

**Minutes of the Meeting
of the Board of Commissioners
of the Fishers Island Ferry District**

A meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Fishers Island Ferry District was called to order on **Tuesday, November 1, 2011** at 4:35 pm by Commissioner Edwards at the Community Center.

Present were Commissioners: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty.

Absent were Commissioners: Brooks and Burnham.

Present were Randy Wyrofsky, Interim CEO/Manager and Nina Schmid, Assistant Manager.

Eight members of the public were present.

Commissioner Edwards opened the meeting and declared a quorum present.

Minutes of the meeting held on October 7, 2011 were tabled.

Minutes from the meeting held on October 8, 2011 were reviewed and amended according to Commissioner Rafferty's recommendations. There were amendments to Old Business and item #b in New Business. The minutes were approved with the changes.

Moved by Commissioner Rafferty

Seconded by Commissioner Herrick

Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty

Nays: none

A list of outstanding obligations of the District were reviewed and discussed. A resolution was made to pay the outstanding obligation of: **\$12,056.88** as represented in vouchers **#1872 through #1895** dated November 9, 2011 by:

Moved by Commissioner Edwards

Seconded by Commissioner Herrick

Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty

Nays: none

Correspondence

1. The Commissioners reviewed a letter from Jim Ski in which he requested to extend his rental property near the Transfer Station. Commissioner Herrick praised the appearance of Mr. Ski's rental property to date and would like to ensure that this and all rental properties remain aesthetically pleasing. Commissioner Edwards asked that the requested increase in rental space be staked. Mr. Wyrofsky informed the Board that inspections of all rental property will begin on November 8th during which a punch list will be created to which all tenants must comply. Commissioner Edwards and Rafferty agreed to accompany Mr. Wyrofsky on the inspections. The decision on Mr. Ski's request was tabled.
2. Dan Gillan was not present at the meeting, but the Board briefly discussed the e-mail he submitted to Ms. Schmid concerning the transportation cost for teams that come to Fishers Island for athletic competition. The Board requested that more information be supplied for the next meeting and the topic will be discussed further.
3. The Board addressed the request from the Friends of the Fishers Island Theatre Committee for a \$2,500.00 donation towards the cost of repairs at the Movie

Theater. Gordon Murphy explained that the FFIT Committee would like to seal the building from the elements by sealing the coal shoot, replacing windows, etc. – Mr. Murphy estimates the work to be approximately \$5,000.00. Meg Atkin explained that Mr. Murphy and Luke Fowler of the FFIT Committee had done a lot of volunteer clean-up work both inside and out at the theatre last fall. Commissioner Edwards requested that Mr. Murphy work with Mr. Wyrofsky on bid specs for the work that the FFIT would like to be done. The Board requested a schedule and work list. Commissioner Edwards thanked the FFIT Committee for their interest and work.

Old Business

- a. Mr. Wyrofsky informed the Board that he had received the final documents from the engineer for the North ramp repairs but that there were errors. The engineer is in the process of correcting and resubmitting the documents. Mr. Wyrofsky will forward all documents to the Commissioners as soon as he receives them. Commissioner Edwards requested a special meeting when the plans are received so that the project may be put out to bid as soon as possible.
- b. The Public Hearing date for the Rental Properties has been changed to December 6, 2011.
- c. There was discussion about the 2012 Tax Cap Exemption Resolution. Mr. Wyrofsky explained the resolution and the need for it. Upon Mr. Wyrofsky's recommendation, the Board rescinded their motion on October 8th to accept the proposed budget.
Moved by Commissioner Rafferty
Seconded by Commissioner Herrick
Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty
Nays: none
The Board then voted to accept the Resolution to approve the conditional one-time exception for the 2% property tax cap.
Moved by Commissioner Rafferty
Seconded by Commissioner Herrick
Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty
Nays: none
The Board adopted the proposed budget as was presented on October 8th that contained \$3.315 million in total expenditures and \$750,000.00 in tax revenue.
Moved by Commissioner Rafferty
Seconded by Commissioner Herrick
Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty
Nays: none
- d. Kudzu Removal/Maintenance was removed from the agenda.
- e. Ms. Schmid informed the Board that the Santini damage claim was ongoing.
- f. Commissioner Edwards presented a letter from the Habitat Committee that listed an overview of all projects that were completed by the Habitat Committee in 2011 and a scope of the work for 2012. Commissioner Rafferty inquired as to whether the burn area will eradicate the kudzu vines while Commissioner Herrick asked if Round-up would still need to be used. Round-up pesticide will still need to be used.

