

FINAL

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District Board of Governors
July 22, 2023
Charlestown Police Station
Meeting Room
4901 Old Post Road
Charlestown, RI 02813**

Members in attendance Ellen Frost, Charlie Freedgood, Bob Fraizer, Fred Newton, Ron Ruel, Dede Consoli, Mike Lewers and Mark Alperin

Members Absent: Maud Bailey, Al Bartosic

Also in attendance Chris Harris and Mark McEnroe as well as members of the public

1. Call to Order/Moderators Opening Remarks Moderator Charlie Freedgood
Charlie called the meeting to order at 8:17 AM.

2. Approval of Minutes Asst. Clerk, Chris Harris

i. No edits or comments were made to the June 24th BoG meeting minutes. A **motion** was made to approve the minutes as written. The **motion** was seconded and passed with all in attendance voting in favor (the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie)

ii. A discussion took place about interest levels of future BoG meetings taking place on days other than Saturdays during the season. Overall, the board was favorable to this suggestion. Pending availability of a suitable location, the board was interested in moving the next scheduled board meeting to Friday, August 11 at 8:15AM.

iii. Chris reminded all chairs and managers to get annual meeting reports to the clerk by 8/15/23

3. Moderator's Report Moderator, Charlie Freedgood

Charlie began his report by indicating that Steve Piccolo, owner/operator of the District trash hauling service had been invited to join this meeting in order to address concerns raised by the board and community. Mark Alperin then indicated that Mr. Piccolo declined to attend.

Charlie then announced that Ellen Frost will be stepping down from her position as Chair of Long-Range Planning as well as her Board position effective at the end of this scheduled BoG meeting. Ellen has shared with the nominating committee suggestions/recommendations for her replacement, each of whom are experienced long-range planning committee members. Ellen will help with transition. Everyone thanked Ellen for her service and the valuable contribution she has made over the years. The Board will vote on a replacement at a future meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report Treasurer, Mike Lewers

Mike Lewers indicated that district finances are in good shape. Cash and debt levels (\$71,000 outstanding on line of credit) are good and contingency reserves are healthy. Tax bills are going out within first 10 days of

August. Payroll system for gate monitors is up and running. There have been some issues with paperwork and hard copy checks had been delivered to the bookkeeper instead of the gate monitors. Heather Cotter has picked them up and distributes them to gate monitors.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

a. Finance and Budget

Mike Lewers for Al Bartosic

Preliminary budget was distributed. Trash hauling expenses have been modified to reflect changes that may be necessary given issues with trash hauler. Mike will follow up on the dates of the Fire contract renewal.

Mike asked that any budget requests for next year be communicated to Al as the process is well underway and needs to be approved by the BoG before the annual meeting.

b. Long-Range Planning

Ellen Frost

Ellen reported that QCC had successful events in July. She also announced that she had some water conservation signage available. She indicated that writing the long-range comprehensive plan has proven challenging given its breadth and scope. LRP is working to prioritize the themes they would like to focus on and will come back and share these with the BoG.

c. Public Works

Bob Frazier

Bob gave an update on permit status. We received assent from CRMC for the wetlands restoration project and the DEM groundwater discharge permit. We are still waiting on a water treatment approval from the Department of Health and a permit for the expansion of the pumphouse from CRMC. With respect to DoH, it has submitted the engineering review to a consultant as DoH is backlogged. NWSI has made contact with DoH and will continue to follow-up to keep the process moving forward. Frazier had requested that a check be delivered by our bookkeeper to the Fire Department so they can do their building plan review. Once approved, our contractor will be able to file a building permit with the Town of Charlestown. Bob will meet with the contractor and engineer to get the shop drawings and orders together in order to determine the equipment needed for the project. With respect to financing, the final commitment is contingent upon receiving the certificate of authority from DoH along with review by the District of a proposed credit agreement. Finally, now that we have the approval from CRMC for the wetlands restoration project, we will need to go out for public bids to then be shared with board for review and approval.

d. Community Property

Mark Alperin

Mark followed-up on Charlie's earlier announcement that Steve Piccolo had been invited to attend this meeting to discuss the ongoing concerns the community has with the trash and recyclable collections. He indicated that late in the day on Friday, Steve sent Mark a text citing work commitments as the reason he declined the invitation, but offered to briefly meet Mark at the tennis courts. Mark met with him and conveyed the issues that have been concerning the members of the community, including comingling of trash and recyclables and several missed scheduled days for pick-ups. Specifically, regarding the comingling of recycling and trash in his trucks, Steve indicated that the separation of these items happens at the transfer station. He offered to make two runs, one with garbage and one with recycling but he can't get that done on the same day. The lift truck is still not ready; therefore the new cans can only be used if we bag recyclables. Regarding the missed days (5 times), he said if his truck is full or the transfer station is closed, he can't make it to us in time.

