

# **Board of Fire Commissioners**

Greenfield Fire District  
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The May 19, 2010 Special Meeting of the Greenfield Fire District was called to order at Company #1 by Chairman Don Kugler at 7:08 PM on May 19, 2010. The flag salute and a moment of silence were recognized for departed members.

## **Present were:**

Commissioners: B. Chouinard, Kugler, Robarge, Spackmann, Waite; Secretary J. Petkus.

Please see sign in sheet for others in attendance.

Chairman Kugler explained that this special meeting was called by the Commissioners at the last meeting to talk about different ways to straighten out the fire district in many ways. Request was made to hold questions/comments until the end of discussion.

Commissioner Spackmann began the session by referencing George Habig's recent letter to the Board regarding his thoughts on closing the Porter Corners firehouse and essentially closing the Maple Avenue firehouse by having them go to the Wilton Fire District. Commissioner Spackmann noted that over the last few months there have been a lot of legitimate questions asked, for that matter over the last ten years there have been a lot of concerns and questions asked, and he personally feels that they have not done a good job of addressing them. During the recent election he spoke to a lot of people and did a lot of fact finding. To sum up the feelings of the taxpayers, they feel like overall they do not have a lot of input into the Board of Fire Commissioners decisions; no matter what they say or want the Board is just going to do what they want. He noted that he personally does not feel this is entirely true, but that seems to be the perception out there. He further noted a lot of people have expressed concern over taxes, the town and fire tax are almost the same. The general idea of tonight is can we do things better, can we lower taxes, can we run the District more like a business?

Based on the people he has spoken to, he would categorize them into two groups:

- Those who do not like paying taxes at all for whatever reason
- Those who do not mind paying taxes as long as it is spend appropriately

He started to do some investigating and took a lot of heat for it, but feels these discussions are very healthy and needed, need to start taking a hard look at things and we need to change as a whole. What those changes are going to be is what they are going to begin discussing this evening. Other ideas besides the ones that Mr. Habig presented in his letter have been suggested to him, including getting rid of the LOSAP plan.

Commissioner Spackmann also commented on the Wilton/Greenfield issue, and the fact they are two distinctly different towns, and that this debate has been going on since the 1970's. Some residents of Greenfield do not feel the Greenfield Fire District needs a ladder truck, although Commissioner Spackmann noted it is in needed for fire protection in Wilton. The question becomes is the Greenfield Fire District the way it is currently defined, the best way because there is that difference between the two towns. Commissioner Spackmann also referenced the Greenfield Comprehensive Plan that can be downloaded off the town website.

He further noted that he does not like to discuss/debate the same issues over and over again and this debate has been going on for forty years. It is not fair to the membership or to the community. What he would like to do is to put this issue to bed once and for all; if it doesn't make sense for the Greenfield Fire District to be defined as it currently is then it needs to be addressed, otherwise let's put together a multi-year plan and move on.

Another issue that has been identified is rolling stock. People have commented that we have a lot of trucks, do we need that many, and maybe we should downsize the fleet sooner rather than later. Commissioner Spackmann noted that he felt we do need to downsize, and he would like to have things done by the end of the year.

Commissioner Spackmann also commented on LOSAP, noting a lot of firemen feel they are entitled to that and he agrees as they serve their community; it is 10% of the budget. These are all issues that need to be addressed and put to bed as he is sick of periodically addressing them.

Commissioner Waite commented that he was here the last time it was brought up and he found out if you are going to close down a firehouse the whole district would have to sell everything that we have and give the money back to the taxpayer and start all over again. He noted that he does not think the taxpayers in Greenfield and Wilton would want to do that when the price of a fire truck is \$400,000 or \$500,000. His own personal feeling is this is all just blowing smoke. If you look at Ormsby Road and the other part of Ballou Road where that land is all going to be for sale when the economy comes back and Porter Corners is going to blossom with Malta.

Commissioner Robarge commented that it is great that we can discuss any issue that needs to be discussed, and no offense to George or Stan, but taxpayers are not knocking down our doors because they are dissatisfied with their fire tax or the service they are getting. To put the District on its ear so to speak just doesn't really make a lot of sense because there are two people who are concerned. At the end of the day we are talking more about Maple Avenue going off on their own than anything else.

