

964th Board of Directors Meeting, July 27, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Nancy Crozier at

19:09. Pledge of Allegiance

Board Members Present: Bruce Appell, Chip Carpenter, Nancy Crozier, Steve Gwizdak, Tom Post, Kristen Shaw, Jim Speich. **Excused:** Brian Baldwin, Jeff Borges, Jamie DiPace, Gina Kline.

Other Members Present: Tom Kline, Sharon Levine-Shein, Jim Reber, Joe Speich, and Mark Wilson.

The June 29, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes, and the July 11, 2023, were approved with a motion made by Chip Carpenter and seconded by Kristen Shaw.

Communications from Members: None.

Communications from Board Members:

- President's Report read by Vice President Nancy Crozier
 - Per new state regulations, Board members must complete Sexual Harassment Prevention training annually. Documentation of completion is required for each Board member. Please send a copy of the 2023 certificate of completion to Gina by 7/31.
 - One of the primary responsibilities of the Board is to ensure that the Chief has the financial resources necessary to run the Department effectively. While the majority of activities are funded through the grant received from the Town, we do offset some expense using fundraising dollars and other grants. Dennis Bianchi has done an exceptional job of operationalizing the fundraising effort over the years, but the Board's fiduciary responsibilities require that we have a Board-level Fundraising Committee to set specific objectives and guide fundraising strategies. This committee will meet regularly at a frequency to be determined with posted agendas and minutes per Foil requirements. Gina will be developing the charter for this committee and will solicit feedback prior to the August Board meeting.
 - Sid Shafran has expressed interest in helping with grants and Ben Shapiro has connected us with a grant writing consultant who is willing to assist with our efforts either pro bono or at a discounted rate. The Fundraising Committee mentioned previously will establish goals and objectives specific to grant funding so that we can have an ongoing process to identify additional funding sources and ensure that we are taking full advantage of these opportunities.
 - There was some discussion at the previous Board meeting about using fiscal year points to determine the annual tax abatement award for members. Grace reached out to the Town to discuss this and was told that the tax abatement is based on assessment year not fiscal year. The determination must be based on activity from Oct 1st through Sept 30th regardless of the dates of our fiscal year. Based on this, there will be no changes to the internal process for submitting information for the annual tax abatement.
 - Per the discussion at the Special Board meeting earlier this month Gina Kline is working on an article for the Running Card for the newly added President's Corner section. The topic, as suggested by Brian, will be the finest traditions of the fire service.

Assistant Treasurer's Report: Steve Gwizdak

- Tax form 990 has been prepared by the tax accountant. Steve presented the tax return information to the board. Motion was made to approve this form and to have Kristen Shaw and Gina Kline just look it over.
- Encumbered Funds: The department has encumbered a little over \$227,000 from the 2022/2023 fiscal year budget.

Communications from Board Members cont.

- Report from Brian Baldwin was read by Chip Carpenter.
 - The September 11th committee met on July 18th, There were three members present. Two members could not make it. A check list for the ceremony was made. Brian will be sending out another meeting notice this week.
- Clambake - Kristen Shaw
 - Kristen reported to the board that the clambake committee met last week and will be meeting again next week on Tuesday August 2nd at Company 2. The clambake will still be on Labor Day weekend. No kids, the same as what has been in the past. The communications committee will get a schedule together to promote the clambake.
- Explorers-Tom Post
 - The Explorers had 2 members graduate from the fire service program at the fire academy. They are Andrew Kline and Kaylee Shaw. Chief Kline handed out awards and we had Engine 10 at the ceremony.
 - The Explorers who graduated from high school are checking on their educational leave status.
 - Still looking into getting the gear supplier here to fit some of our Explorers.
 - The chief show that is usually in June is being moved to October 4-6th. it will be harder this year to have the Explorers go because it is the beginning of the school year. Tom Post will have to see if perhaps the Explorers could get out of school on Friday October 6th to go to the show. it moved this year from Massachusetts to Mohegan Sun and the exhibits are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Town Representative Report: Jim Speich

- The building committee report.
 - The deadline for the architectural firms to submit their qualifications has closed. We had 9 architectural firms reply. We will be looking at all of the returns and between now and September start narrowing down which ones we will be sending out for the bid process. Once the selection is done then the committee will be able to release the names.

