

Cumberland Fire District

Headquarters @ Station Four
3502 Mendon Road Cumberland, RI 02864 401.658.0544
www.cumberlandfire.org

Established
November 10, 2014

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CUMBERLAND FIRE DISTRICT

March 1, 2016 7:15 pm

(Rescheduled from February 23, 2016)

CUMBERLAND TOWN HALL, EVERETT "MOE" BONNER, JR. TOWN CHAMBERS
45 BROAD STREET, CUMBERLAND, RI

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS
4. CONSENT AGENDA
 - a. Approval of minutes from 01/26/16
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Adjourn into Executive Session § 42-46—5a(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation, or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation. Regarding increase in hydrant fees by the Pawtucket Water Supply Board.
 - a. Adjourn from Executive session
 - b. Vote to seal the minutes pending end of negotiations
 - b. FC-2016-08 Authorizing Chairman Bruce Lemois to enter into an engagement letter with Moses Afonso Ryan, Ltd. for legal services at an hourly rate of no more than \$250.00 per hour, relative to the Pawtucket Water Supply Board's increase fee on fire hydrants
 - c. Finance Report
 - d. FC-2016-02 a resolution authorizing payment in an amount not to exceed \$9,822.85 to J & A Appliance for the upgrades to Station 1 kitchen.
 - e. FC-2016-06 Approval to sign Memorandum of Agreement with Local 2722 relative to vacancy in Deputy Chief's position.
 - f. FC-2016-07 Requesting that the General Assembly enact legislation providing that the Cumberland Fire District is a public body

Bruce A. Lemois
Chairman

Phillip Koutsogiane
Vice-Chair

Christopher Parent
Commissioner

Cynthia Ouellette
Commissioner

Ronald Champagne
Commissioner

Jim Scullin
Commissioner

Frank Matta
Commissioner

Kenneth Finlay
Chief of the Department

Station One
555 High Street
401.722.5992

Station Two
1530 Mendon Road
401.333.1421

Station Five
50 Arnold Mills Road
401.333.2244

Kelley Morris
General Counsel

Thomas Bruce
Finance

Debra Auclair
District Clerk

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cumberland Fire District is to provide exceptional public safety services in a safe, compassionate, cost effective and professional manner.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Review of comments made by Mr. Scullin & Mr. Koutsogiane to the Cumberland Town Council on 01/20/16.

These discussions will include all comments made at the Cumberland Town Council meeting held on 01/20/16. These comments were concerning the Cumberland Fire District. The comments are able to be viewed on the Town of Cumberland website.

http://vid.opengovideo.com/playvideo.asp?sFileName=http://video.clerks.hq.com/ri_cumberland_towncouncil_20160120&iCurrentPosition=6068

This discussion may include issues relating to the former Valley Falls Fire District and the former North Cumberland Fire District, including but not limited to, tax rates and budgets, various general policies, and policies of the accounting offices, etc.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Mr. Scullin's report at meeting of 01/26/16 regarding an open meeting violation.
 - i. Request that Mr. Scullin share his information so as the Committee may either fix and/or address the issue.
- b. Phil Koutsogiane's comments/ review of the expenses for Jan 2015-Dec 2015

8. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting location is accessible to the handicapped. Individuals requiring interpreter services for the hearing impaired or need additional information should notify C.F.D. Head Quarters at (401) 658-0544 no less than 48 hours before the meeting

Posted: SOS Web Site
 Cumberland Town Hall (45 Broad Street)
 Cumberland Fire Department HQ (3502 Mendon Road)

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cumberland Fire District is to provide exceptional public safety services in a safe, compassionate, cost effective and professional manner.

1
2 **JANUARY 26, 2016 AT 7:15 P.M.**

3
4 **CUMBERLAND TOWN HALL, EVERETT "MOE" BONNER, JR. TOWN CHAMBERS**

5
6 **45 BROAD STREET, CUMBERLAND, RI**

7
8
9 The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

10
11 **MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Lemois, Commissioners Koutsogiane, Champagne, Ouellette,
12 Scullin, Solicitor Kelley Morris and Chief Finlay

13
14 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Commissioner Matta and Parent and Tom Bruce

15
16 **GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no general announcements at this time.

