

WESTERN COVENTRY FIRE DISTRICT

ANNUAL MEETING

7:00 PM, Monday, April 14, 2025, Summit Fire Station
1110 Victory Highway, Greene, RI 02827

VOTES TAKEN

Posted May 7, 2025

Call to Order

Moderator Skip Mays

Ms. Annie Driscoll stated that there are 35 qualified voters present at the start of meeting. There is a quorum.

Motion made by Mr. Robert Mann of 5150 Flat River Road, to waive the Call of the Meeting. Second by Mr. Robert Guastini of 861 Perry Hill Rd. Motion Carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Robert Mann of 5150 Flat River Road to wave the reading of the minutes of the 2024 annual meeting.

Second by Jessica Mann of 652 Franklin Rd. Motion carried

The Moderator recognized the attendance of State Representative Mike Chippendale, Representative George Nardone, and Senator Gordon Rogers and thanked them (including Senator Raptakis) for providing WCFD with grant money from the State House.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Chief Fratantuono

Chief Fratantuono reviewed the emergency evacuation procedure.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Coventry Junior Naval ROTC Color Guard

Invocation:

Rev Reppa Cottrell

Call to Meeting:

District Clerk Mariann Gardener

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Stenographic Report on file with District Clerk

Reports:

Mr. Robert Mann of 5051 Flat River Road made a motion that the Treasurer's report, the Tax Collectors report, the Board of Directors report, and the Chief's report be accepted as printed without reading. Second by Steven Mann of 652 Franklin Rd.

Discussion: Details presented by Chief Fratantuono and Chairman Bousquet. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Sandra Mann

Tax Collector's Report: Tax Collector Annie Driscoll

Board of Director's Report: Board Chairman Stephen Bousquet

Chief's Report: Fire Chief Peter Fratantuono

Member Recognition:

Chief Fratantuono

Chief Fratantuono recognized the members for all they do and every member here deserves recognition. The chief recognized the members that acquired their fire 1 and fire 2 certifications. He next recognized the members that achieved their EMT basic and EMT cardiac license, and Paramedic license. The chief noted special recognition for Charles Barrett, Captain Russell Lacaille, and the member of the year award went to firefighter David Mahoney.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

RESOLUTIONS: Board Chairman Stephen Bousquet

RESOLUTION 1: *That all actions taken by the Officers and Board of Directors of the Western Coventry Fire District during the fiscal year ending February 28, 2025, be ratified.*

Motion made by Mr. Bousquet and second by Mr. Guastini to accept Resolution 1. Motion Passes

RESOLUTION 2: *That a Western Coventry Fire District operating budget of \$1,239,955 be adopted for fiscal year March 1, 2025, to February 28, 2026.*

Motion made by Mr. Bousquet and second by Mr. Gorham to accept Resolution 2. Discussion and Comments from Mr. Novak.
Motion Passes

RESOLUTION 3: *That the proceeds of the sale of the old, out of service, Rescue 8, be added to the Apparatus Capital Equipment Fund.*

Motion made by Mr. Mann and second by Mr. Barrett to accept Resolution 3. Motion Passes

RESOLUTION 4: *That the excess of the 2024/2025 budgeted "Surplus Applied" of \$60,000 over the actual deficit amounting to \$37,742 be added to the Apparatus Capital Equipment Fund.*

Motion made by Jess Mann and second by Kevin Lacaillade to accept Resolution 4. Motion Passes

RESOLUTION 5: *That the Department's \$40,760 share of an \$855,956 AFG grant request to FEMA for a new engine/tanker, if granted, be paid out of the Apparatus Capital Equipment Fund.*

Motion made by R Mann and second by Steven Mann to accept Resolution 5. Motion Passes

ROBERT HEVEY MOTION FROM THE FLOOR: *Mr. Robert Hevey, Weaver Hill Road, made the following motion: Taking into consideration that the town may be forming a municipal fire department and that the town may acquire all various fire districts assets and liabilities without reimbursement, and also taking into consideration that the Western Coventry Fire District (WCFD) is not only financially sound but also has a substantial equity in equipment and real estate that was financed by the taxpayers, and finally also taking into consideration that there is a possibility that the taxpayers of Western Coventry will be taxed at a higher rate to fund this municipal fire department and the liabilities being acquired, we the voters of the WCFD authorize the WCFD Board of Directors to take those actions necessary to protect the taxpayer equity of the WCFD. The actions authorized include but are not limited to the offering of the assets for sale to the town of Coventry and if refused by the town of Coventry, the liquidation of all WCFD assets and the dispersal of the resulting funds to the taxpayers of record on the date of the liquidation. The WCFD Board of Directors shall take this action only when it deems that this equity is on the verge of being diluted such that the taxpayers will be irreparably harmed.*

Motion is second by Mr. Guastini by to accept the Hevey Floor Motion. Motion Passed

JOHN HUMBLE MOTION FROM THE FLOOR: *I make a motion to amend the Charter of the Western Coventry Fire District, Chapter 011 of the Rhode Island Public Laws of 2013, passed by the General Assembly in concurrence at the January session, AD 2013 Signed by the Governor on the thirteenth day of May AD 2013 as follows:*

Section 12. VOTE TO APPROVE, DISTRICT MERGER, CONSOLIDATION, OR TRANSITION TO MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT OR CONSOLIDATED FIRE DISTRICT. (A) Notwithstanding, any other law, the District shall not be merged, joined, consolidated, transitioned, or otherwise made a part of a municipal fire department of the Town of Coventry, or consolidated with any other fire district, without an all-day referendum and the affirmative vote of the electors of the district in support thereof, said vote to be supervised by the board of directors. (b) The all-day referendum shall be called in the same manner as special meetings of the district and set forth in section 6 hereof.

Section 13. This act shall take effect upon passage by the qualified voters at a meeting of the district and the General Assembly of the state of Rhode Island and Providence plantations.

Motion is second by Mr. Guastini. Discussion: Mr. Gorham wishes to number the charter amendment as section 13.

A motion is made by Mr. Robert Mann to reflect the segment that was just mentioned from 12 to 13. Second by Ms. Cottrell.

Motion Passes

Election of Officers

Board of Directors: Of the five (5) Board of Director's positions, three (3) are open with four (4) candidates applying: Stephen Bousquet, Elizabeth McDonald, Kent Novak, and Jillian Winemiller. Two positions are for a three-year term, and one position is for one year (the balance of the appointed term).

THE CLERK REPORTED THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION: MR. BOUSQUET 28 VOTES, MS WINEMILLER 28 VOTES, MS. McDonald 27 VOTES, MR. NOVAK 15 VOTES.

Oath of Office:

Directors will be sworn in by the Moderator or his designee. Waived for the incumbents that have been previously Election of Officers.

DIRECTORS ARE SWORN IN.

Adjournment: *A motion is made by Captain Robert Mann and second by Mr. Robert Hevey to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 pm. Motion Carried.*

Notes: 1. In order to qualify to vote on matters of this meeting, persons must be a qualified voter of the Fire District.
2. To assist the Moderator and Tellers in recognizing WCFD qualified voters, all non-qualified audience participants will be requested to sit in a designated area set aside for guests.
3. At the Moderator's option or by a majority vote of qualified voters present, votes on motions and resolutions may be by written ballot. Unless otherwise noted or voted, all votes will be by voice or hand vote.