Commissioner Spackmann noted that there are a variety of options that we can look at, and agreed with Commissioner Waite that it absolutely does not make sense to sell everything and start over fresh, but there have been a lot of changes made that would allow us to separate the Towns completely and more if we wanted to in terms of hamlets, and not have to sell a thing.

Commissioner Robarge noted that at a workshop he had asked Commissioner Kugler if he had discussed over the winter with Commissioner Spackmann of Co #4 going out on their own, and he and other people were all told it was just rumors. Commissioner Spackmann noted that the question that was asked was Maple Avenue looking to separate and the answer to that question was absolutely not. Commissioner Spackmann noted that he was looking into reorganizing the fire district and that is why they are here tonight.

Commissioner Spackmann further noted that what has happened in the past, specifically with the ladder truck, that caused a lot of hard feelings throughout this District, there were articles in the papers, many meetings, a consultant was hired who said a ladder truck was needed at Maple Avenue. When the Board said no originally there was a movement out of the membership of Maple Avenue to separate from the District; this is nothing new. Commissioner Spackmann noted he has discussed it with Commissioner Kugler but the Maple Avenue membership is not involved in any of this; this is Commissioner Spackmann looking into many different options for the future of this District and addressing taxpayer questions. He also felt that a lot of business decisions need to be changed in this district too. He likes the idea of forming a committee to look ten years down the road, address all these concerns and put it to bed once and for all. But the Board needs to start making better business decisions now. An

example he used was the idea that Brian Bishop brought up when he was a commissioner, that the Board needs to start putting money aside each year to replace 293 because 20 years from now when it needs to be replaced we do not have to go through the same battle that we did two years ago; to this date we have not done that, we have not set up a special reserve account to put that money away for the ladder truck.

Commissioner Robarge commented that they were asked a question, they are elected officials, and he feels they were not truthful regarding Maple Avenue leaving the District. Brief discussion continued; Commissioner Spackmann noted he may have misunderstood the question when asked; he absolutely did look into reorganizing the fire district and that was no secret at all. He further noted that some people have suggested that it may be better if you had three or four separate fire protection or fire districts; there is a lot of opportunity that can be explored regarding dividing up the fire district. There are a lot of options on the table that we should explore, that is the point of a committee. Commissioner Spackmann felt overall people want us to start changing the way we do business and looking toward the future and that is very fair.

Commissioner B. Chouinard commented that he is a 28 year member, and all that time all four companies have basically argued with each other. We act like four separate departments now, we each have our own names even though we are one department; if we were one department we would have just four stations. There are four Presidents, four separate company meetings and only one department meeting a year, to him that is acting like four separate departments already. Since 1947 they have been doing it. He also agreed with downsizing the fleet, not 100% in favor of getting rid of Porter Corners as he does not think it is fair to the taxpayers of Porters, it is hard to run the Fire District like a business. There are other things to look at as well like doing away with allotments he is not sure, doing away with LOSAP although that doesn't bother him. We are the only department in the County that has four separate tones; Arvin Hart has three stations and one tone. Feels we need to deal with the facts, believes the taxpayers need answers from us, whether it is one taxpayer or fifty taxpayers. He has sat at these Commissioner meetings for years and watched previous Commissioners do the same thing, thank you for your concern and hopefully you will go away. There are people who will say things to other people but will not come out in public and say it.

Commissioner Kugler commented that it is not to the betterment of the community to close Porters, thinks we need to look at the future and look at building a new firehouse north of Bockes Road, build it right, make sure it is green, energy efficient and put both Porters and Greenfield companies in that one facility and in the long run you will save a lot of money. Would like the Board's okay to form a committee and include different people in the community to take a look at a long range plan for the Fire District.

Commissioner Waite commented that he cannot see going away from LOSAP, we're getting applications right now from young guys that say when they go to retire social security is not going to be there and they are looking to get in to the volunteer fire companies and get a little bit anyway out of that. We also have some people now that are retired and all they are getting is \$100 a month and that is the only way they are making ends meet and they are still active. He also noted he is in favor of downsizing the fleet. If we have a structure fire in the middle of the day and trucks don't roll then we don't need that truck.

