

**MINUTES
OF THE
NORTH BRANCH FIRE DISTRICT #1
ANNUAL MEETING
March 31, 2014**

This meeting, having been duly Warned was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Daniel Facilla, in the absence of Moderator Larry Feldstein.

Members Present: Thomas Ferrazza, Hobie Terhune, Edward Barber and Daniel Facilla.

Absent: Robert Rubin.

Also Present Representing the Fire District: Edward Floyd, Bartholomew Howes, Rebecca Snow and Linda Holland.

Also Present: Rebecca Moore, Louise Severance, William Buswell and Myron Jacobs.

Facilla asked the voters permission for Linda Holland, Edward Floyd and Bartholomew Howes to speak. The voters agreed unanimously.

Article 1. To elect three Members to the Prudential Committee and two Officers by Australian Ballot.

1. One Prudential Committee Member for a one year term.
2. One Prudential Committee Member for a two year term.
3. One Prudential Committee Member for a three year term.
4. One Moderator for a one year term.
5. One Clerk for a one year term.

NOTE: Voting for Article 1, above, will by Australian Ballot between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Article 2. To see if the Fire District will accept the Annual Report. Buswell moved to accept the Annual Report. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

Article 3. To see if the Fire District will vote to collect taxes by the Treasurer pursuant to Title 32, V.S.A., Section 4791. Buswell moved to collect taxes by the Treasurer pursuant to Title 32, V.S.A., Section 4791. Seconded by Jacobs. Passed unanimously.

Article 4. To see if the Fire District will vote to collect \$60,000.00 from the “users” for the Capital Fund. Ferrazza moved the question. Seconded by Barber. Jacobs asked why the number changed from \$40,000.00 to \$60,000.00. Howes explained the increase is necessary to keep the Capital Budget funded. Buswell feels the 50 year budget “is stupid” and a 20 year plan is more practical. Buswell stated that he must see at least a 20 year budget to be able to vote on this article. Howes stated that the budget in the next 5

years, for Capital, will be nearly a million dollars. Buswell moved to raise \$100,000.00 for Capital Funding. Seconded by Jacobs. After a little more discussion, Buswell called the question. Facilla called for a vote to amend the article to raise \$100,000.00. Passed unanimously. Ferrazza moved to raise \$100,000.00 from the “users” for Capital Funding. Seconded by Jacobs. Passed unanimously.

Article 5. To see if the Fire District will vote to expend \$929,104.00 for Operations. Buswell moved the question. Seconded by Ferrazza. Buswell moved to expend \$969,104.00 for Operations. Seconded by Terhune. Passed unanimously. Jacobs suggests looking into Solar to assist with electric costs. Howes and Holland explained the solar systems being investigated.

Article 6. To see if the Fire District will vote to Raise and Appropriate \$850,976.36 for Operations. Buswell moved the article. Seconded by Jacobs. Ferrazza moved to amend the article to raise and appropriate \$890,976.36. Seconded by Buswell. Amendment approved unanimously. Facilla read the amended article “to see if the Fire District will vote to Raise and Appropriate \$890,976.36 for Operations”. Passed unanimously.

Article 7. To see if the Fire District will vote to expend \$365,601.00 for Capital Improvements. Ferrazza moved the question. Seconded by Buswell. Discussion revolved around as to whether or not the Bond payments should be in the Capital Account or accounted for on its own. Facilla expressed that the Raise and Appropriate for the Bond should be separate from all other accounts. Buswell moved to amend the motion until the Certified Public Accountants can give the Fire District an explanation. No seconded. Buswell withdraws the motion. Buswell moved to expend \$197,215.00 for Capital Improvements, plus the \$62,000.00 for the bond, totaling \$259,215.00. Seconded by Terhune. Passed unanimously. (Voters reduces the original amount by the amount of the Bond).