17
18 **CONSENT AGENDA**

19
20 COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 12/8/15. SECONDED BY
21 COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE.

22
23 Commissioner Koutsogiane corrected his comments on page one to include Robert's Rules of
24 Order.

25
26 COMMISSIONER KOUTSOGIANE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 12/8/15 AS AMENDED.
27 SECOND BY COMMISSIONER SCULLIN. PASSED 5-0.

28
29 **NEW BUSINESS**

- 30
31 A. **Finance Report.** Mr. Bruce was unable to drive due to illness. The Commissioners
32 received a copy of the report. Chairman Lemois gave a brief review. The report shows
33 that the District is at 48% of budget with revenues at 49%. Thirteen hundred late
34 notices were sent out and the District is at an 87 ½% collection rate. Department of
35 Revenue is pleased with the District's results. For the first time past due collections are
36 being budgeted which is considered a non-tax revenue item. The rest of the report is
37 self-explanatory and anyone with questions are welcome to email Mr. Bruce and copy
38 Chairman Lemois.

39
40 COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINANCE REPORT. SECOND BY
41 COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE.

42
43 Commissioner Koutsogiane suggested waiting until Mr. Bruce to attend the meeting to
44 approve.

45
46 MOTION PASSED 4 TO 1 WITH COMMISSIONER KOUTSOGIANE VOTING NAY.

47
48 B. **FC-R2016-01 Abatement of Taxes.** The Cumberland Land Trust is a tax-exempt
49 organization and, therefore, should not be taxed for properties it owns. The original
50 transfer of data from the Town of Cumberland for tax assessment did not designate
51 properties owned by the Cumberland Land Trust as tax-exempt. This resolution would
52 authorize the Finance Department to abate all taxes assessed to the Cumberland Land
53 Trust for properties it owns.

54
55 COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO ABATE TAXES FOR
56 THE CUMBERLAND LAND TRUST. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE. PASSED 5-0.

57
58 C. **FC-R2016-3 Engagement Letter – Ragosta.** This resolution would authorize Chairman
59 Lemois to enter into contracts with Attorneys Vincent Ragosta, Jr. and Timothy Bliss for
60 services relating to collective bargaining.

61
62 The Cumberland Fire District and the Cumberland Professional Fire Fighters Local 2722,
63 IAFF will enter into collective bargaining for the next labor contract and is in need of
64 legal advice relating thereto.

65
66 Vincent Ragosta, Jr. and Timothy Bliss, both reputable attorneys, have agreed to provide
67 these services at reduced government rates of \$200 and \$175 per hour respectively.

68
69 COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE MOVED TO APPROVE CHAIRMAN LEMOIS TO ENTER INTO
70 CONTRACT WITH VINCENT RAGOSTA, JR. AND TIMOTHY BLISS WITH HOURLY RATES OF
71 \$200 AND \$175 PER HOUR. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE.

72
73 Commissioner Scullin questioned whether they worked in the same office and a ballpark
74 on the cost. Solicitor Morris explained that Attorney Ragosta would be the supervising
75 attorney and that they would not be working at the same time. It was also explained
76 that there is no way to predict how the negotiations will go, thus not able to
77 predetermine the cost. Commissioner Scullin questioned the need for legal
78 representation so early in the process. Solicitor Morris reviewed that we are preparing
79 for negotiations and we can't discuss strategy in public, that the Committee would be
80 reviewing this in Executive Session and that it would be irresponsible not to have legal
81 representation during labor negotiations. Chairman Lemois asked "Would be
82 irresponsible for us to hire them the day we needed them?" Solicitor Morris responded,

83 absolutely. Commissioner Champagne commented that it is the same as waiting to get
84 a general practitioner for a doctor, until you needed one.

85
86 Commissioner Koutsogiane stated that he would like to review legal bills as submitted.