Chairmen Kugler noted that they would now take questions/comments from the floor, please keep it to two or three minutes.

Brian Gibbins, Greenfield Center, 35 year member: Noted for general public information that the District covers approximately 89 square miles, we rely on a dispatch system from the Saratoga

county 911 system; if they believe it is a structure fire or confirmed structure fire all four stations are activated simultaneously to respond with all apparatus as directed by our SOG's, so it is not like we are four separate stations. Questioned commissioner Spackmann regarding the discussions that there is a response issue at Maple Avenue, yet at Porter Corners maybe they only run 50 calls but they are doing one hell of a job at fire prevention and homeowners are doing a fantastic job up keeping their houses. Back in the 1970's they used to go to structure fires every other week and nowadays if we have 12 structure fires in the whole district it's a bad year. In the future Maple Avenue may have to go to paid drivers. This is an added expense of salaries, and if this board is going to start running like a business he suggested looking at all the EMS we do and false alarm calls at the mall, Maple Avenue is the most expensive entity of the Greenfield Fire District and it should be at the Board's discretion to look to the Wilton Fire District and ask them to take over the whole entire town of Wilton. Commissioner Spackmann noted that the issue of paid drivers is not a new one. FF B. Gibbins noted that if you are going to start putting more money in that corner of the District and create more expenditures to get a truck off the floor, maybe it is time to consider having Wilton take over that as they do not seem to have issues getting a truck off the floor.

Jon Davis, 13 year member, current Deputy Chief of Porter Corners: Commented that this year January started out great with the Board and the new Chief. Blames the companies fighting on the Board, not all the members. The Chief has done a lot for this department in 6 months, more than a lot of Chiefs have done; he is trying to work as one, we need to give him the chance. As for Porter Corners, he noted they might have done only 40 calls last year, but if they saved one life or helped one family that means a lot to that family and that should mean a lot to this whole District and to the Board. There were not a lot of people happy with the ladder truck thing, the Board screwed up when they bought that truck used to begin with. He voted in favor of the ladder truck because it is needed down there, but the Board screwed up when they brought it up to buy two of them, twice. If one was bought he felt the public would not have said anything. Also noted the Board needs to look at itself and ask if they are the problem. Right now there is a Chief out of Co #4 and he is doing a fine job and with this stuff going on he may never see Chief again. He was proud to be a Deputy Chief until March and then when Don came home it went down and feels he should resign as a Fire Commissioner. Commissioner Spackmann asked D/C Davis if he felt two ladder trucks were needed; D/C Davis commented there should be one ladder truck, we have a problem with water right now.

John Lant, District Chief, 36 year member: Noted he took great offence at what FF B. Gibbins said about Maple Avenue. He has a lot of pride in this District and if it wasn't for Maple Avenue there would not be new trucks paid for with cash in this district. Greenfield isn't the greatest getting out trucks either, fortunate that Middle Grove turned around. Everybody goes through these humps. He has noticed in the last few months the membership in this department and some of the Board members are working hard, we are clicking and all getting along. We need to put the bull to rest, make a decision on what to do so we can get back to the job we are here for.

Ed Petkus, Assistant Chief Middle Grove, 5 year member here, 25 years in the fire service in Nassau County. Commented that the Commissioners want to run this like a business; in other districts the Commissioners are in the office twice a week, they have their own offices, they have a lot of paperwork to do, and things get done. Things up here do not get done too quickly. If the Board had put money away for the ladder trucks years ago like they said they would there would not have been such problems. The Board never acted on it. Regarding the reduction of the fleet, Mike Wilbur came in, gave us a report and told us what we should do. The truck committee got together, came up with a master plan for the future, presented it to the Board and nothing has been acted on it since, which was to buy new trucks, reduce the fleet. It is going to cost a lot of money now but in the long term it will save you money. Regarding the District, he comes from a fire district down on Long Island that covers three different towns who also have fire

districts and there are no problems. Greenfield is not unique. He comes from one fire district with seven fire companies that have their own Captains, Treasurers, Secretaries, their own money, and their own company meeting nights; is not too much different from Greenfield. We need to be educated more, there are offers from different fire districts throughout the State; he and Commissioner Robarge are going down to Springs Fire District in Suffolk County to look into the possibility of electric fire wells due to our water issues here. East Meadow, Jericho, Wantagh, Warwick in Orange County has offered for us to visit, get some ideas and see how they operate. We need to work together and for the past few years things haven't been done. The new Chief came into office and things started happening, a bomb was dropped and threw off everyone. Feels the Board needs to stop, regroup and be Fire Commissioners and work on the day to day operations of the Fire District.