New Business

- a. The Board discussed the process for hiring a Permanent CEO/Manager of the Ferry District. Commissioner Rafferty asked Mr. Wyrofsky what was required according to civil service laws. Commissioner Edwards would like to advertise even if it is not required. Commissioner Rafferty stated that he is pleased with the job that Mr. Wyrofsky is doing and hopes that he will apply for the permanent position. Commissioner Rafferty believes that a third party search firm should be used to fill the permanent position, and he suggested using Robert Half which is the firm that found Mr. Wyrofsky. Robert Half has offered the Ferry District a discount for their services. Commissioner Edwards requested a timeline for the search and requested to know if the District would have to go out to bid for the search party firm according to the Procurement Policy. Mr. Wyrofsky responded that according to the Procurement Policy, only two bids were needed for professional services. Commissioner Herrick asked Commissioner Rafferty why he suggested Robert Half – Commissioner Rafferty responded that he was pleased with Mr. Wyrofsky’s performance, that Robert Half was located locally in Hartford and has a world-class reputation for providing financial and accounting services. Commissioner Edwards inquired if Robert Half will modify the job description – Commissioner Rafferty responded that the job description will be finalized according to the civil service job description. Commissioner Herrick requested to see both the job description that was used to hire Mr. Wyrofsky and that which was created by the HR study.
- b. Mr. Wyrofsky suggested putting Dave Denison on the payroll as a part-time freight laborer when he returns to the island in April. In the past, Mr. Denison had been paid in exchange for ferry tickets which Mr. Wyrofsky believes that this kind of barter arrangement is not appropriate for compensating ferry district employees.
- c. Mr. Wyrofsky informed the Board that the most recent project work list that he has seen was dated August 1, 2011 and that it is approximately 90% complete. He will send the remaining items to the Board so that they may assist in prioritizing them.
- d. Mr. Wyrofsky gave a financial system overhaul update. He informed the Commissioners that he has almost completed his study of the Ferry District’s financial system and will soon provide his schedule for revamping it. He would like to go live with the new system on January 1, 2012. Mr. Wyrofsky suggested using Marien & Co. to install a new system that would cost approximately \$10,000.00. Rather than paying Marien & Co. approximately \$15,000.00 to train FIFD employees in the new system, Mr. Wyrofsky volunteered to be responsible for all training. Commissioner Edwards inquired as to whether or not these funds could come from the emergency fund – Mr. Wyrofsky responded yes. Mr. Wyrofsky informed the Board that the 2010 Financial Statements posted on the website were reported by the accountant with qualified opinion and believes that those for 2011 will be the same due to a lack of appropriate financial controls and reporting through 2011. Mr. Wyrofsky also informed the Board that he had renewed the website authentication certificate which had expired the day before. Mr. Wyrofsky will investigate the usefulness of a scanner system that would be used for ferry tickets. Commissioner Rafferty asked what Mr. Wyrofsky’s projected timeline is for the overhaul of the financial system – Mr. Wyrofsky responded that he would like to obtain a written proposal from Marien & Co. first. Commissioner Rafferty stated that \$30,000.00 had been allotted in next year’s budget for accounting services, of which \$15,000.00 was for the audit and the balance for advisory services related to the financial system overhaul. Mr. Wyrofsky responded

that he would begin within the next two months. Commissioner Herrick commended Mr. Wyrofsky for quickly undertaking and realizing a comprehensive financial tracking and reporting system. Comprehensive data of this sort will facilitate management decision-making going forward.

- e. Nicholas Espinosa was approved for a longevity salary increase effective November 27, 2011.

Moved by Commissioner Rafferty
Seconded by Commissioner Herrick
Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty
Nays: none

- f. The Board discussed the Off Peak Resident No Driver Fee Policy upon the request of an e-mail from Mark Easter. The e-mail explains Mr. Easter understands that the policy is not to charge residents a no-driver fee during the off-peak season. Commissioner Edwards explained that he was unaware of this policy until he recently went to the ferry to send his car over for service. Commissioner Rafferty was similarly unaware of the policy and inquired as to the history of this practice. Mr. Wyrofsky suggested leaving the policy as is for the time being until the numbers for 2011 are complete at which time he suggests making any and all necessary policy changes at one time. Commissioner Rafferty verified that the freight system changes have been implemented. Commissioner Edwards expressed concern as to the liability when cars are not accompanied by a driver. The Board decided to leave the policy as is upon Mr. Wyrofsky's suggestion.
- g. Mr. Wyrofsky explained the current payroll format to those present. He stated that employees in New London and those on Fishers Island are paid on a different cycle and that there is a need to create a differential pay scale for certain employees based on the position that they are filling at a particular time. Southold has agreed to Mr. Wyrofsky's proposed differential pay.
- h. Nina Schmid informed the Board about an incident in the waiting room at the ferry in which a small burn and matchsticks were discovered in the carpet behind a couch. Ms. Schmid contacted Constable Edwards who filed a report. Ms. Schmid suggested replacing the existing furniture and having the ferry crew lock the waiting room when the last ferry departs Fishers Island. Commissioner Rafferty asked what the Ferry District's policy is about physical security and if there is a list of key holders. Mr. Wyrofsky suggested having all locks changed – he will obtain an estimate. Ms. Schmid will get an estimate to replace the furniture with outdoor furniture – Commissioner Herrick suggested contacting Gordy Lovejoy about building some benches.
- i. The Board reviewed a resignation submitted by Deb Silva. Ms. Silva would like to remain on the part-time call-in list but requested not to be on the schedule.
- j. The Board adopted a resolution to remove Tom Doherty's name as the authorized contact with First Data Merchant Services and replace it with Randy A. Wyrofsky, Interim CEO/Manager and Nina J. Schmid, Assistant Manager.