87
88 MOTION PASSED 3 TO 2 WITH COMMISSINERS KOUTSOGIANE AND COMMISSIONER
89 SCULLIN VOTING NAY.

90
91 D. **FC-2016-04 Repair to Engine 4.** Chairman Lemois amended the resolution to amend
92 that amount of \$1,359.00 to \$3,398.27.

93
94 This resolution is to authorize payment to Ocean State Truck & Diesel for the installation
95 of a battery maintenance system on Engine 4. Engine 4 was previously a reserve engine
96 and been up fitted for front line response.

97
98 COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO APPROVE PAYMENT TO OCEAN STATE TRUCK
99 & DIESEL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,398.27 AS AMENDED. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER
100 KOUTSOGIANE. PASSED 5-0.

101
102 E. **FC-R2016-5 Heating System.** This resolution would authorize Chairman Lemois to enter
103 into a contract with Kafin Oil Co., Inc. The heat exchange boxes in the apparatus bays at
104 Station 4 are 24 years old and have failed. It was suggested that they be replaced as it
105 would be more costly to weld than replace. Three quotes were obtained with Kafin Oil
106 Co. being the lowest bidder.

107
108 COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE CHAIRMAN LEMOIS TO ENTER INTO A
109 CONTRACT WITH KAIN OIL CO., INC. IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED 5,562.00. SECOND BY
110 COMMISSIONER SCULLIN. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

111
112 F. **Negotiations Update.** The Board received a letter from the Local that they are
113 interested in starting negotiations. A meeting was set for 2/4/16 as a ground rules date.
114 Chairman Lemois and Solicitor Morris will meeting with Attorney Ragosta and Attorney
115 Bliss and either and will swap proposals and at that point will have an executive session
116 to give an update.

117
118 Commissioner Koutsogiane stated that he would like to volunteer with the negotiations.
119 Chairman Lemois stated that there will be the same negotiation team as last year with
120 Chairman Lemois, Commissioners Ouellette and Champagne. The only change will be
121 that Commissioner Matta would serve as an alternate. Chairman Lemois thanked
122 Commissioner Koutsogiane for volunteering.

123

124 G. **Review of Task Forces.** The Capital Task Force met on 1/19/16 where there were
125 introductions and formulated a plan. They are scheduled to meet again on 2/16/16 at
126 7:00 p.m. at the Library.

127

128 The Quarterly Task Force is scheduled to meet on 2/4/16 after negotiations.

129

130 The Insurance Task Force is working on gathering data on all the insurances the.

131

132 H. **Review of Pawtucket Water Supply Board – Solicitor Morris.** Solicitor Morris reported
133 that hydrant fees were basically doubled. She has been looking at it from and legal and
134 practical standpoint to figure out how the District can get this reduced. The District was
135 not notified of this. She asked if anyone had dealings with Pawtucket Water Supply
136 Board, specifically Commissioner Scullin. He said he has had prior dealings with them.

137

138 I. **Review of meeting with DOR/OAG – Solicitor Morris.** Chairman Lemois and Solicitor
139 Morris met with the Chief of Municipal Finance and the R.I. Auditor General, as well as
140 several members of their staff last Friday in Providence. They talked about what has
141 been happening in the District in the past 4 to 6 months and more importantly the
142 audits. They had nothing but positive comments. The two departments are waiting for
143 some minor wording changes where typographical errors have occurred. They have
144 accepted the audits. It was reported that the fiscal year will finish with a surplus. A
145 memorandum was provided with explanations and is part of this record.

146

147 J. **Condition of CFD; past and present.** Chairman Lemois stated that he sent an email to
148 Commissioner Koutsogiane and to Commissioner Scullin. (Part of this record.) In this
149 email he stated that it came to his attention that there was going to be a resolution
150 concerning the Fire District brought to the Cumberland Town Council. Chairman Lemois
151 was not invited nor was the Committee notified nor was not given the courtesy to
152 review the resolution. For those reasons the Chairman didn't attend. Chairman Lemois
153 did watch the meeting and was taken back by some of the opinions and facts presented
154 to the public and on the record by Commissioners Scullin and Koutsogiane. He feels that
155 this is not fair to the Committee nor the taxpayers and needs to be discussed. It is not
156 fair to have two Commissioners working behind the backs of the other five members in
157 a secret fashion and presenting resolutions to be adversarial to this Committee. The
158 Chairman stated, "Albeit that the topic is not something that is not in disagreement to
159 me but certainly the way it is being done is not professional to this Committee at all."

