

# **BY-LAWS OF THE CENTRAL COVENTRY FIRE DISTRICT**

**Revised – September 18, 2017**

## **ARTICLE I — MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. Voting List and Seating**

The Clerk of the District, or his or her designee, shall have or shall cause to have present at all annual and special meetings of the District voters a list of all the taxable inhabitants qualified to vote. The Clerk or his or her designee shall determine whether or not each individual present at the meeting is qualified to vote in the District. Those not qualified shall be seated separately from those qualified.

### **SECTION 2. Ground Rules**

The Moderator shall state any ground rules for the annual or special meeting of the District at the start of said meeting.

### **SECTION 3. Counting Votes**

When a ballot, hand, or standing vote is taken, the Moderator shall be responsible for counting and declaring all votes, affirmative and negative; he or she may appoint tellers for the purpose of counting votes.

### **SECTION 4. Call of Annual Meeting; Special Meetings; Instructions to District Clerk**

#### **4.A. Annual Meetings & Quorum:**

Annual meetings of said fire District for the election of officers and the transaction of any other business of the fire district shall be held. One hundred (100) qualified voters shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the corporation. The District shall hold an annual meeting in a public place on the third Monday in September, at 7:00 P.M. at such place within the District as the Board shall determine, for the purposes of: (1) electing a Board of Directors; (2) authorizing the assessment of all the taxable personal and real property of the District; (3) authorizing the collection of taxes, as further set forth in Section 6 hereunder; (4) authorizing an annual budget to provide for the purchase and maintenance of equipment, apparatus, real and personal property, the payment of wages and salaries, and for such other expenditures deemed necessary by the qualified voters of the District; and (5) For such other lawful purposes deemed necessary and proper by either the Board of Directors or qualified voters of the district.

#### **4.B. Call of the Meeting:**

The District Clerk shall give notice of the annual meetings by causing a copy thereof to be posted in the Kent County Times, The Reminder, or a similar newspaper of general circulation distributed in Kent County, and posted in each fire station of the District sixty

(60) days prior to the meeting and thereafter, thirty (30) days prior to the meeting and thereafter, at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting date. The annual meeting and all other meetings of the District shall be held in a public place, which shall be accessible to the handicapped, pursuant to the requirements of the Rhode Island Constitution, Article 1 & 2 and applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws.

#### 4.C. Special Meetings.

Special meetings of the fire District may be called upon written request of not less than one hundred (100) qualified voters, or may be called by a majority vote of the board of Directors. Written application for a special meeting of the fire District, as well as the notice thereof, shall mention the reason for such special meeting. Notice of the special meeting of the fire District shall be given in the same manner as the annual meeting not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting, thereafter, at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting. The purpose of the special meeting of the fire District shall be stated in the notice and call for meeting and no other business shall be transacted.

4.D. Nothing herein shall prohibit the Board of Directors from calling such special Board of Directors meetings, or Board work sessions or workshops as they may from time to time require, so long as said meetings comply with the RI Open Meetings Act (RIGL § 42-46-1 *et seq.*)

## **ARTICLE II — BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **SECTION 1. Duties of the Board of Directors**

1.A. The Board of Directors shall develop an annual budget, with information provided by the District Manager, and shall present said budget at the annual meeting, or a special meeting if necessary, for approval by the eligible voters present.

1.B. The Board of Directors shall propose a tax levy and a budget, and shall present the same at the annual meeting, or a special meeting if necessary, for approval by the eligible voters present. Except as provided herein, in no event shall the Board propose an increase in the tax levy of more than four percent (4%) above the prior years' levy or propose a budget increase of more than four percent (4%) above the prior years' budget without an all-day referendum. In addition, the eligible voters at the annual meeting shall not, by amendment or otherwise, increase the proposed budget by more than four percent (4%) without an all-day referendum approving the same. The eligible voters at the annual meeting shall not, by amendment or otherwise, increase the proposed levy by more than four percent (4%) without an all-day referendum approving the same.

1.C. The Board of Directors shall set the tax rate, with information provided by the District Manager, and in accordance with the tax levy approved by the eligible voters. If the annual assessment has been completed and a proposed tax rate calculated by the date of the annual or special meeting, the Board of Directors may present said tax rate, in lieu of or in addition to a range for the tax levy, for approval by the eligible voters present.

1.D. The Board of Directors shall propose any change in the interest rate charged on overdue taxes and shall present said proposal at the annual or a special meeting for approval by the eligible voters present.