Old Business:

- **23-20 Safety Committee - Chief Appell**
 - Chief Appell presented a plan for setting up this committee. The committee membership composition should be 1 member from each company, a representative from the officers and a representative from the board. The chief suggested that maybe put something out to see if there are any member interested in this committee.
- **23-22 AVFD Tax Status Change from a 501c4 to a 501c3 Exploration - Steve Gwizdak**
 - Steve has been concentrating on doing the year end and working with the accountant for the tax return so he hasn't had a lot of time to look into this but feels he can get this done by the end of the year. Steve suggested that we state on whatever form we are going to use for the fundraising, that it is a charitable tax deduction.
- **23-28 AOG Review**
 - **CM-1 Board Meeting**
 - A motion was made by Tom Post and seconded by Chip Carpenter to approve CM-1 with the changes to comply with FOI requirements. Motion passed unanimously.(See Attachment A)

Old Business cont.

- **23-35 Station 2 - Replacement Generator - Status Update - Chief Appell**
 - Chief Appell told the board that Tri-State came out and tried to fix the transfer switch, but they didn't have the right one and when they looked at the generator, they suggested the generator be replaced. The town has a service contract with Tri-State. The Chief wanted to get more information and quotes from another contractor so he had Bob Theriault look into this and Bob had Tower Generator come out to look at the generator at Company 2 and Company 3 since the generator at Company 3 has been acting up. The chief is in discussions to maybe repairing them for the short term because the town is looking into updating/replacing some stations. Bob Theriault did get quotes to replace both generators from Tower Generator. Tower Generator will put together a list of what has to be done to the existing generators and then the Chief will have a meeting with Adam from the town and a representative from Tower Generator to see what should or has to be done.
- **23-36 Corporate Fiscal Year Change - Status Update**
 - The fiscal year change for the corporation only needed to have 990 submitted for November 1, 2022, though June 30, 2023. Now this is changed to match the Grant money fiscal year. There is nothing else to do.

New Business:

- **23-37 Chief's Vehicle - Assistant Chief Joe Speich**
 - Assistant Chief Speich presented to the board all the information for a chief's vehicle along with the reasons for needing this vehicle how our call volume is climbing and need to have a vehicle that is all set up as a command post to handle any type of emergency/fire. The total price is \$64,000. There is over \$40,000 in encumbered funds, \$10,000 in budget line item Emergency Lighting, \$9,000 in restricted funds from the Lion's and a little over \$4,000 from budget. Tom Post made a motion to proceed with the purchase of a new vehicle for the chiefs with Steve Gwizdak seconding. During the discussion Jim Speich stated that with what all the town is doing for the department like purchasing a new ladder and engine and going forward with all the stations being looked at for updating, he felt the Corporation should be paying for this vehicle as a good will gesture and not use town funds. After some discussion a vote was taken and the motion passed with Chip Carpenter voting no.
- **23-38 Explorer Company Realignment - Move from AOGs to SOGs**
 - President Kline discussed with Chief Appell a proposal to move the Explorer program from the oversight of the Board of Directors to the line due to the Explorers being members of the department and as such are considered support members to the line. This discussion was just to see how this might be done. The chief said that he would treat the Explorers as another company with a captain and lieutenants who would report to an assistant chief. He would ask any member who is interested in these positions to apply and be interviewed, but before that can be done there would have to be job descriptions in place for these positions. After some discussion Tom Post suggested this item be tabled so that he had time to talk with the other advisors to let them know what is being proposed. Kristen Shaw made a motion with Chip Carpenter seconded to table this until the current advisors could be informed on this proposed change. Motion passed.
- **23-39 2022/2023 Encumbered Funds - Review**
 - Chief Appell went over some of the items on the encumbered report. The biggest amount encumbered is the points reimbursement due to the points were earned in the 2022/2023 fiscal year and are paid out in November. Most of the other items in this report were items purchased before June 30, 2023, but had not been invoiced yet. Jim Speich made a motion with Chip Carpenter seconding to approve the Encumbered report as presented. Motion passed.

New Business cont.

- **23-40 2023 Symposium in the Sun - Select Attendees**
 - The following board members would like to go to this symposium: Gina Kline, Nancy Crozier, Kristen Shaw, and Tom Post. Captain Theriault would also like to go since they are offering an educational program on Recruitment and Retaining and he is the chairperson for both of these committees. Other workshops being offered are Professional Coaching and Problem Solving, Character in the Fire Service and more.

- **Chief's Report - Chief Appell**
 - The old Dakota building has been torn down. The company that owns the property gave the department the 2 bears that were by the door. There is a back story but for right now we have the bears and will decide what the department will do with them at a later date.

- **Meetings Schedule:**
- The Corporation Meeting will be held on August 14 at 7:00 pm
- The next Board Meeting will be held on August 31, 2023, at

7:00 pm. Meeting adjourned at 20:55