160

161 The Chairman continued to state that he has the comments transcribed (Part of this
162 record) and has some detailed questions but he would open it up to the committee first.

163

164 Commissioner Ouellette commented on her introduction to the concept of four fire
165 districts and her lack of understanding as to why they were needed. Having been
166 involved with the North Attleboro Fire Department for many years, she didn't
167 understand. While moving into Cumberland her father in law was involved in an
168 attempt at consolidation but it didn't go forward. At the time consolidation was again
169 active she had been ensconced within the town and made the decision to run for the
170 Fire Committee. Commissioner Ouellette stated that she had never run for a public
171 office before but she is a firm believer in democracy.

172
173 She continued that she was really hurt and dismayed when she found that there was a
174 resolution to disband this committee so quickly in our first year was occurring. Because
175 she stated, as a firm believer in democracy.

176
177 Commissioner Ouellette was concerned about a comment made to the Town Council by
178 Commissioner Scullin that the Fire Committee was a five to two Committee. She
179 indicated that she had gone back into her records and found that comment is not
180 actually true. She continued to report that she had voted along side of you
181 (Commissioners Koutsogiane and Scullin) on many occasions. Commissioner Ouellette
182 than pointed out that there are times when Commissioners Koutsogiane and Scullin
183 voted opposite the full committee; further she stated that in a democracy some people
184 get their way and some people don't but that's democracy. So to me what happened
185 was; you weren't getting your way so you are trying to undermine democracy.

186
187 She continued: We have been working very hard on this committee and that she was
188 really frustrated with having that totally undermined especially with the Town Council
189 that has no determination over this committee, we are a separate committee.
190 Continuing she stated, one of the first questions she was wondering was, all this talk
191 about whether or not this is what Cumberland wanted when we voted to have this Fire
192 Committee and to merge the districts that it also meant that we were going to turn
193 everything over to the town and that people wanted lower taxes bills, but when I voted
194 to go to a one district I don't recall ever seeing anything on that ballot that said anything
195 about changing over to a municipality or having lower taxes; to me the vote was
196 merging the districts. And that's what we have been doing, merging this district. We
197 haven't even got through our first fiscal year. And to have this happen now is an
198 absolute slap in the face to what we have been doing. And do you know what? There
199 were times when people didn't agree with my stand, continuing she stated "Oh well
200 that's what happens, that's what democracy is all about." Democracy is not about
201 saying "Well you don't want to play in this sand box, so I am going to change the sand
202 box."
203

204 Commissioner Ouellette continued "So I have to tell you both, you are not getting your
205 way at times so this is how you handle it? "I don't recall me jumping and yelling I don't
206 want to play with you anymore, that's ridiculous, ok we didn't agree. She stated, "no
207 offence to you Chief, we didn't get the Chief I wanted. Buy you know what? We have
208 been working really well together. I have not been undermining him because I didn't
209 like the choice, Chief Finlay have developed a really good relationship and we are both
210 committed to fire safety education in the Town of Cumberland. To me that's what you
211 do. Everyone has differences and you all have common ground. The common ground in
212 this committee is to ensure Cumberland that they have the best possible service they
213 can get. And I am sorry if things were handled differently in your own little private
214 districts but we are one district and everyone has to give up something and then we
215 move forward. And this is what we are doing, we are moving forward.

216
217 Continuing she said that she could go on and on and make so many comments about
218 this, about what was said, but I am going to stop because that is just more frustration.
219 Gentlemen, I am really disappointed, really, really disappointed and I am offended
220 because of the work I have done and the sacrifices I have made to help this committee
221 do what it is intended to do.