Article 8. To see if the Fire District will vote to abolish the Line Extension Account and place funds totaling \$122,477.96, plus any additional interest, in the Capital Account. Buswell moved the question. Seconded by Ferrazza. Buswell moved to amend the motion to place \$70,076.96 in the Capital Account and to use the remaining \$52,401.00 for the Bond payment. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously. The question was asked why the Fire District could not budget the Bond payment exactly. The reason is the Fire District does not receive notice of the sequestration increase until April and October, after the budget has been approved. The sequestration percentage is different for each period. (Note: Sequestration percentage is based on the funds the District received from the Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds).

Article 9. To see what sums the Fire District will vote to pay the Prudential Committee Members and Officers for the coming year. Buswell moved the question. Seconded by Ferrazza. Buswell moved to pay the Chairman of the Committee \$75.00 per meeting and the Committee Members \$65.00 per meeting. Terhune stated the Chairperson and the Committee should be paid the same. Buswell withdrew his motion. Buswell moved to pay the Prudential Committee \$65.00 per meeting, the Clerk will be paid the current

minimum wage, and the Board of Abatement and the Review Board will be paid \$10.00 per hour. Seconded by Ferrazza. Passed unanimously.

Article 10. To see if the Fire District will authorize the Prudential Committee to borrow in anticipation of taxes. Ferrazza moved to authorize the Prudential Committee to borrow in anticipation of taxes. Seconded by Buswell. Passed unanimously.

Article 11. To see if the Fire District will vote to exempt the Dover Town Offices, The West Dover Fire Department, The Dover Police Department, The Dover Elementary School, Dover Historical Society and the West Dover Church from taxes for the coming year. Ferrazza moved to exempt the Dover Town Offices, The West Dover Fire Department, The Dover Police Department, The Dover Elementary School, Dover Historical Society and the West Dover Church from taxes for the coming year. Seconded by Barber. Buswell wanted to know why the Memorial Hall Center for the Arts was not listed. Holland stated that a written request had not been submitted. Buswell called the question. Passed unanimously.

Article 12. To transact any other business that may legally come before this Meeting.

1. Jacobs questioned the amount in delinquent taxes and what was being done. Holland stated that on December 31, 2014 the District had \$95,432.37 in delinquent taxes. To date, we have collected \$45,142.93 leaving a balance of \$50,289.44 of that we have listed for tax sale \$34,339.99 leaving \$15,949.45 to collect.
2. Jacobs wanted to make the Committee aware that in his opinion the contribution for the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement Service may jump up to as much as 75% in nine years.
3. Buswell stated that he thinks two years is not enough time to install the radio frequency meters. He feels the Committee should extend the deadline into 2019.
4. Buswell feels the Committee should set-up a special account to pay for meter replacements. Currently to replace a meter head is approximately \$159.00. Buswell states, "this will make the customer feel like he is getting something back."
5. Buswell receives a copy of all the Minutes and Agendas and it appears to him that John West may not have been treated fairly. Ferrazza stated that Mr. West was treated very fair.
6. Buswell stated that come June 15th. the Fire District will have lots of delinquent taxes because people will not recognize the post card and throw it out.
7. Buswell recognized the employees of the Fire District, stating we have good employees and they deserve public recognition.
8. Ed Floyd stated that once the clarifiers are done, it should only be maintenance of the facility.

Buswell moved to recess at 11:50 a.m. Seconded by Ferrazza.

Polls closed at 7:00 p.m. with the following results.

Of 749 registered voters, 70 ballots were cast.

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| Prudential Committee for a one year term: | Edward G. Barber |
| Prudential Committee for a two year term: | Hobart C. Terhune |
| Prudential Committee for a three year term: | Cyndee Frere |
| Clerk for a one year term: | Catherine D. Kaufmann |
| Moderator for a one year term: | Joseph Mahon |

Respectfully Submitted:

Linda L. Holland,
Assistant Clerk
Administrative Manager

cc: R. Rubin, H. Terhune, D. Facilla, E. Barber, E. Floyd, T. Ferrazza, Bart Howes, Cyndee Frere, W. Buswell, Amiee Pritcher, Arlene Palmiter, Donald Albano, Linda Anelli, Adam Levine, Jeannie Flanagan, Deerfield Valley News and the Brattleboro Reformer.

Posted: North Branch Fire District #1, Wastewater Treatment Facility & Administrations Building. Dover Town Office.