

Minutes of the Meeting of
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District
Board of Governors
September 14, 2024
Quonochontaug Grange
Meeting Room
5662 Post Rd, Charlestown, RI 02813

Members in attendance: Renee Cohen, Charlie Freedgood, Bob Frazier, Julie Low, Ray Martino, Barry Okun, Ron Ruel, Bill Wilson, and Debbie Dupre.

Members Absent: Mark Alperin.

Also in attendance was Chris Harris, Assistant Clerk and Dede Consoli.

1. Call to Order/Moderator's Opening Remarks

Moderator, Charlie Freedgood

Charlie called the meeting to order at 10:42 am. He thanked everyone for all their work throughout the entire year and welcomed the new Governors Julie Low, Ray Martino and Bill Wilson, who each introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Clerk, Debbie Dupre

There were no edits or comments to the August 23, 2024 minutes. A **motion** was made to approve the minutes as drafted. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Debbie raised the issue that several of the Governors can not attend the BoG meeting scheduled for October 18th. The group agreed to move the meeting to October 19th, 9am at the lower-level meeting room of the Grange. A **motion** was made to move the meeting. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Then the group discussed the proposed 2025 BoG meeting calendar and agreed to review it and request any necessary changes before the October BoG meeting. Renee raised whether we are required to have two meetings in the off-season. Charlie clarified that no such requirement exists but that there may be business to discuss. The group decided to schedule both a January and March meeting with the understanding that the March meeting might be cancelled if there is insufficient business to address at that time.

Next item discussed was whether to approve the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for appointment of Committee chairs, Committee members and Managers as set forth on Attachment 1. Debbie clarified that it is the Committee Chairs and members as well a Mangers to be approved here as the slate of Governors was approved at the annual meeting. A **motion** was made to approve the recommendations. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Next after reviewing there were no edits or comments raised to the below Bank Accounts; Safety Deposit Boxes resolution:

Resolved, (1) that each of Ray Martino (Treasurer), Charles Freedgood (Moderator), and Barry Okun (Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee) be authorized to establish bank accounts and to endorse checks and orders for the payment of money or otherwise withdraw or transfer funds from or into any bank account of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District, (2) that each of the Moderator and the Treasurer be authorized to borrow money on behalf and in the name of Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District, sign, execute and deliver promissory notes or other evidence of indebtedness. (3) that Kathy Alperin (Assistant Treasurer) be authorized to establish bank accounts and to endorse checks and orders for the payment of money or otherwise withdraw or transfer funds from or into any bank account of the Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District provided that such account is used solely or primarily for merchandise sales or special events funds, (4) that

each of the Treasurer, the Moderator, and the Chair of the Finance and Budget Committee be authorized to draw on the District's line of credit with Washington Trust Company, (5) that Deborah Dupre (Clerk) and the Treasurer be authorized to establish and maintain such safe deposit boxes as they shall deem appropriate for the protection of the deeds, contracts, and other documents and financial instruments and securities of the District, and (6) that the Treasurer, the Moderator and the Clerk are hereby authorized to take such actions as may be necessary or appropriate for effecting such authorizations, including without limitation signing such account agreements and certifying the adoption of such typical-form resolutions as any bank with which any such account or safe deposit box or such line of credit may be established shall require, which agreements and resolutions are hereby authorized, approved and adopted.

A **motion** was made to approve the resolution as written. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Debbie clarified that the next resolution proposed below is to grant enumerated authority to the bookkeeper:

Resolved, (1) that Elise von Housen, Partner from Hoyt, Fillipetti & Malaghan, LLC (Bookkeeper), has the authority as appointed QCBFD Bookkeeper, working under the supervision of QCBFD Treasurer, to endorse and deposit checks into any District bank account at the direction of the Treasurer and make orders for payment of duly approved invoices from the QCBFD Operating Account held at Washington Trust.

A **motion** was made to approve the resolution as written. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

3. Moderator's Report

Charlie Freedgood, Moderator

No report. Julie Low asked that the summer construction proposal raised by Chris Licht at the annual meeting be added to the October BoG agenda.

4. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Ray Martino

Ray updated everyone on the progress of transferring the Treasurer role, including scheduling meetings next week with the Washington Trust and the QCBFD bookkeeper. He added that in addition to accessing the District accounts, he will need to access to our quickbooks database, paycheck portal, tax accessor spreadsheet and other finance document files. Discussion ensued on how to he could gain access. Barry raised the need to review the various finance and tax databases/spreadsheets/shared files that currently exist to synchronize, consolidate and make searchable the information. Charlie mentioned that reviewing all District databases is currently a topic of discussion (having arisen around distribution lists for annual meeting packets and accurate District voter rolls), and he hopes to find someone and/or establish a small task force to tackle this project. He hoped to have an update for the BoG in the coming months.

Next Ray reported that he will be transferring funds next week from tax receipts into the District checking account to cover expected expenses through mid-October. Barry added that as of today 50% of the 2024 tax payments have been deposited into the District account. Ray noted that several of the QCBFD accounts are not interest bearing and he planned to work with Washington Trust to improve this. He asked that an item be added to a future BoG agenda to update the BoG on any progress. Dede asked Ray to include Kathy Alperin in any discussion involving the Special Events account(s).

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Long-Range Planning

Chair, Renee Cohen

Renee reported that Paul Mathews will give an update on the water quantity/quality project at the October BoG meeting. She stated that Paul is finalizing a written report of the project teams findings that will become part of the draft comprehensive long-range planning document, which she hopes to circulate soon to the BoG for their feedback.

Finance and Budget

Chair, Barry Okun

Barry reported that the finance committee is finishing the September financials and will file the approved 2025 QCBFD budget with the State of RI as required. He is continuing to work on the Federal EPA grant as discussed at the annual meeting. Charlie asked about the timing of the process and Barry indicated that the first step is to complete the SAM.gov registration, which should be finished within the next couple of weeks. Afterward, there are some training modules to be completed before the more formal application can begin. Barry plans to make a recommendation to the BoG that the District hire a third party to help QCBFD navigate the application process. Ray asked whether we should set up a separate account to run the water project expenses through for either the RIIB loan or the Federal grant. Barry indicated that is not yet clear whether a separate account will be necessary but acknowledged that the District will need to track all monies spent on the project to enable reimbursement of those expenses, when appropriate.

Public Works

Chair, Bob Frazier

Bob updated the group on the water upgrade project and reported that the contractor has issued new construction documents and plans to file those next week with the Town of Charlestown as part of the building permit application. Barry asked whether the construction contract needed to be amended. Bob clarified that the revisions would be accomplished through an amended contract, with subsequent changes accomplished through change orders. Charlie added that a standing meeting has now been set up (scheduled for every second Tuesday) between the District, general contractor, RIIB and RIDoH to discuss the project and its financing. He clarified that there is still no final price yet under the revised construction documents but once the final number is established the BoG will use that to access how much to borrow from RIIB and whether to go forward with trying to access funds under the Federal grant program. Discussion arose on whether the District should borrow funds to cover expenses already paid for by the community (pre-costs). Bob asked whether the authorization to spend up to \$2M by the community would cover any additional approvals required for the financing. Charlie indicated that the community has authorized the BoG to put the financing in place though there will be various steps that will require specific BoG approval.

Next Bob reported that he is coordinating with CRMC to get their sign-off on the wetlands restoration project. Once the sign-off is received he will, with the possible help of Beth Noonan, seek to have the levied fine reconsidered by CRMC.

6. Managers' Report

Merchandise Sales

Dede Consoli for Julie Low

Dede reported that the Merchandise Sales for 2024 had a good year. The success of the sales will fund 2025 special events, \$10,000 toward an anniversary dance in 2025, pre-fund 2025 merchandise purchases as well as the community grants program. The ad hoc community grants task force (Dede Consoli, Kathy Alperin, Amy Murphy and Jeff Matthews) reviewed and approved the following proposals:

- \$800 – replace “no parking” signage at tennis court
- \$750 – trimming of bushes at tennis court and possible removal of bush near score board
- \$1000 – QCC conservation and preservation education programming

Dede reminded the BoG that there remains additional money available for community improvement projects and any community members interested should apply through the community grants process. She also highlighted that grant funds have been set aside to replace the pea gravel at the beach parking lot in the spring. Renee raised whether grant funds should be applied toward items, which arguably fall within existing committee duties and budgets. Discussion ensued without resolution and Charlie asked that the issue be revisited at a future BoG meeting.

A **motion** was made to approve the above recommended grants. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Next Dede raised another grant request made by Seaside Gardeners, an outside 501(c)(3) group, to revitalize garden beds it had planted in various community property areas. Discussion ensued about whether outside groups in general should be eligible for merchandise sales grant funds. The BoG agreed to return to the discussion at a future meeting but decided to address the specific request for \$1500 to revitalize and enhance plantings at the beach entrance, West Beach Road entrance and the area around the ball field bulletin board. The BoG also asked that the group come and speak to the BoG at the May 2025 meeting to understand the gardening services provided to the community.

A **motion** was made to approve the \$1500 community grant to revitalize the above-identified garden beds. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all in attendance voting in favor (except the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Adjournment

A **motion** was made to adjourn at approximately 1:13pm. The **motion** was **seconded and passed** with all members of the Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor (other than the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Dupre, Clerk
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District

ATTACHMENT I
QCBFD NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee respectfully recommends the following to serve as Chair and Committee Members of Standing Committees: (*denotes new Member)

Finance and Budget

(Chair) (2024)

Jeff Matthews, Neil Siegel, Susan Wales, (*Ray Martino ex-officio as Treasurer)

Barry Okun

Thomas McConnell, Jim Furnivall,

Public Works

(Chair) (2022)

Frost, Vin Bailey, Jim Montstream, Bill Meyer, Bob Roseman, *Fred Newton

Bob Frazier

George Prior, Steve Peet, Tom

Community Property

(Chair) (2023)

George Grey, Neal Simon, Meg Deshpande, Mary Duffy,

Mark Alperin

John Pinkos, Anthony Flint,

Cheri Stabnick, Cindy Rice

Long Range Planning

(Chair) (2024)

Paul Mathews, Anthony Flint, Taylor Rettig, Alex Schultheis

Renee Cohen

Roy Jacobsen, Diane McEnroe,

The Committee respectfully recommends to the Board the following individuals to manage the various events and activities of the QCBFD:

Merchandise Sales:*Julie Low (2025 BOG)

Ron Ruel (2022 BOG)

Beach Gate Managers: Heather Cotter (2022), Nancy Picard (2022)

At Large: *Bill Wilson (2025 BOG)

Manager of the QCBFD Marina: Will Carpenter (2022)

Ballfield and Playground: Matt DeFusco (2015)

Dunes: Caroline Gilpin (2022)

Mark McEnroe (2019)

(2022)

Special Events: Amy Murphy (2024)

Police Liason:

**Beaches and
Tennis:**

Webmaster: Liz Pommeroy

Eblast Coordinator: Meg Deshpande (2022)

The Committee would also like to advise the **Board of Governors** that it will recommend to the Voters at the Sept 2024 Annual Meeting that they elect the following individuals to the Board of Governors:

Charlie Freedgood (Moderator), Debbie Dupre (Clerk), *Ray Martino (Treasurer), Barry Okun, *Julie Low, Renee Cohen, Ron Ruel, Mark Alperin, Bob Frazier, *Bill Wilson.

The Committee will recommend to the voters that they elect the following individuals to **important but non-Board positions:**

Ben Marlor and Eric Schultheis to serve as Tax Assessors.

serve as Assistant Clerk.

serve as Assistant Treasurer for Special Events/Merchandise Sales.

Christine Harris to

Kathy Alperin to

The Committee is grateful to and thanks all who have agreed to serve.