222
223 Chairman asked for any comments, "out of respect to the Commissioner, are there any
224 comments or questions or additions or deletions?"

225
226 Commissioner Koutsogiane stated that there is nothing on the agenda for this particular
227 discussion and will not make any detailed comments. He further stated that he did not
228 agree with methodology.

229
230 There were other comments by Chairman Lemois and Commissioners Koutsogiane and
231 Scullin. The Commissioners made statements but would not answer questions as they
232 felt the item was not on the agenda correctly.

233
234 The Chair asked for the opinion of the Solicitor regarding the legality of the agenda,
235 which she confirmed.

236
237 The Chairman stated that the item will be on the next meeting as the questions have to
238 be answered.

239
240 Commissioner Scullin, along with Commissioner Koutsogiane, left the meeting at 8:47
241 p.m.


242 COMMISSIONER OUELLETTE MOVED TO ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION AT 8:49 P.M.
243 SECOND BY COMMISSIONER CHAMPAGNE. PASSED 3-0.

244

245 Respectfully Submitted,
246
247
248
249 Debbie Auclair
250 Committee Clerk
251 With additions by Chairman Lemois
252
253
254
255

Reply Reply All Forward

Sat 1/23/2016 6:25 PM

 Bruce Lemois <blemois@cumberlandfire.org>
Communications

To Jim Scullin

Cc Kelley Morris, General Counsel, CFD

Jim,

It has come to my attention that you have made disparaging comments about the Cumberland Fire District, specifically "it's a border line disaster" and "it's going to force continued problems." You further stated "If you look what's going on, they have been sited twice by the AG's office, there's a couple more complaints pending with the AGs office, they just don't run a tight ship."

You have made similar comments on a regular basis. At this point, the Fire District Committee deserves an explanation of these comments. More importantly the taxpayers need you to represent them and put these issues on the table.

I be asking you to comment at our next regular meeting, ie., January 26, 2016.

Thanks,
Bruce Lemois
Chairman
Cumberland Fire District
401-524-8380

Cumberland Fire District

Headquarters @ Station Four
3502 Mendon Road Cumberland, RI 02864 401.658.0544
www.cumberlandfire.org

To: The Honorable Cumberland Fire District Commission

From: Kelley Nickson Morris
General Counsel

Re: Department of Revenue, Division of Municipal Finance
Office of Auditor General

Date: January 26, 2016

This memorandum is to inform the Commission relative to a meeting with Susanne Greschner, Chief, Division of Municipal Finance, and Dennis Hoyle, RI Auditor General, and their respective staff, held on Friday, January 22, 2016, in Providence. The meeting was attended by Chairman Bruce Lemois and myself.

Most importantly, regarding the audit, the Chief and Auditor General had only positive comments. We are awaiting some minor wording changes, (i.e., where typographical errors occurred). Otherwise, they were pleased with the results.

We reported on several issues:

1. The tax rate for 2015-2016 was set at \$2.14 (with an exemption cost of \$.04 on the rate).
2. We will finish the fiscal year with a surplus; the Auditor General suggested that a cash stabilization account/budget reserve account

and/or capital project fund be initiated to ensure responsible use of these funds.

3. Administratively, tax collections for the months of June-July-August strained the business department staff, but was successful.
4. The “3-platoon” initiative was studied for several months this year and was rejected, primarily for a lack of savings to the District.
5. Negotiations with the Fire Fighters Union to begin in February; a resolution to engage labor counsel is before the Commission for approval tonight.
6. Task forces relative to the following issues have been appointed:
 - Capital Improvements
 - Insurance
 - Quarterly Payments
7. Budgeted collection of \$250,000 in past due taxes; we are on target to collect.

257
258

259 **THE NEXT 4 PAGES ARE AN UNOFFICAL TRANSCRIPT FROM THE CUMBERLAND TOWN**
260 **COUNSEL IN REGARDS TO RESOLUTION R16-10.**

261

262 Cumberland Town Council 1/20/2016
263 Transcript on Resolution R16-10
264 Page 1 of 5

265
266
267 This section starts at the 1:41:09 point of the meeting video

268
269 Council Presidents reads resolution.

