Explore different methods to engage members to receive communications.
 - Develop and implement a plan to market the department to support recruitment, fundraising and general awareness (Of volunteer status).
 - Identify communication barriers to establish better 2-way communication.

Unfinished Business cont.

- Physical Policy – Tabled for now. Need more information.
 - Chief Appell is in talks with Adam Corrado about what type of physicals are needed. The chief would like to see entry level members under 40 have a physical every year.
 - Kristen Shaw did ask if HQ members could take the Life Scan Physical and the Chief Appell said he didn't see why they couldn't. He will talk to Assistant Chief Sedlak about this. Kristen will wait until Chief Appell talks to Assistant Chief Sedlak before she sends out an email to the HQ members to let them know they can take this physical.
- Suggestions Box – Gina Kline and Nancy Crozier will talk to Chief Appell about having the captains get feedback to their members.

New Business:

- Simsbury Black and Red Ball – Everyone that was on the original list has been contacted to see if they are still able to go. As of tonight, there are 12 tickets still available, and an email has been sent out to Avonfire to let the members know that these tickets are available. The board originally purchased 3 tables with 10 to a table. The list of attendees must be sent to the event planner by the end of the week.
- Yard Goat Tickets for the July 26, 2022, First Responder Night #6:05 pm – Jeff Borges made a motion to purchase 50 tickets with Joe Farzinazad seconding. Motion passed.
- Steward – The board needs to put together a Job Description for this position. Board should know what the Steward should be doing. This will be taken up by Kristen Shaw, and she will work on a job description to present to the board for approval.
- Camera Policy will be addressed at the April Board meeting. An email will go out with the draft policy,
- Discontinue of Lock Box – Ryan Deming checked with the department's bank, and they are charging us for this service. If we continue with this for the month of September, the bank will charge us \$1,100. Ryan made a motion to do away with this service and to encourage people to use PayPal in our fund-raising letter and with our website with Brian Baldwin seconding. Motion passed.
- Ryan Deming made a motion to solicit bids for a firm to submit the department's 990 to the IRS with Tom Post seconding. Motion passed.

Not on the Agenda:

- The Chief just wanted to let the board know that they may have to think of increasing points with the price of gas going up. He just wanted the board to think about this, no action needs to be taken now.
- Tom Post wanted the board to be aware that there is a problem with the steering box on the Mack Truck and this should be looked at to keep it road worthy. Chief Speich has sent the Mack out to get quotes for what needs to be done to keep the Mack Road worthy. He suggested the board should think about putting money aside to keep the Mack going. Chief Appell agreed with this.

Next Board meeting will be April 5, 2022

Meeting adjourned at 20:55