

DRAFT

Shelter Harbor Fire District Board of Governors Meeting

Saturday, September 24, 2022

Meeting Minutes

I. Call To Order and Roll Call

- The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. by Patrick Kinney, Moderator.
- The meeting was conducted in person.
- Board Members present : Bob Palumbo, Alex Platt, Marianne Nardone, Denise Williams. Jack Waters Michael McEntee
- Officers present: Patrick Kinney, Renee Davis, Paul Eldridge and Anne Thomas
Absent: Richard Gregory
District Counsel: David Petrarca
- Moderator Patrick Kinney welcomed all District residents in attendance.
- II. Minutes of July 30, 2022 BOG Meeting- Review, Discussion and /or Vote by the Board

- The Moderator asked if Board Members had reviewed the Minutes of the BOG Meeting that was held on Saturday July 30,2022. No substantive corrections or additions were made. A motion was made by Jack Waters, seconded by Denise Williams to accept the minutes, The motion passed 6-0.

III. New Business -Review, Discussion and Possible Vote by the Boar

A.Treasurer's Report

Renee Davis reported that approximately one -half of the real estate taxes due for the FYE 2023 had been paid and deposited. All outstanding bills had been paid and there are no arrearages. Treasurer Davis also reported that two Shelter Harbor properties had been successful in getting their property assessments lowered by the Town of Westerly.The downward assessments had the effect of lowering FYE 2023 tax receipts by \$100. This amount will be written off. Treasurer Davis also reported she had established a new mailbox address for Treasury questions and inquiries at

- B. Finance Committee Report

Chairman Bob Palumbo reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on

September 14, 2022. Mr. Palumbo first mentioned the names of the Finance Committee members as several of them are new. The members of the Committee in addition to Bob are: 1) Jim Brower; 2) Livia Carega; 3) Renee Davis; Richard Gregory; 4) Clay Howland; 5) Denise Williams; 6) Anne Thomas.

Chairman Palumbo reiterated the primary function of the Finance Committee is to assist the Board of Governors in fulfilling its responsibility to the Shelter Harbor Community by developing and recommending policies and procedures to make sure there are adequate internal controls on spending and there are adequate finances to support the many activities of the SHFD.

This Committee is to also ensure compliance with all applicable laws and rules with respect to the tax assessment and collection process, financial accounting and reporting, cash flow management and investments and assessing the risks of potential liabilities. Most recently the BOG has tasked the Finance Committee with the obligation of reviewing any proposed expenditure of \$5000 or more and making a recommendation to the Board of Governors whether such sum should be spent, not spent or some higher or lower amount should be spent..

- C. Assessor and Tax Collector Report.

Harry Gregory sent a final written report as his term ends September 30, 2022. Mr Gregory reported tax invoices for FYE2023 were mailed to owners of real property on September 1, 2022. Mr Gregory also warned that since this is an assessment year, some property owners may be appealing their property assessments which if successful will reduce the tax revenue projected to be collected. Mr. Gregory reminded all SHFD residents that as of October 1, 2022, Anne Thomas will be the new Assessor and Tax Collector. If any owner did not receive a tax invoice for FYE 2023, or have a revision in their assessed value of their property please contact Anne Thomas at

New Assessor/Tax Collector Anne Thomas added her own report to Richard Gregory's final report. Anne reported that at the start of FYE 2023 the SHFD had a grand list of taxable property that was approximately \$86 million higher than last year due to the Town of Westerly's property reassessment. With a voter adopted mil rate of \$0.95 per \$1000 of assessed value the gross tax levy for FYE 2023 will be \$269,352.27 after the reduction for the two properties which were successfully reassessed downward. Ms. Thomas indicated as of today roughly one half of the taxes for FYE 2023 have been collected. Ms. Thomas also indicated the time for challenging the new property assessment will be over soon.

D. Update on Long Term Roads Improvements Planning Committee (“Roads Committee”)

- 1) Moderator Kinney provided an update on the status of this Committee. Mr Kinney explained this Committee was formed to focus on the private roads of the SHFD. The Committee will assess the condition of the SHFD roads for short term and long term needs focusing on maintaining safe roads. All Committee recommendations will be presented to the Finance Committee, the BOG and the Shelter Harbor Community before any plan of action is implemented. The Roads Committee membership includes the following six Shelter Harbor residents: 1) Steven Sweeney Road Agent; 2) Peter Wise; 3) Jim Stifel; 4) Judy Serio; 5) Bob Duff; 6.) Karen Langston. The expectation is the Roads Committee will be fully operational by the second Quarter of FYE 2023.

3 Moderator Kinney also reported the progress on fixing damage caused to Gershwin, Brahms and Bach (and a few other spots) by the recent heavy rain. As of today’s BOG meeting we had spent \$11,500 of the \$15,000 accrued but not spent in FYE 2022. Moderator Kinney warned that the necessary focus on roads for the foreseeable future would have an impact on our expenditures on other items. James White addressed the road issues on Gershwin, Haydn and Grieg that was the subject of his letter and his request for immediate action to address the road issues which he believed posed serious safety issues to him and his property. Mr. White thanked the BOG for its prompt action in addressing the issues raised in his letter. There were a number of comments by residents which addressed various road issues such as debris left by road repair crews and builders which are not removed and which inevitably wash down onto residential property when it rains. Other issues raised were why we have no storm drains on Wagner Road, the need for tougher rules on private contractors and with regard to heavy trucks on Shelter Harbor roads.