270
271 Bradley recusing himself.

272
273 **Mr. Scullin:** Brought this resolution forward, as you know we merged the four district together, by
274 general assembly enactment and we have come to a situation to which I have received numerous
275 inquiries on and, I don't know how many other counselors have, that the taxpayers of Cumberland don't
276 feel they've gotten what they wanted out of this merger. Which is basically one tax bill. It's been a
277 gripe around town for years and years is the fire tax bill.

278 And there was an assumption that when we merged the four districts we would have one tax bill.
279 Which I knew that not to be true, but at the time it was easier to merge the four districts together and
280 then move on from there.

281 And know I feel we are at the point now to move on and the only way we can get a single tax bill in the
282 town of Cumberland to include all services is through a town department. You know there now way
283 that I see it that any Mayor or Town Council would ever put a tax on their bill that they send out that
284 they don't control. It just can't happen.

285 And as you can see the resolution calls for the voters to decide if that's the way they want to go and that
286 will clarify the situation. And I think it will be beneficial to the Town do that, and from what I hear on
287 the street it will go over favorably in November.

288 People don't have an issue with the fire service, and I don't personally have an issue with the fire
289 service, we have one of the finest fire departments around it's just how we do the in house
290 administration and billing. And I think this will correct that and you will not see any difference in
291 service. The stations will be where they are the men will be where they are, the only difference will be
292 the Mayor and Town Council will control the fire department and set the budget. And it will be part of
293 the town tax bill. And it's like I say we leave it up to the voters in November to make that decision.

294
295 **Mr. Shaw:** Generally not against it, but we are too early. We just approved and coordinate, not over a
296 little over a year ago a committee. He listed some general accomplishments. He spoke that he didn't
297 think it would lead to one tax bill. Wait four years for something to happen, and less than a year into we
298 are looking to change it? Has not heard of any cry to change.

299
300 **Mr. Lambi:** What the tax payer voted on in 2010 by an 80/20 margin, actually I think it was 85/15, um
301 10,000 positives 2,500 negative on support for improved fire service delivery and the establishment of a

305 consolidated fire agency that could be a town department. They voted for that, let's face it, because
306 they thought there were some synergies in consolidating the four separate fire districts which they felt
307 they could generate some tax savings. The consolidated district's first year budget was 7.3 million
308 dollars which was the aggregated or combined spending package of the four separate Districts. Now we
309 don't know what the true numbers will be, come June 30th. But we do know under the budget that was
310 adopted this consolidated district there were no savings for the taxpayers. It was the same 7.3 as was
311 prior to the consolidation. That's not what the taxpayers approved 10,000 to 2,000 back in 2010. They
312 wanted savings. Um so sense we didn't get it I'm strongly considering favoring this resolution. The
313 other thing is that Public Safety is our number one job here in town hall. And the Fire Service is an
314 important role and um the coordination of those efforts, the management of those efforts under one
315 roof, the synergies that are realized, um with the rescue department and police and dispatch, having
316 those under one roof. Are paralleled in just about every other community. (Listed several cities and
317 towns) Their rescue is with the fire. It's not two separate groups. Um also the savings of bringing the
318 administration into town hall integrating those into some of the existing positions here in town I believe
319 we can save some taxpayers some additional dollars as well as obtain the one bill that Councilor Scullin
320 referenced. Um so for those reasons; mainly public safety and managing that under one roof I am in
321 favor of this, I don't see any negative impacts on our taxpayers, rate payers of consolidating this
322 department into the town operations. I see nothing but positives for the department, public safety and
323 the town and the taxpayers.

324 **Mr. Shaw:** Gave some counter points.

325 **Mr. Schmitt:** Suggested tabling.

