

CENTERVILLE-OSTERVILLE-MARSTONS MILLS FIRE DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022

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PRESENT: Carlton B. Crocker, David V. Lawler, John Lacoste, Prudential Committee; Krystal Abrams, Clerk/Treasurer; Alexandra Jackson, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer, Michael Winn, Chief; Craig Crocker, Water Superintendent

Also Present: Byron Eldridge, Deputy Chief

The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Chief Winn: Chief Winn opened the meeting with his department update. Chief discussed the snow storm we had the previous weekend. There were about 117 emergency responses in the 48 hour time period. Mike Grossman, FPO, has announced his retirement from COMM Fire effective August 29, 2022. Mike is a 34 year veteran. Chief Winn stated that the Fire Department is expending their budget for this Fiscal Year at an incredible rate, which the Chief instituted a department wide spending freeze on January 10, 2022. Chief Winn explained that a lot of their budget is expended due to overtime demand for the firefighters, at this time overtime has been about \$50,000.00 per pay period. The increase in overtime is in direct correlation of call volume, duty and non-duty related injuries and coverage for Covid in order to be in compliance for the DPH as an ambulance company. Chief Winn also explained that his department had a lot of unplanned retirements this Fiscal Year. Chief Winn states that when the department starts to budget for the following Fiscal year, he reaches out to his department asking if there are any anticipated retirements within the Fiscal Year so they can budget for any buyouts. For Fiscal Year 22', there were two planned retirements that were budgeted for, subsequently we have lost 6 employees to retirement, the two that gave notice plus four more. The result of that is the line item that exists for retirement buyouts is now way over spent, in order to fulfill the obligation to buyout our employees according to the contract. Chief Winn expressed that he believes his department will be over budget for this Fiscal Year. Chief Winn explained that he has been working diligently with Deputy Eldridge, Krystal Abrams, Treasurer, Carlton Crocker, Prudential Chairman and Bill Fraher, CPA to try and figure out ways we can move through this Fiscal year by cutting spending and preventing this from happening again in the future. Chief Winn stated that Krystal and Bill have found ways to come up with the funds that the Fire Department will be short of by June 30. There are two possibilities; the Fire Department can take

Articles that have previously been approved and have they re-approved at Annual Meeting to go back into the Operating Budget and not for Capital Purchasing. The other option that Bill identified, is to fund what is needed from Free Cash. We will be asking Bill Fraher to attend the next Prudential Meeting to go more in detail about these options. Chief Winn distributed a draft of Fiscal Year 23 Budget. Chief Winn explained that because of contractual raises and the additional pay period (27 pays vs. 26 pays) the bottom line percentage for the Fire Department is higher than the usual expected and aimed for 2.5%. Chief stated that 89.14% of the Fire Department budget is for salary and wages, so when they have increases that are contractually obligated and warranted, it leaves very little room for increase in the general operation of the department. Chief Winn discussed the Articles they would be asking for at this year's Annual Meeting. Those Articles include a new ambulance, a Duty Officer vehicle, Shop Maintenance Vehicle, Station Maintenance and a request to update COMM's Station Alerting System. Deputy Eldridge also recommended doing an Article for Covid Expenses. Chief Winn also stated that his executive assistant, Natalia, is working on a program through the Commonwealth, where every vacancy we had due to a Covid exposure or sickness, there is a wage reimbursement of \$850.00 per day per person.

Craig Crocker: Craig stated that the Water Department has almost recovered from the storm this previous weekend. There are a few stations with some power issues, transformers that are blown and hopefully everything should be back to normal by the end of the week. Craig discussed his draft Maintenance and Operation Budget for FY 23. Craig stated his department will be seeing the same type of increase in the bottom line percentage due to salary and increase wages and there being 27 pay periods in the next Fiscal Year. The Articles for Fiscal Year 23 will include the standard labor for all projects, one or two vehicles, and a reserve. There was a brief discussion regarding the inflation of costs of chemicals and other operating materials. Craig provided a draft of the Catastrophic Sick Leave Program, which his board voted to implement at last month's Water Commissioners meeting, it is based on approval by the Prudential Committee and the Districts Attorney. The next step would be to finalize the contract and set up a committee of three to run and keep track of it.

Krystal Abrams: Krystal distributed the Appropriations and Expenditures Report through December 31, 2021 to each department to see where we are half way through the Fiscal Year. Krystal stated that the audit is pretty much complete, we have not received the final report back yet, but they came and spent a full day here at COMM and got what they needed. One of the things that Roselli Clark and Associates has recommended that COMM allows them to track our fixed assets. Currently COMM is tracking their own fixed assets and balancing thousands of assets in an excel spreadsheet and has become pretty chaotic. They have offered to convert our fixed assets and continue to track them for us for a one-time fee of \$2500.00. Generally, they do this free of charge but COMM has thousands of fixed assets between hydrants, water mains and labor costs. Krystal also mentioned that we do need a cover for this year's Annual Meeting and suggested a picture from the Water Department. David Lawler asked that Krystal reach out to Bill Fraher to attend our next Prudential Meeting.

John Lacoste made a motion to approve minutes from January 12, 2022 meeting as printed. David Lawler seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting: March 16, 2022 at 6:00pm.

Public Comment: None

David Lawler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. John Lacoste seconded the motion. It was a unanimous vote.

Alexandra Jackson, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer