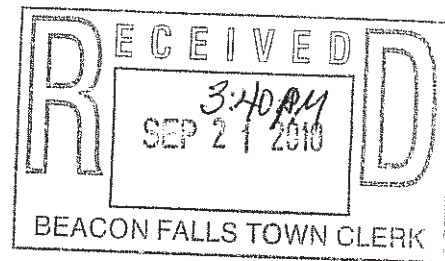


**SERVICE AWARD COMMITTEE
MEETING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2010
MINUTES
(Draft Copy – Subject to Revision)**



Chairman George Shea called the Meeting of the Service Award Committee to order at 7:05 P.M. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: G. Shea, M. Brennan, E. Grace, E. Groth, D. Sorrentino and L. Krepinevich.

ABSENT: T. O'Connell

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

G. Shea asked for a moment of silence to remember departed Firefighters and others who have passed away.

MINUTES

Clerk K. Wilson read Minutes from the June 2, 2010 Meeting. Correction made: Name is T. O'Connell. **M. Brennan made motion to accept the Minutes with correction, 2nd by E. Grace. All aye.** K. Wilson noted she had done a Proclamation for T. Laput and he had accepted it at a little ceremony at a Board of Selectmen Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS / OLD BUSINESS

1. D. Sorrentino noted the Board of Selectmen had asked Service Award Committee to review the Ordinance Establishing a Service Award Plan for Beacon Hose Company No 1 Volunteer Fire and Ambulance. Discussion.
 - E. Groth noted there are members of the Fire Department with 49 to 50 years of service, adding that it might be difficult for some members to make the requirements for the Service Award because of their age and mentioned being 'grandfathered' in. It was noted there are members who are no longer able to fulfill all of the requirements.
 - G. Shea asked what 'grandfathered in' actually means, adding that somehow this should be included in the Ordinance.
 - D. Sorrentino noted a person who has put in 50 years of service is entitled to the Service Award as well as Tax Abatement.
2. D. Sorrentino asked how the Board wants to structure this. Discussion
 - M. Brennan suggested service of 20 years, so members could retire at age 65.
 - G. Shea added if 20 years were put in, at age 65 person would get the \$1,000 tax abatement.
 - M. Brennan noted these suggestions have the support of the membership.
 - E. Groth wanted to see the total costs of this and wanted to see some examples of how this all works.

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- M. Brennan noted there are currently 5 members receiving benefits from the Service Award Plan.
 - E. Groth had concerns about extending the age to 70, up from the current 65 years old. G. Shea noted someone could be 70 and still be qualified to receive the benefit.
 - E. Groth was told if you do not own property in Town you are not eligible for the abatement. It was also noted that if person is not listed as the owner of the property; they are also not eligible for the abatement. It was noted that if the firefighter does not own real estate, there is a reduction of the motor vehicle taxes.
 - G. Shea again reminded everyone that in order to qualify for the Service Award you must also qualify to receive the tax abatement.
 - It was noted that once a person starts to collect the Service Award as a retiree, then currently they are no longer eligible to receive the Tax Abatement.
3. E. Grace suggested cleaning up language of the Service Award Ordinance and the Tax Abatement for Firemen and Ambulance Ordinance in order to come up with a closer 'marriage' of the two (2) Ordinances. Committee agreed this is something the Town Attorney would take care of. It was noted if verbiage does change, then the revised Ordinances would have to go to a Public Hearing and subsequent Town Meeting to vote on any changes or revisions. D. Sorrentino agreed that both the Board of Selectmen and Attorney should review the Ordinances and develop any new verbiage if needed.
4. E. Groth is still interested in seeing some numbers and what the actual costs would be. Discussion.
- E. Groth suggested that from now going forward, a person would need 20 years of service, upon reaching age 65 before being eligible for the Service Award.
 - G. Shea noted there are approximately 6 to 8 members collecting the Service Award at this time.
 - G. Shea noted approximately 45 members currently qualify for the tax abatement.
 - E. Groth also asked about annual physicals, noting physicals taken now are not the same as physical fitness tests.
 - Committee felt it is fair to include the ages of 45 to 65, so as to qualify for the 20 years of service, and to retire at age 65.
5. G. Shea commented that while some members cannot do all of the physical requirements, they are still able to teach and share their years of experience with new members, adding they can serve as trainers and Fire Police and can serve as mentors.
6. E. Grace noted the Service Award Committee only manages a small aspect of the total Fire Department, adding the Service Award is an aid to help with recruitment of new members.

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7. E. Grace also noted tax abatement could be reduced or even increased as this is not a state requirement, but is awarded on a local level. He noted this award could be cancelled at any time, but this is not a goal of this Committee. He added that it is a little difficult to determine a projected cost. E. Groth said he would like to see a copy of any projection to see the impact on overall taxes. M. Brennan said it might take one (1) month to come up with these figures.

PAYMENT OF ANY BILLS

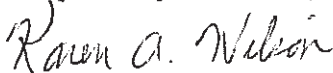
None.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Committee agreed to hold its next meeting on Thursday, October 28, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room.

With no further business, M. Brennan made motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 P.M. 2nd by D. Sorrentino. All aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen A. Wilson

Clerk for the Service Award Committee – Meeting September 16, 2010

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