



DORSET FIRE DISTRICT

Dorset Volunteer Fire Dept.
Dorset Water Co.

Mailing: PO Box 341 Dorset, VT 05251
Fire Station: 2877 Route 30, Dorset, VT 05251

Offices: Town Office 112 Mad Tom Rd E. Dorset, VT 05253
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DORSET FIRE DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

May 8, 2017

Present: Ben Weiss (Chairman), Milt McWayne, Roger Squire, Abbott de Rahm (by phone), Chris Brooks (Moderator)

1. Reading of the minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting held on May 9, 2016 and act upon the same.

M. Thorn moved and B. Faesy seconded to approve the May 9, 2016 Annual Meeting minutes as presented. Unanimously approved.

2. To hear reports of the Officers of the Fire Department and the Prudential Committee.

Ben Weiss expressed appreciation and gratitude in recognizing the volunteer Firefighters for the Town of Dorset. It was noted that Shawn Hazelton has volunteered on the fire department for 33 years, currently serving as the Chief.

A PowerPoint presentation was displayed on an overhead projector by B. Weiss which covered:

- **Accomplishments**
 - ◆ Fire Tax Equalization
 - ◆ Bookkeeping Services Contract
 - ◆ Supplemental Water Study
 - ◆ Asset Management

- ◆ Loan Preparations
- ◆ Financial Audit

- **Current Challenges**
 - ◆ Water Shortages During Dry Periods
 - ◆ Aging Service Lines
 - ◆ Water Fees Not Based on Usage
 - ◆ Management of System Improvements
 - ◆ Sub-par ISO Firefighting Rating

- **Water System Improvements**
 - ◆ System Monitoring Station
 - ◆ Supplemental Water Supply
 - ◆ Water Meters
 - ◆ New Service Lines

- **System Improvement Funding**
- **FY 18 Fire Budget**
- **FY 18 Water Budget**
- **Water Budget Increases**
- **FY 18 Water Rates**

This presentation and more information is available on the Fire District's website: www.dorsetfiredistrict.org

Questions/comments raised during the presentation:

- W. Calfee inquired about the number of connections on the water system. B. Weiss replied 187.
- J. Cook asked if metering for users could be postponed if the service lines are fixed and solve the excess water usage. B. Weiss noted that meter and service line installations should be done at the same time for possible cost savings. Meters are the only way to get accurate usage of water, especially for commercial consumers. J. McGinnis explained in response to concern expressed about wireless meters that there is an option for a "tap" system of metering with no electromagnetic emissions.
- When the new census based on bedrooms is used for FY18 and the resident has three bedrooms, but only two people in the house, how will this be charged? B. Weiss responded that the charge will be on three bedrooms and that is why metering is needed. A. de Rham

commented that everyone is now paying based on the number of fixtures which also may not be used.

- W. Calfee expressed support for new service lines, metering and monitoring usage.
- M. Wightman questioned how leaks would be determined from the service line to the house and J. McGinnis said that a pit meter adjacent to the curb stop could be used.
- B. Weiss noted that the ISO rating for the Fire Department influences the homeowners' insurance premium rates in answer to W. Calfee's question.
- Jim Kingston asked about the cost of the meter installation, maintenance, reading, etc. and B. Weiss replied \$150,000 installed. J. Kingston expressed his displeasure regarding the cost of meter installation and felt that it was not necessary to do upgrades to the water system for the small amount of users.
- W. Calfee stated that he encourages the Committee members to upgrade the water system quickly as he was recently denied a permit for a replacement septic field. B. Weiss said that the State has prohibited all new/expanded water usage until supplemental water has been added.
- User share of cost for service line replacement is still to be discussed and determined.
- It was noted that average water user payments in Arlington are \$932, East Dorset ~ \$1,091 and Dorset ~ \$256.

3. To act upon the proposed budget for the Fire Department for the Fiscal year July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 and to authorize the Prudential Committee of the Fire District to set the tax rate following the publication of the Grand List.

B. Weiss stated that the Fire Department FY18 budget being proposed is \$179,888 which is a \$44,000 reduction from last year. Questions about fire house maintenance (exterior painting), administration line items and what caused the reduction in the budget were answered. S. Hazelton believed that the firehouse maintenance line item included money for exterior painting; administration line items were described and the reduction in budget was partially due to lowering the apparatus line item.

M. Thorn moved and C. Loudenslager seconded to approve the presented FY18 Fire Department budget in the amount of \$179, 888. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **To act upon the proposed budget for the Water Department for the fiscal year July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 and authorize the Prudential Committee to set the rates for water users.**

B. Weiss stated that the Water Department FY18 budget being proposed is \$124,757 which is an increase of \$73,532. Cited for the cause of the increase was deferred maintenance, supplemental water source, new valves, cost overruns, professional services (engineering & legal), sinking fund, and increased time for System Operator.

W. Calfee moved and M. Thorn seconded to approve the presented FY18 Water Department budget in the amount of \$124,757. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **To authorize the Fire District to borrow money, if necessary, to meet expenses in anticipation of tax revenue and/or water revenue.**

S. Hazelton moved and J. Cook seconded to authorize the Fire District to borrow money, if necessary, to meet expenses in anticipation of tax revenue and/or water revenue. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Brooks asked if this included borrowing money to update the water system and B. Weiss responded no.

6. **To elect members of the Prudential Committee, one member to a three-year term and two members to one-year terms.**

Two years remaining on a three year term: G. Squire moved to nominate Steve Jones and M. Wightman nominated Justine Cook. J. Cook declined the nomination. S. Hazelton seconded the motion to nominate Steve Jones. Motion carried unanimously for Steve Jones.

Three-year term: B. Hazelton moved to nominate Roger Squire and W. Calfee seconded the nomination. Motion carried unanimously.

One-year terms: C. Loudenslager moved to nominate Ben Weiss and G. Squire seconded the nomination. Motion carried unanimously.

M. Thorn moved to nominate Abbott de Rham and G. Squire seconded the nomination. L. McGinnis moved to nominate James Kingston and J. Cook seconded the nomination. Motion was carried for Abbott de Rham by a hand vote of 20 to 15.

7. **To elect a Clerk-Treasurer, a Collector of Delinquent Taxes and a Moderator**

S. Weiss moved and W. Calfee seconded to elect Roger Squire as Clerk-Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Dickinson moved and J. Salsgiver seconded to elect the Town of Dorset as the Collector of Delinquent Taxes. Motion carried unanimously.

J. Dickinson moved and B. Weiss seconded to elect Chris Brooks as Moderator. Motion carried unanimously.

8. To transact any other business to properly come before the meeting.

M. Thorn expressed her appreciation for the volunteers noting that it takes special people to give of themselves overlooking differences to work together to make the Town livable.

J. Stannard moved and L. McGinnis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully, submitted,

Nancy Aversano