

*Watch Hill Fire District  
Watch Hill, R. I. 02891*

DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETING

Friday, May 28, 2010

4:30 P.M.

Fire Station

222 Watch Hill Road

Watch Hill, RI

A meeting of the District Council of the Watch Hill Fire District was held at the Watch Hill Fire Station at 4:30 p.m. Friday, May 28, 2010.

The following members were present:

Edwin L. Russell, Moderator  
Grant G. Simmons III, Chairman of the Park Commission  
William H. White, Treasurer  
Scott Harold, Fire Chief  
Andrew Parsons, Member at Large

Voters present:

Richard J. Ahearn  
John Felber, Park Commission  
Judy Lentz  
Walter Lentz  
George C. Moore, Jr., Clerk  
Robert Peacock, Fire Department  
John M. Regan III, Finance Committee  
Henry Toolan, Finance Committee

Also present were:

Chaplin B. Barnes  
Harvey C. DeMovick III  
Judy Kelley, Office Manager  
Lyn Traver, Fire District Administrative Assistant

Proper notice having been given and a quorum being present, the Moderator, Edwin L. Russell, called the meeting to order at 4:30 P.M.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the District Council meeting on April 23, 2010. The motion was seconded and approved.

Financial Update and Budget - William White

Mr. White reported that the budget for 2010-2011 was a work in progress. It should be very similar to this year's budget. Mr. White said he expected this year's income and expenses to come in virtually on budget or possibly slightly over despite the water main repair expense. However, there will be a lot of movement between categories. He also reminded those present of

the unexpected revenue (past due rent) from the Cabana group. That will result in a year end surplus.

East Beach - George Markham

Mr. Markham reported that his group was continuing with the trash bin phase out. It is still an educational process but Mr. Markham will not allow trash to build up on the beach. His crew will sweep the beach at the end of each day to pick up any debris. The only area affected is at Bluff and Everett Avenues. There hasn't been any major negative feedback. He will have staff at these entry ways to explain why visitors must carry out their own garbage. The reason is that in previous years he added more and more bins, and they were still all full; it was getting out of control. Also, East Beach was the only beach in Westerly that did not require visitors to take out their own garbage. Mr. Markham reported that the police are supportive of this change in procedure.

The East Beach crew normally starts their work in mid-June but there will be some people working over Memorial Day weekend.

Other items of note from the East Beach Association:

They may be coming to the Fire District for help in the placement of their dumpster, which must be moved from its current location.

They are in the process of getting bids to complete a survey of long term erosion which will be the basis for a request to the state for renourishment of the dunes.

They will continue to take bather counts.

They will continue with beach fencing.

Mr. Markham reported that the access ways are okay except at Niantic, which may need to be cut back. He will check,

Mr. Moore stated that he had seen a dirt bike on the beach and wondered what he should have done. Mr. Markham said such use of bike on the beach was against the law and the police should be called. Also, Fish and Wildlife could be notified because of the potential disturbance to the plovers.

Mr. Markham said he was going to have some refrigerator magnets made for owners on East Beach so they know who to call if they see problems on the beach.

Mr. Markham asked if the Fire District Security patrols would be the same as last year and was told, yes. He is also concerned about the impact of the Ocean House and will meet with their management to discuss. He noted that last year there were 23 emergency calls from East Beach, a large increase from previous years.

Lighthouse – William White

Mr. White reported that the flag pole came down again this winter and is being replaced. There has been continued deterioration of the sea wall. Technically this is a Coast Guard responsibility but they don't have the funds so the Friends of the Lighthouse have been taking over the

expense. Mr. Berkley has repaired the sea wall along his property. The new museum will be open in July and August.

The Watch Hill Conservancy – Chaplin Barnes.

Mr. Barnes reported that the utility duct work has been completed along the area of the water main repair in preparation for removing the overhead wires. Next fall the wires will be pulled through the ducts, the system energized and the utility poles will be taken down. This will be a great demonstration of what can be done for all of Watch Hill. The Bay Street area would be the next step, costing approximately \$1.5 million.

Mr. Russell asked why it is taking so long to get the wires down. Mr. Barnes replied that the bureaucracies of National Grid and CRMC had worked incredibly fast to get the permitting needed and work done related to the piece by the water main repair because it was an emergency but that further permits are needed and they have not yet been obtained. Also, it has been decided that there should not be construction during the summer season.

Mr. Barnes praised Mr. Simmons for the extraordinary job he did in working with the engineers, construction personnel and the Larkin Square residents to make the first phase happen.

Cabanas – Richard Ahearn

Mr. Ahearn reported that the new cabanas had been given a temporary certificate of occupancy that afternoon, but there was still a lot of work to be done. The roadway was swept again last night. The pallets have been removed and the dumpsters will be removed as they are filled but no later than June 7, when the road is to be paved. The punch list should be finished by June 11. The only wrinkle would be if site lighting and a fence are added, which would cause the contractor to be there a bit longer.

Mr. Ahearn stated that the original cost for lighting was \$14,540, to be split three ways between the First District, the Cabana Owners and the Conservancy. The new proposed lighting expense would be \$8,422. Current plans call for putting back the old fence. Installing a new fence would cost \$9,649, which would be split 50/50 between the Fire District and the Cabana owners. (The fence belongs to the Fire District.)

Mr. White said the District Council needed to discuss additional lighting, the fence and paving. It was estimated that repaving the lot would triple the cost of the entire water main repair project, - \$60,000 for the water main repair and \$120,000 to pave.

Mr. Ahearn suggested the Fire District just patch the area where the trench is and repave the whole lot when the utility poles have been taken down. Also, he is going to request burying the propane tank, which would require ripping up an area of the lot again.

Mr. Simmons said the original proposal was to just patch were the water main was, but then the trench got bigger than expected. It could be patched but eventually the entire lot will need to be repaved.

Discussing lighting, Mr. Ahearn noted that there are two light poles which will come down. When they are gone there will be no light from Bay Street to the Misquamicut Club. As a landlord, perhaps the Fire District should provide some lighting.

Mr. Russell suggested the Fire District approve proceeding with the fence and the lighting but defer paving.

Mr. Simmons moved that the Fire District approve the additional lighting, sharing the expense equally between the Fire District, the Conservancy and the Cabana owners and also approve new fencing, with the expense to be shared equally with the Cabana owners. The motion was seconded and approved.

#### Summer Concerts

Mr. Russell reported that there will be an art show in the village on June 26 and 27. He also noted that the summer concert series has been changed to Tuesday nights to avoid conflicts with the Misquamicut Club activities. Mr. Russell passed out a listing of the concert dates and performers (copy attached).

#### Ocean House

Mr. Russell noted that the ribbon cutting ceremony has taken place. There is an Open House this Sunday, 5/30 and then a variety of events going forward and over the 4th of July. Mr. Russell has met with Police Chief Mello and Mr. Simmons to find ways to keep traffic flowing on the two main avenues into town and to keep Bluff Avenue open. For the Open House on May 30<sup>th</sup>, buses will bring guests from the Middle School, coming up Plimpton Avenue to drop off and pick up. Going forward, they will deal with traffic flow individually depending on the event and what they have learned from the traffic at past events.

#### General Discussion

Mr. Harold reported that he has told the Fire Department that he wishes to retire this year. A formal announcement will be made at the annual meeting in July and the search for a new chief will begin at that time. It is hoped to have a new chief in place by the fall.

The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 5:55 p.m.

The District Council returned to regular session at 6:40 p.m. and, there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Kelley  
Office Manager