Scott Murray, member of Middle Grove, before that he was a member of Porter Corners for 6 years. It doesn't matter if they respond to 10 calls a year or 100, if they can get a truck on the road just about any time there is a call the Board and Chief should be proud. As for the membership in the companies not getting along, maybe the Commissioners should start going around to the firehouses; as Commissioners of the Greenfield Fire District he does not see a lot of Commissioners coming around to Middle Grove to see how everybody is doing.

George Habig, resident Greenfield Center: With regard to rolling stock, he looked at Wilton Fire District at their apparatus and one thing he found out is everything they use is made by one Company, Pierce. We are all over the place. Cited example from 2006 - 2010, the allotted money for apparatus repair went from \$40,000 to \$70,000 on the last budget. Still feels the same about Maple Avenue, like he said in his previous letter, in 1947 it was justified, but today he does not think so as the Wilton area is getting bigger and bigger and costing more and more. He was not sure if the Wilton satellite station is still in the works, but if it is they are not going to make the mistake Greenfield did, they will keep it outside of Greenfield. Commends the firefighters for what they do, but it comes down to cost and that needs to be looked at. Chief Lant noted that as the mall gets bigger it means more tax dollars and Pierce is one of the most expensive fire trucks made. Commissioner Robarge noted that Wilton has one firehouse and their budget is almost the same as ours with four firehouses and approximately 20 pieces of apparatus.

Jack Atwell, 45 year member: Commented that if everybody sits down and puts in a little effort things will get smoothed out. He has a problem because he keeps hearing Greenfield-Wilton; that should not exist in any of these meetings, we are the Greenfield Fire District and we are all one. Also noted the ladder truck is essential; he was against buying 2. It is needed in the whole community not just down at the Avenue, they just happen to have more use for it because they have a lot more big buildings. Their part of the District brings in a lot of money to the District as far as taxes go. They cost us more but in return they also bring in more. They have a lot of calls; they are a very active department. Money can definitely be saved, need to look at wants versus needs. Also feels there is no reason to break this Fire District up. Commissioner Spackmann asked FF Atwell if we need two ladder trucks in this District; FF Atwell noted he was against it before; he is comfortable with one, if we need it the guys at the Avenue will be here, they know how to operate it.

Jack King, member of Middle Grove: questioned Commissioner Spackmann regarding speaking to another attorney other than the Board's attorney, and his feeling is something is going on behind the scenes. He is not informing all the Commissioners of what is going on and using a separate attorney as opposed to the District's attorney, and so thinks something shady is going on. Commissioner Spackmann noted that there was nothing shady going on, he went to one conference and spoke to Mark Butler, an attorney. They spoke about new legislation that came out that allows you to reorganize local government and he referred Terry Hannigan as he recently went through a very similar situation.

Butch Duffney, 3<sup>rd</sup> generation resident: His son and daughter are both firefighters. Looking around this room, as far as he is concerned they are the best of the best, from Co #1 to Co #4. Anytime day or night they all put their lives on the line for us. If the ladder saves one life, whether firefighter or resident, it is worth it. Suggested that each Commissioner pick a resident to sit on the committee. He is also not in favor of shutting down Porters either.

Julie Ray, member of Porter Corners: she has some health issues, and without Porter Corners she wouldn't be here, Porters is needed. Five Commissioners are sitting here but she only hears two people talking and why when it should be all five of them. Commissioner Spackmann noted that when people ask questions they deserve answers; and Commissioners have a right to research and look at things, and when someone asks him a question, he researches it. Tonight is about that discussion, and where do we go from here. Agrees that a committee needs to be formed, but who should be on it is open for debate, but we need to put all this stuff to bed once and for all. His concern is that we battle the same issues over and over again and he would love to be able to say to residents who question him, here is a report, we formed a committee and here is a 15 year plan and that is why things are the way they are.