E. Review of 2022 Beach Issues as Outlined in Moderator Kinney’s Letter to SHFD Community

Moderator Kinney highlighted the beach operation issues we need to address as a community. These issues are : 1) beach pass distribution; 2) bus route; 3) bus usage; 4) beach access and parking; 5) straying from our beach into Shady harbor and Weekapaug beach areas. 6) displaying beach badges. Mr Kinney indicated with approximately 250 property owners and approximately 45 parking spaces we will need to start using the bus more. We can’t create or buy additional parking spaces Based on the numerous complaints we received (which were detailed in Moderator Kinney’s letter), we need a major attitude adjustment in how we interact with parking personnel and with our Shady Harbor and Weekapaug neighbors. Vivian Duff

suggested we meet with new owners to explain the beach rules and behavior expectations and also the need to get owners to take responsibility for explaining these rules and expectations to their renters and guests. Other suggestions involved finding alternatives to the parking sticks such as spray painting the parking lines. Concerns were expressed about potential liability if people are outside the lifeguard green flags and the obligations of our lifeguards to act if people not inside the flags get into difficulty. Jack Waters noted that the dirt path between the entrances to the Weekapaug and Shelter Harbor beaches were manned by Weekapaug guards who would not let Shelter Harbor residents "cut through" to our beach. Finally Moderator Kinney stressed that beach buttons must be worn.

In addition, the Lifeguard Supervisor's Report and Proposed Budget were noted and briefly discussed by the BOG.

.F. Picnic Tables

Michael McEntree summarized the analysis he had prepared to help the BOG make a decision on possibly purchasing new picnic tables for placement on Harbor Field. Mr. McEntree's analysis contained suggested review criteria for making the decision as well as details on various available tables describing their characteristics and prices. Mr. McEntree did not recommend which tables we should purchase. Letters were received from Helene Hardick, Vivian Duff and Patricia Kinney recommending the purchase of particular tables at different price points. Alex Platt, Mary Chevalier, Laurie Sweeney, Betty Waters, Marianne Nardone and Anne Thomas all offered comments and observations on this issue.

After a vigorous discussion, Denise Williams moved the BOG allocate \$4000 to purchase new picnic tables. Jack Waters seconded the motion. The BOG voted in favor of this motion by a vote of 6-0. David R. Petrarca indicated someone could donate a table to the SHFD, but not money to buy additional tables.

G. Speed Humps

Alex Platt reviewed the history and rationale for placing the two speed humps on Wagner Road. Mr. Platt said the issue is whether we want more speed humps, the same number of speed humps or fewer speed humps. We own the two speed humps and there is money in the budget to purchase more. Roger Reichers gave his opinion that the speed humps were ineffectual because most cars do not slow down, but the trucks do at the cost of spreading noxious fumes and also creating a lot of noise pollution. Roger says this particularly affects his family since his front porch is close to the road. There was a discussion about moving the speed bump in front of Mr. Reicher's house to a spot further north on Wagner road. There was a consensus it would do more good to have a speed hump not far

from the Shelter Harbor entrance to slow down trucks coming into Shelter Harbor. Betty Waters suggested reviving a plan to put stop signs on Brahms at the intersection with Wagner Road as a safety precaution. Betty said the Town of Westerly wanted to do this several years ago but the former owners of houses on the corners vehemently fought it and the Town eventually dropped the plan. Betty said there are new owners of those houses now so the plan should be revisited. Michael McEntee moved we keep the speed humps we have, do not buy more and relocate the one in front of Mr. Reichers' house further north. Bob Palumbo seconded this motion and the BOG passed it 6-0.

H. Transfer of Responsibilities For Community Function

Marianne Nardone said she would be resigning her position as Community Functions Agent at the end of 2022 after eight years of service. Moderator Kinney thanked Marianne on behalf of the Shelter Harbor Community for her service and commitment. Mary Chevalier will prepare a job description detailing the role and responsibilities of the Community Function Agent(s) and the activities to be performed.

Additionally, job descriptions for Community Event Leaders and Helpers will also be prepared. These job descriptions will be distributed to the Shelter Harbor Community next week along with a request for candidates to step forward. A replacement for Marianne needs to be in place by February, 2023 to be able to coordinate with Elizabeth Miller in preparing the 2023 Shelter Harbor Directory.

G. Old Business

NONE

H. Questions and Comments From the SHFD Community

1. Rochelle Levins asked a question about the proposed GO FUND ME site Anne Thomas was going to set up to buy additional picnic tables for Harbor Field.

IV. Adjournment

Moderator Kinney thanked everyone for attending the meeting and then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Bob Palumbo. The Board voted 6-0 to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

By Paul W. Eldridge, Clerk

