

Draft – Minutes

Kingston Fire District
Board of Wardens' Meeting
24 August 2023

Present: Wardens: Bill Flatley, Elizabeth McNab, Sandra Koerner and Doug Carr. Also present were Treasurer Tom Vignali, Chief Tom Reed and District Manager Jenifer Madison.

Absent: Tax Collector Susan Axelrod, URI Director of Public Safety & Chief of Police Michael Jagoda and Deputy Chief Erik Brierley.

Call to Order: President Bill Flatley called the Board of Wardens Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Information/Comments/Questions from the Public: Steve Davis was present.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: McNab made and Carr seconded a motion to accept the Minutes from the Wardens Meeting on 07/27/23. The minutes were reviewed. There were no questions.

Flatley, McNab and Carr voted to pass the motion. Koerner abstained since she was absent from the 7/27/23 meeting.

Tax Collector's Report:

Motion: Carr made and McNab seconded a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report.

Madison presented the Tax Collector's Report in Axelrod's absence. The Board reviewed the report. Madison let the Board know that the 2022 collection rate is at 98.5%. Madison noted that the Board will be approving KFD's 2023 tax rate at the next meeting on 9/28/23. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

URI Report:

Motion: Jagoda was not present at the meeting and there was no report. No motions were made.

Chief's Report:

Motion: Carr made and Koerner seconded a motion to accept the Chief's Report.

Reed presented the Chief's Report. He let the Board know that to date, KFD has responded to a total of 475 emergency responses this year and 53 calls for service during the month of August. Reed let the Board know that KFD responded to the hotel fire that occurred on Block Island last weekend. He noted that he was "happy to report our planning paid off" and that great work was done by our crew and all the other departments that responded. Reed let the Board know that we had a crew on the island through that Sunday and there were no injuries. He noted that in total, KFD contributed over 300 manhours to the response and that our ladder truck flowed an estimated 400,000 gallons of water. Carr asked if the Union Fire District (UFD) covered our station while we were there. Reed explained that there was a mutual aid plan in place for the entire operation. In terms of maintenance, Reed let the Board know that there have not been any major repairs or

breakdowns. He noted that clean up from Block Island is complete and we had no issues with the truck or equipment; however, the amount of salt water flowed may prove to be a maintenance issue in the future and that KFD is doing all it can to mitigate long term effects. Reed let the Board know that there will be an after-action in two weeks and a command-level after action meeting next week. Flatley commented that the mutual aid teams that responded had just trained last April for an incident of this type. Davis asked what would have happened if one of KFD's firefighters had gotten hurt; Reed responded that we have a rider on our insurance policy to cover their wages. Reed let the Board know that we are in the process of updating our safety and intercom systems and that the new intercom system will have remote capability. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Motion: Koerner made and McNab seconded a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report.

Vignali presented the Treasurer's Report. The Board reviewed the report. Vignali noted this his report covered FY2022-23 and FY2023-24 this far. Vignali let the Board know that KFD ended FY2022-23 with a healthy surplus in the operating fund which will be moved over to the Capital Projects Fund. Vignali noted that KFD will be audited next month. There was no further discussion or questions.

The motion passed unanimously.

Finance Committee Update: Carr and Vignali presented the information that was discussed at the 8/17/23 Finance Committee Meeting including planning for the next KFD-URI Cooperative Agreement and discussion about replacing the rescue truck. Vignali noted that the truck purchase is coming up in 2026. And he let the Board know that URI is looking towards a three-year contract with a four-percent increase in the 1st year, a three-percent increase in the second year and a three-percent increase in the third year. Reed added that he is going to look into getting URI to help maintain the "envelope" of the building in the next contract (i.e. siding and windows.) Davis asked if KFD pays rent to URI; Reed responded that KFD does not and that URI covers the expenses for electric, water, gas and WiFi. There was no further discussion or questions.

Next Meetings:

October 19, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

New Business:

- **KFD Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws:** The Board received hardcopies of KFD's updated Articles of Incorporation that were recently approved by the Rhode State Legislature. The Board agreed to start reviewing the By-Laws at the next meeting on 9/28/23. The Board requested that Madison e-mail the By-Laws and Articles for review ahead of the next meeting on 9/28/23.

Old Business:

- **Open Warden's Position:** Davis let the Board know he is interested in filling the open Warden's position in the interim. The Board agreed to put the interim appointment up for a vote at the next Board meeting on 9/28/23.
- **KFD's Legal Needs:** Flatley let the Board know that he will reach back out to the attorney he spoke with that was interested in being KFD's legal representative to confirm whether she is still interested and if so, to invite her to attend a future KFD Warden's Meeting.

- **Use of Training Grounds Agreement and Fees:** Reed requested to table this topic to the next meeting on 9/28/23. The Board agreed.
- **Radio System Project Update:** Reed let the Board know that all the equipment has been installed. He noted that we are waiting on updates to dispatch and the next step will be to train the dispatchers on the new system. Reed let the Board know that the system has been tested and the results have been good and that it is a much more robust system. He let the Board know that the goal is to be 100% operational by October.
- **American Rescue Plan Act – Covid-19 Response and Recovery (ARPA) Funding Update:** Reed let the Board know that the fire departments have not been approved to receive any money through the ARPA funding the Town of South Kingstown received as of yet.

Communications:

- Madison shared a copy of the notice regarding KFD’s first public meeting in 1923.
- McNab shared a joint newsletter of KFD and the Kingston Water District (when they were combined) from 1989.
- Reed shared a letter of gratitude from a Church in Exeter for our services during the wildfire.

Information: There was none. No motions were made.

Future Planning: There was none.

Next Meetings:

- September 28, 2023 at 5:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- October 26, 2023 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting
- December 07, 2023 at 6:30 PM at the KFD Station – Monthly Wardens Meeting

Adjournment:

Motion: McNab made and Koerner seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenifer Madison
District Manager