Brian Bishop, former Commissioner, 22 year member: one of the main reasons we are here tonight is because one or two individuals decided to go off on their own and investigate a large scale issue facing the department. This could have all been avoided if those people had come to the entire Board, noted there are taxpayer concerns and asked the Board for permission to do some research and come back to the Board with the information. Whether it was intentional or not, it gave the look of back door politics and if you want to get a community riled up, pretend you are doing something behind everybody's backs. If all this had been open discussion from the very beginning we would not be where we are today, there would not be months of hard feelings, angry people and frustrated constituents. Noted the Chief had made a comment at the last meeting putting all the blame on one or two individuals; he feels that is not the case, that sore has been festering for a while. The Board has to collectively try to find a way to work better together for the District, for the firemen and for the community. When he was Commissioner, he made it clear that he was a Commissioner for the District, he may be a member of Company #3, but he was elected Commissioner of the Greenfield Fire District; you are not a Commissioner of a company, you are Commissioner of the Greenfield Fire District, elected by the citizens of the Greenfield Fire District. Commented that a District wide change of attitude needs to happen. Agreed with Commissioner B. Chouinard that we act as four separate companies; many efforts have been made over the years to bring the four companies together, most recently over the past couple of years with a District picnic to bring the four companies together, have some good hearted fun, share a few burgers, beverages and brotherhood. Each year there were concerted efforts by certain members of certain companies to sabotage that effort. That is not a District mentality. Further noted if there are response issues at a certain company, take some help from those who aren't having that difficulty. Also commented that he was very critical of Chief Lant when he first took office, he disagreed with some decisions made early on, but he really thinks he is working at the District level to be District Chief and get all four companies working together. Finally noted that he would be happy to serve on any committee to try and look at this District to see what we can do better.

Jack Sadosky, member of Porter Corners, 25 year member of a Long Island department where he has been a company officer and in the Commissioners office. Has never seen anything set up like this before, this should be one department with four stations. He thinks what so many people are annoyed at is that the Board is mirroring what is going on with upper level government, the way things are done appears to be sneaky. Noted that if his firehouse is closed, his homeowners insurance will increase because homeowners insurance is based on proximity to fire protection. Feels closing Porter Corners is irresponsible. Chief Lant is trying to make it one department; there are four companies in this fire district but we should be working

as one. The Board was elected to represent all of us. He questioned Commissioner Spackmann on the statement he allegedly had made the he didn't care what goes on up in Porter Corners because Commissioner Spackmann does not live in Porter Corners. Commissioner Spackmann noted he did not say that; he addressed this at the last meeting; the statement he had made was twisted around. Commissioner Spackmann noted that he was glad Mr. Sadousky is here this evening because there were a lot of rumors and misinformation regarding Mr. Sadousky, Mr. Davis and the Republican committee and getting rid of Maple Avenue. Mr. Sadousky noted that he lives in the Town of Greenfield and there are lots of people he speaks to, and if they happen to be in the Republican party that is their business. Understands there are fiscal problems, but it always seems that when things start to come together the Board throws a monkey wrench in what the Chief is trying to do and he resents that as a firefighter and taxpayer. Commented that he went to a Republican committee meeting because he is on the committee for the republican Town; if you are going try to close his station, he will do everything he can to close Maple Avenue because they are not in the Town of Greenfield. Commissioner Robarge noted they are part of the Greenfield Fire District.

Jay Ellsworth; Deputy Chief of Middle Grove: Received his homeowners insurance bill this month and he was very surprised, could not believe how much it went up from last year. If we close a station that is going to affect homeowners; Commissioner Kugler disagreed, as in his case it was the company, we are all rated the same in the Greenfield Fire District. Suggested that we put this all to rest; let's discuss this a little more tonight, maybe have another meeting, but put it to rest as we have other things to focus on. The Board is always telling the officers to come together and get the job done; he thinks they are getting the job done and now it is the Board's turn to come together. Commissioner Robarge noted he agreed with D/C Ellsworth and he is all for it, but a bomb was dropped and he just doesn't know how we are going to do that. Chief Lant commented that the taxpayers elected the five Board members to make decisions; you have a Chief, Deputy Chiefs and membership that should be the committee.