Moved by Commissioner Herrick
Seconded by Commissioner Rafferty
Ayes: Edwards, Herrick and Rafferty
Nays: none

Public Comment

Nancy Parson addressed the Board about the following topics: the presence of a no smoking sign in the waiting room at the ferry, the unacceptable appearance of the crew on last Friday's boat which was somewhat improved when she returned on Monday, the posting of meeting notices – she requested that signs be verified in place on Tuesday mornings before a meeting, the inaccuracy of the truck fees posted at the New London terminal, and an opposition to free passage for sports teams coming to compete at the Fishers Island School. Ms. Schmid and Commissioner Edwards reminded Mrs. Parson that there had been a Nor'easter this past weekend and that all notices on the bulletin board at the Post Office had blown away, but they apologized for this oversight and will try to ensure proper posting in the future.

Gail Cypherd expressed her opinion about a discount passage for sports teams coming to compete at the Fishers Island School. She explained both the hardship for Island parents to go to competitions in town and also for those coming to the Island when they have to pay non-resident fees. She asked the Board to consider what is best for the community and not just what is best from a financial standpoint. Commissioner Edwards responded that no one has ever come from the school requesting an adjustment in fees for sport teams since he has been a member of the Board.

Deb Shillo inquired as to whether there was an explanation for why the freight revenue number is so off from the projected budget for 2011 and if it will continue in 2012. Mr. Wyrofsky responded that all numbers are suspect at this time and that in the near future, they will hopefully be closer to those projected in the budget. Commissioners Rafferty informed those present that he had looked at the numbers with Mr. Wyrofsky and that they are currently light, but the Board will have a better idea at its next meeting. Mrs. Shillo asked whether the 15% surcharge on vehicles was still in effect as it is a great source of revenue this time of year.

Jay Parsons stated that Dave Denison's name was misspelled on the agenda. He suggested that ticket books should have an expiration date. He requested that the Ferry District consider the same percentage discount when considering a rate change. Mr. Parson recently attempted to use the kiosk in New London but was unable to read the screen possibly due to sunny conditions. He asked if it was a rule that the crew park near the ferry in New London. He then asked if on the occasion that there are two captains of a ferry ride, if both are paid a captain's rate even if only one is acting as such. Mr. Wyrofsky responded that he will investigate about the pay scale in such an event.

Commissioner Rafferty asked Mr. Wyrofsky about how the District could get more accurate revenue numbers by addressing the ticket issue. Mr. Wyrofsky responded that he would exchange unscannable tickets if the system were changed. Ms. Schmid replied that ticket books have never been dated so that they were not wasted if the rates changed. Commissioner Rafferty then asked Mr. Wyrofsky if he thinks that the Ferry District is losing money by not requiring a ticket when returning from Fishers Island. Mr. Wyrofsky stated that a fix may not be possible by January 1, 2012 but that it would definitely be rectified before the peak season.

Ms. Schmid informed the Board that repairs are needed on the Ferry District truck. Commissioner Herrick inquired as to when the truck is used – it is used for plowing, trips to dry dock locations, dump runs, etc. Commissioner Rafferty asked if multiple estimates were needed. Commissioner Edwards suggested leaving the decision up to management – the Board agreed.

The Board decided to post the part-time reservationist position left vacant by Deb Silva's resignation. Commissioner Herrick asked where the position will be posted – Ms. Schmid replied that it will be posted in the New London Day, Suffolk Times, Foghorn, and the Post Office bulletin board.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 6:20 pm to discuss personnel.

Motion by Commissioner Edwards

Seconded by Commissioner Rafferty

The Board returned from Executive Session at 6:45 pm.

Motion by Commissioner Rafferty

Seconded by Commissioner Herrick

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15, 2011 at 4:30 pm at the Community Center.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.