Mark updated the community on ongoing maintenance projects. Two benches at the ball field were replaced and the rest repainted. The *Welcome to Central Beach* sign on Central Street that was damaged in a car accident should be installed shortly. There was discussion on what to do with the old sign. For now, it was agreed we would hold on to the sign and explore the options for future discussions.

Charlie indicated that he has been gathering the information necessary to complete a CRMC application to maintain the three district ROW's to the beach. A **motion** was made to permit the submission of an application to CRMC to get permission to maintain the three existing district ROW's. The **motion** was seconded and passed with all in attendance voting in favor (the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie)

6. Manager's Reports

a. Merchandise Sales

Dede Consoli

Dede reported that weather has impacted two weekends, which has adversely affected sales. Inventory is in good shape and volunteer sign-ups are going well. She mentioned there was healthy competition from QEBA.

b. Police Liaison and Manager of Beach Gate Monitors

Ron Ruel

Ron reported that he and his volunteers are still working through ongoing issues with getting complete paperwork from gate monitors. He is already planning on how to improve for next year, possibly with zoom calls and workshops on how to complete forms as well as sharing information on how we manage data privacy concerns. Ron indicated that there was a recent incident regarding a gate monitor being challenged by someone who did not have a beach lot pass. Ron is unable to locate the individual and encourages residents to come forward anytime with info. He wants to assure the community that all info will be kept confidential. Charlie updated the community on the new RI low speed vehicle laws which will be effective 7/1/24 and what impact this may have on the District's current Rules and Regulations. A discussion ensued on whether the District should sunset its golf cart rules next year and rely instead on the new state law. The Board will continue to discuss the issue and consider whether a recommendation be made at the September annual meeting.

c. Beach and Dunes

Chris Harris for Caroline Gilpin

The beach clean-up took place July 8, and 25 pounds of garage and trash were collected. Fourteen people of all ages took part. Another clean-up will be held Labor Day Weekend. Details to follow in August.

d. Tennis Courts

Mark McEnroe

Mark discussed the neighbors' concerns about noise during Pickleball. The current rule is that tennis courts are for tennis only. Accommodations were proposed to allow one time slot for pickleball to which several community members complained, some opposing the idea and others seeking more time slots during the day. Discussion ensued regarding noise ordinances, other community reactions, ideas for soundproofing and locking the court. Bob Frazier made the **motion** that the tennis courts by the ballfield in Central Beach be maintained for tennis only. The **motion** was seconded and passed with all Board of Governors in attendance voting in favor: Ellen Frost, Bob Fraizer, Fred Newton, Ron Ruel, Dede Consoli, Mike Lewers and Mark Alperin (the Moderator, who under the District's By-Laws only votes in the case of a tie).

7. Executive Session:

A motion was made and seconded to enter into Executive Session pursuant to the relevant requirements of the R.I. General Laws 42-46-5(a)(2) potential and/or pending controversy regarding that certain contract between QCBFD and Steve Piccolo & Sons Rubbish Removal, LLC dated as of May 18, 2022.

Roll Call Vote

Mike Lewers in favor, Ellen Frost in favor, Dede Consoli in favor, Mark Alperin in favor, Ron Ruel in favor, Bob Frazier in favor, Fred Newton in favor. The motion passed.

Then the matter was reviewed and discussed with one vote taken.

A **motion** to reconvene to open session was made and 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).

After reconvening into open session, a **motion** was made to vote to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. 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).

As stated above, in addition to the vote to reconvene into open session, one vote was taken during the Executive session.

8. Adjournment. Motion was made to adjourn 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,
Christine Harris, Assistant Clerk
Quonochontaug Central Beach Fire District