326 It went to a vote, but the President asked to have the second lifted to allow discussion.

327 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** This consolidation really hasn't gone as well as people think it has gone, as a matter
328 of a fact I have a minority view point, we had the opportunity to save the tax payers some money which
329 was part of the referendum to begin with, that the taxpayers would get one tax bill, fine, but there was
330 going to be savings of monies, those monies have not come, period. What there has been as been a
331 redistribution of monies same budget as the four independent districts. Same amount of money but
332 just a redistribution as to where it goes. And I will let your minds decide to where you think it went.

333 Administrative staff went up, prior to the consolidation they were part-timers now they are a
334 combination of almost full timers, independent contractors and part timers but the monies, the cost has
335 substantially gone up from roughly 130,000 to 215,000 plus benefits. Which makes it a grand total of
336 about 240,000.

337 The redistribution has also increased the salaries of the firefighters, they matched the highest district of
338 the four which was Cumberland Hill, so the other three went to the same as Cumberland Hill. So 70% of
339 the firefighters got an increase in wages.

340

341 Cumberland Town Council 1/20/2016
342 Transcript on Resolution R16-10
343 Page 3 of 5

344 I think this is an opportunity that is sliding down the hill, you had an opportunity and I think it's not
345 being accomplished. I am not quite sure of what the solution is but something should be done, maybe
346 this is the starting point. You have already discussed the aspect that you have the power and I think, not
347 that I want people to take on more work than you have, because I know you have a great deal of work
348 to do but maybe with the assistance of others, this is an opportunity to see if you can accomplish what
349 the taxpayers were looking for and were lead to believe when that referendum went to vote; we are
350 going to save some money; that has not been done. I thank you.

351 **Mr. Dwyer:** "You said that there wasn't a savings there, is there an increase cost?"

352 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** It's a redistribution

353 **Mr. Dwyer:** But if it cost us whatever the figure was we have and we can use the 7.3 , now I don't
354 believe the Audit report has been in yet, has it?

355 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** yes it has

356 **Mr. Dwyer:** Ok we have not seen it yet, have we?

357 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** ahhh I think it was delivered to the clerk's office

358 **Mayor:** Yes it has

359 **Mr. Dwyer:** So I guess my question to you is, is there a savings, is it an added expense or is it cost
360 neutral?

361 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** That's a question I would try to answer; and I will repeat myself it's a redistribution;
362 they've lowered some cost in some areas but they have increased cost in other areas, basically in
363 benefits and salary. So the total budget remains the same. Now when they have to do their new budget
364 coming up and they have to figure out, now they have to do these capital improvements I anticipate
365 that they are going to have to increase their budget I don't see any savings coming down the pike. Prior
366 to the merger I was the chairperson of the NCFD, when they just did the audit which completed the
367 individual audits of the four districts; NCFD ended with a surplus even after lowering its tax rate to 1.28
368 per thousand with approximately 560,000. I am not saying that is great; you need money for capital
369 improvements and other things but even at the lower rate there were monies that were still there. I
370 just don't see the merger accomplishing that with the increase in salaries and other benefits and it's
371 only other cost will increase not decrease.

372 **Mr. Lambi:** I know the first year CBA was a one year contract with the firemen, and the next one is
373 supposed to be a three year deal and I don't know how that will all play out. Have discussions started,
374 has there been any type of initiation of discussions for the new three year deal?

375 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** No discussions with the full committee what so ever.

376 **Mr. Lambi:** OK, but with the full committee.

377 Cumberland Town Council 1/20/2016

378 Cumberland Town Council 1/20/2016
379 Transcript on Resolution R16-10
380 Page 5 of 5

381

382 **Mr. Koutsogiane:** not with the full committee, I am sure there are discussions going on but not with the
383 full committee.