1.E. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to approve short term borrowing as may be necessary in anticipation of current taxes and revenues.

1.F. The Board of Directors shall give final approval for the hiring of any and all persons being considered for employment by the District.

1.G. The Board of Directors shall determine the duties, salaries or wages, benefits, and conditions of employment of all appointees and/or employees, in addition to the duties listed in the District Charter and these By-Laws.

1.H. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the negotiation of all labor contracts; may appoint a subcommittee of no less than three (3) individuals, including no less than one (1) Director to represent them in negotiations; shall have final approval of said contracts.

1.I. The Board of Directors shall review the By-Laws of the District at least every five (5) years and propose additions, deletions, or amendments if needed at an annual or special meeting for approval by the eligible voters present.

## **SECTION 2. Duties of the President**

2.A. The President shall preside at all meetings of the District in accordance with the District Charter; shall enforce and observe the provisions of the Charter and By-Laws; shall enforce and maintain order and decorum; and when present, shall preside at each meeting of the Board of Directors.

2.B. For annual and special meetings of the District, the President shall provide the agenda to the District Clerk, who shall advertise the meeting and post the agenda in accordance with Rhode Island law and the District Charter. For meetings of the Board of Directors, the President shall provide the agenda to the District Clerk who shall distribute said agenda to the Board of Directors and Appointees of the Board, and post the agenda in accordance with Rhode Island law.

2.C. The President shall maintain frequent contact with the Fire Chief for the purpose of staying informed of District business and activities; shall maintain periodic contact with full time employees; shall report his or her findings from said contacts to the Board of Directors.

2.D. The President shall be the official spokesperson for the Board of Directors; shall sign official District documents on behalf of the Board, with the Board's approval.

2.E. The President shall, on any vote by the Board of Directors, only cast a vote in the case of a tie.

### **SECTION 3. Duties of the Vice President**

The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President when he or she is unable to perform such duties; shall assist the President as needed. In the absence of the President and the Vice President at any meeting of the Board of Directors, the Directors shall appoint a temporary moderator for said meeting.

### **SECTION 4. Recall of Directors**

Any Director, having been in office for at least six (6) months, may be removed from office by a recall petition prepared and approved by the voters of the District in the manner hereinafter procedure provided for recall.

Upon application by a registered voter of the District, the Clerk of the District shall issue recall petition blanks, which shall be dated, which shall demand the removal of the designated Director, which shall also state the cause upon which the removal is sought. The petition is to be filed with the Clerk of the District within thirty (30) days after issuance to be in order for the certification process.

The signatures to a recall petition need not all be appended to a single paper, but each signer shall add his or her signature as the same appears on the Board of Canvassers and Registration's records, and the signer's place of residence, giving the street name and number. One of the signers shall take an oath before an officer competent to administer oaths that the statement therein made is true, as the signer believes, and that each signature to the paper appended is the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be.

The recall petition shall be signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the registered voters of the District for certification purposes. The petition is to be submitted by the Clerk of the District to the Coventry Board of Canvassers and Registration for certification forthwith. If the petition shall be found and certified by the Board of Canvassers and Registration to be sufficient, within ten (10) days said Board shall submit the same to the Board of Directors without delay; the Board of Directors shall order an election to be held on a Monday fixed by it no more than seventy-five (75) days after the date of the Board of Canvassers and Registration's certificate that a sufficient petition is filed. However, if the annual meeting is to occur within ninety (90)

days after the date of the certification, the Board of Directors shall postpone the holding of the recall election to the date of said annual meeting.

### **ARTICLE III — DUTIES OF APPOINTEES**

#### **SECTION 1. Appointees**

The Board of Directors, in its sole discretion and judgment, may appoint or employ, such persons to the following positions: District Clerk; District Tax Collector; District Tax Assessor; Fire Chief; Finance Director/District Manager/Treasurer; or other establish such other appointments or positions as the same shall be required from time to time. The Board, in its sole judgment, may designated more than one (1) function to an appointee or employee, except the Fire Chief shall not have any administrative responsibilities or control. When making such appointment, the appointee shall have those responsibilities as directed by the Board and in addition to those listed in the District Charter.

#### **SECTION 2. Reporting Structure**

2.A. All appointees shall report directly to the Board of Directors; shall be present at Board of Directors meetings as directed by the Board.

2.B. If an appointee has two (2) consecutive unexcused absences from meetings of the Board of Directors, such individual may be addressed by the Board, in Executive Session per Rhode Island General Laws and Rhode Island Open Meeting Laws, to review the job performance status of such individual.

