Meeting Minutes for the
7 PM, 12/09/20 Meeting of the
Board of Finance Communication Sub-committee

MINUTES

Members Present: Joe Corbett, Bruce Dutch, Todd Gelston
Staff Present: None
Guests Present: Steve Dorfman, Jiffy Spencer

AGENDA
For the
12/09/20 BoF Communications Sub-committee Meeting
7 PM at the MOBC, Meeting Room #1

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Minutes – November 17, 2020 Special Meeting
3. Review of the intended content and available information for the FEMA / "Quint" article.
    a. Review with the Fire Department of the FEMA submittal and award process for a FEMA Grant
    b. How did we learn of the Grant opportunity?
    c. How many other municipalities applied for the Grant?
    d. What made the difference for winning the Grant?
    e. Are there any "Strings" with this Quint Grant?
    f. What are the other FEMA submittals for East Haddam and how many?
    g. Overview of the FEMA reimbursement process
    h. Other questions and items as necessary
4. Review with the First DRAFT of the Refunding Article
5. Scheduling for the next meeting
6. Adjournment

DISCUSSION

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM in Meeting Room 1.

The Communications Subcommittee members reviewed the meeting minutes for the 11/17/20 Meeting. Bruce Dutch moved that the meeting minutes, as presented, be approved. Joe Corbett seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Next, the attendees and guests began to review the FEMA Grant Application and Award Process by addressing the questions listed in the Agenda. This is a summary of that review:

- Every year Congress allots funding for Firefighting Equipment through the National Firefighting Academy in the form of Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG). A Notice of

Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released. The NOFO lays out the eligibility requirements. Word got out through the Region #1 communications and discussions. The East Haddam Fire Department (EHFD) is within Region #1 of the AFG Program. East Haddam is considered a rural town in Region #1. Steve Dorfman had been taking the Grant Writing Courses offered by Region #1. While taking these courses he networked with knowledgeable firemen and learned when and where to look for grant opportunities.

- The CARES Act added $100 million for PPE. The grant application submittal and selection for ward for the PPE followed the same process but a separate path from that for the "Quint" fire truck. The PPE award was made before that for the "Quint". The Grant Applications and Awards were conducted in two Rounds. Round #1 was for the "Quint" Fire Truck. Round # 2 was for the PPE. Round #1 and Round #2 were independent and insulated from each other.

- There is a timeline for submission and a scoring process for award selection. The Steps and actual timeline are as follows:

    1. Became aware of the NOFO……..February 2020
    2. Completed the Research for the Grant Application ……..April 2020
    3. Completed the Grant Application……..April 2020
    4. Submitted the Grant Application……May 10, 2020
    5. Completed Automated Scoring of the Application……Summer 2020
        a. Computer software looks for certain variables, statistics, key words
    6. Completed Review by a Peer Review Panel……..Summer 2020
        a. Panel is composed of Fire Chiefs from various organizations
        b. Panel met virtually due to COVID-19
    7. FEMA completed a final eligibility and validity review……..Summer 2020
    8. Notification of Award Selection……..…..August 19, 2020

- The work performed to complete a successful grant application was a team effort. The Team consisted of EHFD volunteers, career firefighters and Finance Department staff. – Steve Dorfman, Eric Kolasinsky, Ryan Warner and Cindy Varricchio. The research needed covered the following:
    - Risk Analysis
    - Background on the current ladder truck (Engine #1) and a need for a ladder truck
    - Background on Engine #2
    - General Maintenance History
    - Record and Analysis of the past 3 years for the types of calls as applied to 8 categories.
    - Breakdown of the last 3 years of EHFD budget (Capital and Manpower)
    - Be prepared for an audit of the information by FEMA and data verification.

- The research, completion of the application and submittal required many manhours of work by the Grant Submittal Team. The estimated man-hours spent are as follows:
    - Steve Dorfman ……..over 200
    - Eric Kolasinsky……..100
    - Ryan Warner……30

- The Key factors for the Award of the Grant for the "Quint" are as follows:
    - The sole Ladder Truck for the EHFD was unserviceable
        - The EHFD had a genuine need
    - A second fire Truck was being removed from service
    - Acquisition of the "Quint" was part of the EHFD's drive to be more efficient with less fire trucks and less manpower needed. The "Quint" showed the potential for a significant long term cost savings.
        - The "Quint" performs 5 functions as follows:
            1. Aerial Ladder
            2. Ground Ladder
            3. Pumper
            4. Tanker (750 gallons)
            5. First Response to Medical Emergencies

        - The "Quint" is very versatile. It can be used for all types of rescue:
            - High Angle, low angle, extraction, water rescue
        - Instead of having 3 personnel dedicated to operating 3 vehicles, only one operator is needed to operate the "Quint".
        - The ability to pay for the "Quint" was not a factor in the award selection.

The support from the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance and the Finance Department was much appreciated. The support enabled the ability to do these actions.

- There were no negative strings with this "Quint" Award. The only strings were that the ladder truck (Engine #1) must be scrapped and the Engine #2 must be sold as a fire apparatus for some other fire department.

- Make sure that all of the participants are recognized in the EHN Article.

- The EHFD's "Quint" Award was the third highest in monetary value for the 1,769 Awards. They missed second place by $1,000.00.

- For 2020, there were 8,376 applications for the AFGs. Out the 8,376 applications there were 1,769 Awards. It is not known how many applications were for the "Quint". It probably was numbered in the hundreds.

Lastly, the members scheduled the next meeting for the first week in January 2021.

Meeting was adjourned at 8: 15 PM.