384 **Mr. Lambi:** Well hopefully there will not be a three year agreement particularly if the Council believes
385 it's in the best interest of the taxpayers to make this a municipal department. For a variety of reasons
386 we have spoken about and to reiterate the number is 7.3 million. That was the combined number of the
387 four district prior to consolidation and that was the adopted budget for fiscal June 30, 2016. And the
388 audit was completed that will be discussed at length Saturday morning at the Library at 10:00am. My
389 understanding is that was for the prior year ending June 30, 2015 that was before we got those four
390 districts rolled into one , so it will be interesting seeing what it is going forward. We already know that
391 the budget is 7.3 and the combined savings is 7.3 and I am of the same opinion that the taxpayers were
392 looking for savings by consolidating and not the same old, and with a three year deal we are going to
393 end up with additional cost.

394

395 **Mr. Koutsogiane;** You know what I realize I am repeating myself, but just as a clarification , that audit
396 that was done in each separate district. Yes we were merged, but they did an audit of each separate
397 district those came out clean. So now that the merged district has come into play, I see my own
398 impression of increase cost. And even though the CBA hasn't been discussed, you know I have heard
399 rumors, asking questions and just don't get answers, when I make a request for information it may take
400 any place from 2 weeks to 2 months to get. And ah it's a hidden agenda but, you can't do that. This was
401 a golden opportunity and I repeat it's sliding away.

402 **Mr. Shaw:** Made some statements

403 **Mayor:** Made comments

404 **Mr. Dwyer:** Made some comments

405 **Rep McLaughlin:** Made comments

406 **Mr. Scullin:** Just a couple of comments; you mentioned that Lincoln working on a new plan reminded
407 me that a few months into merged operations TA Joe Almond had said in the VB that he defiantly
408 wouldn't use the Cumberland model. He could see right off the bat it was not working. And being
409 involved very closely its border line disaster and it's going to force continued problems, you know, if you
410 look at what's going on, they have been sited twice by the AG's office, there is a couple more complaints
411 pending with the AG's office. They just do not run a tight ship. For whatever reason.

412 **Mr. Dwyer:** When you say they, you mean yourself as well.

413 **Mr. Scullin:** No.

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418

419

420

421 **Mr. Dwyer:** Oh no, ok

422 **Mr. Scullin:** It is a five to two board.

423 **Mr. Dwyer:** Oh, ok

424 **Mr. Scullin:** Mr. Koutsogiane and I are trying to right the ship, but at 5-2 it's impossible.

425 **Mr. Dwyer:** Closed out segment and resolution was tabled for 4 weeks.

426

427

428 The video can be seen here for further review.

429 http://vid.opengovideo.com/playvideo.asp?sFileName=http://video.clerkshq.com/ri_cumberland_towncouncil_20160120&iCurrentPosition=6068

431 Completed by:
432 Bruce Lemois, Chair

433

1
2
3 **FC-R-2016-08**
4 **CUMBERLAND FIRE DISTRICT**
5

6 **Resolution: Authorizing Chairman Bruce Lemois to enter into an engagement letter with**
7 **Moses Afonso Ryan, Ltd. for legal services at an hourly rate of no more than**
8 **\$250.00 per hour, relative to the Pawtucket Water Supply Board's increase fee on**
9 **fire hydrants**

10
11 Be it resolved by the Cumberland Fire District as follows:
12

13 **Whereas,** The Pawtucket Water Supply Board (PWSB) recently increased hydrant fees charged
14 to the Cumberland Fire District (CFD) by 100% pursuant to an application filed with
15 and approval by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC); and
16

17 **Whereas,** The CFD was not notified of the application for increase, and therefore, did not have
18 the opportunity to participate in the PUC proceedings; and
19

20 **Whereas,** The CFD wishes to reopen the application and give evidence opposing the increase;
21 and
22

23 **Whereas,** The CFD is in need of a law firm to handle this matter.
24

25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CUMBERLAND FIRE DISTRICT AS FOLLOWS:**
26

27 **Section 1.** Chairman Bruce Lemois is authorized to enter into an engagement with the law firm
28 of Moses Afonso Ryan, Ltd. at an hourly rate of no more than \$250.00 per hour, to
29 pursue the CFD's objection to the increase of hydrant fees charged to the CFD.
30

31 Date adopted: March 1, 2016
32
33
34
35
36
37

38 **PASSED**

39 **YAY:**

NAY:
40