CENTRAL COVENTRY FIRE DISTRICT  
Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Minutes for September 18, 2017  
Coventry High School

1. Moderator Fred Gralinski called the meeting to order.
2. Declaration of Quorum – Moderator Fred Gralinski declared according to the charter there were more than 25 electors/voters present.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Moderator Fred Gralinski
4. Review of Emergency Evacuation Plan and rules and procedures for voting was given by Moderator Fred Gralinski.
5. Chief Frank Brown gave the 2017 Summary Report

At the present the fire district has 30 active members and 3 members out on Long Term OJI. This includes 10 new recruits. Six hired in Jan 2017 and four hired in August 2017. Division Chief Cady retired on August 19, 2018. He was appointed Fire chief with the Western Coventry Fire District. Promotions – Captain Mark Blanding was promoted to Division Chief and Lieutenant James Almagno to Captain.

**INCIDENT REPORT FOR 2016:**

FIRE – 916  
RESCUE – 2751  
TOTAL - 3667

**APPARATUS**

Purchased New Engine, and a 2009 Pontoon Boat for Johnson's Pond to replace the current marine boat.

**EQUIPMENT**

New air paks and radios.

**STATIONS:**

Firefighters renovated Dayroom at Station 4. Cleaning out of Station 3 continues. Contractor hired to complete several repairs on Station 7.

## **FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE;**

There is 3 part time fire marshal's working on Smoke Detectors inspections, plan reviews, fire investigations, fire alarm reviews.

Report on receipts and disbursement was given by District Manager Gayle Corrigan.

Tax revenue: 92% collection rate. Department revenue due to rescue recovery was higher. Hill Farm Station was also sold. Total district revenue was 13% higher than budgeted.

Administration cost: Total administrative cost was 28% higher than budgeted due to interest arbitration and property appraisals.

Personnel Costs – Union: Due to the 10 vacancies overtime was higher than budgeted. Salaries for these vacancies were lower. Total personnel cost – Union was .5% lower than budgeted.

Personnel Costs: Total personnel cost was 16% lower than budgeted due to medical insurance.

Retirees/Separation Costs: Total cost was 165% higher than budget due to separation payouts

Final results give the district with a surplus of over 100,000.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2018:** Budget was given by District Manager Gayle Corrigan.

Tax Revenue: Assuming 91.5 collection rate and collection of outstanding taxes there proposed budget revenue will be 78% percent.

Department Revenue: Rescue recovery, fire marshal services and detail reimbursement will be 16% of proposed budgeted revenue.

Administration cost: This will be 3% of proposed expenses.

Operations Costs: A 7% proposed budget expense due to purchases of life pack and station repairs.

Personnel Costs Union: This will be 67% of proposed budget due to salaries, state pension, and medical insurance.

Personnel Cost Administrative: Proposed budget of 3% due contracts – chief and tax collector

Retirees/Separation Cost: The proposed budget will be 3%.

Other Expenditures: Proposed budget of 17% due to increased charge for hydrants, street lights and capital purchases.

**PROPOSED TAX RATE:**

- 2.06 FOR RESIDENTAL
- 3.08 COMMERCIAL
- 2.06 TANGIBLE

VOTE ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CCFD By-Laws was presented by legal counsel Attorney David D'Agostino Esq.

Attorney D'Agostino explained the charter changes that were voted and approved in the annual meeting last year did not pass in the Senate but did in the House of Rep. Therefore the charter could not be changed. These changes are now being present to the tax payers to add to the by-laws. Director Cindy Fagan-Perry stated since they were just received and did not have the exact wording to charter changes that they be tabled. Moderator Fred Gralinski stated it had to be this year or cannot be done until 2018 annual budget meeting. He said we will leave it up to the voters. He called for a voice vote with I or Nay.

I have approved the proposed amendments to the by-laws.

Voting for the proposed tax rate began. Voting for the election of directors began at 5:30 and continued to the end of the meeting.

Moderator was given the results of both.

**RESULTS:**

**BUDGET**            71 Approved  
                          18 Rejected

**BUDGET CARRIES**

**ELECTION OF DIRECTORS:**

Matthew Bacon	82
Jane Deptula	85
Ron Flynn	192
Dan Lantz	175

Dan Lantz and Ron Flynn will be sworn in at the October meeting.

Adjournment

A Special thank you to Vice President Maureen Jendzejec for her services on the board.