Jason Gibbins; Assistant Chief Co #1, 15 year member: Disagreed with Commissioner B. Chouinard, believes this year the four companies and officers are working together better than in prior years. Over the years has seen when the Board is working together the officers are not, and vice versa. Agrees that a committee needs to be set up; heard that about 20 years ago Greenfield and Porters wanted to combine but the Board did not want it. Feels it could be a solution, not now but in the future. Commented in reference to the ladder truck that Co #4 needed it for the commercial sections, but up in  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Town we cannot use it, cannot get up the driveways so it is useless to the taxpayers up here.

Jason Abraham, 10 year member of Co #1: Asked if George Habig would have written that letter if Commissioner Spackmann had not dropped the bomb. Mr. Habig noted that his concern as a taxpayer is cost. Noted that Maple Avenue is a big drain and the taxpayers of Wilton get a free lunch, and he would have written that letter. He attends the Commissioners meetings, this has nothing to do with the firefighters, it is about cost and it keeps going up, and all the cost is at Maple Avenue. He noted he would like to have Maple Avenue shifted over to Wilton and that would solve a lot of our problems with money. Commissioner Spackmann commented that this was brought up in October of last year, people keep saying a bomb was dropped but these are issue that have been here for forty years. We need to put this stuff to bed once and for all; this is not stuff he made up. Tonight he is hearing collectively that people want to keep the status quo, optimize what we have, become more efficient and move forward. Researching problems is what Commissioners should be doing; they should be addressed and put to bed once and for all. FF Abraham also commented that it was brought up the Board should attend company meetings, but he has not seen the Fire District Chief at any Greenfield meetings.

John King, Deputy Chief Maple Avenue: Takes a lot of offense at what people are saying about

Maple Avenue, that we don't do anything for the District; Maple Avenue brings in the most money for the District, had to fight 10 years to get that ladder truck, had to hire a consultant to tell us that. Anyone that says we don't need it or wants to take it away from us, they are wrong. It's needed down there and it is needed up here too. There are still several people out there who have problems with Maple Avenue and whenever they do talk they just breathe negativity and they ought to stop it.

Mike Monroe, 15 year member of Maple Avenue: Regarding the comment that Wilton residents get a free ride in the District, he asked Commissioner Kugler to clarify some things. Commissioner Kugler noted regarding taxes \$605,000 came out of Wilton and \$601,000 came out of Greenfield. Chief Lant noted that Maple Avenue protects the Wilton Mall, and they pay a lot of school taxes and everybody here benefits from it.

Wes Montgomery, taxpayer: Appreciates what the firefighters do, his issue is it sounds like you are all kind of individual and you can't be that way, you need to work under one united District. Mutual aid is necessary, especially if you do not have enough manpower. Bought an \$850,000 truck that he voted down; has previously asked how often it rolls out and actually gets used and never got an answer and that irritated him. Also noted that we as taxpayers don't really pay attention and if you really want the taxpayers involved, you have the website, maybe send out emails to let the taxpayers know what is going on. Commissioner Spackmann asked if Mr. Montgomery get a lot of use out the newsletter; Mr. Montgomery noted yes, but it is only sent twice a year.

Butch Duffney: Saw the ladder truck at the car show last year, promoted it and everybody loved it. Noted he is a logger, and for years and years he was called the biggest low life tree killer, but they promoted their business and educated people about regeneration of new growth; if the district promoted together as one unit, and showed the people what you have and what you do, it's a start. Suggested getting involved with the Town wide garage sale in September, maybe put on a firefighter competition.

George Habig: Pointed out various assessments in Greenfield and Wilton over the past several years. Noted the costs are over at Maple Avenue and will always be over there. FF Brian Bishop noted that he keeps hearing that Wilton is more expensive, but Wilton actually brings more money to the District.

Deputy Chief Jay Ellsworth commented that he gives Mr. Habig a lot of credit for coming to these meetings, his heart is in the right direction, he thinks the figures are off though. He further noted that prices of trucks are astronomical, prices in general are astronomical and if it is associated with fire it's double the cost, and we can't stop that, what he thinks the Board is trying to do is slow it down. Would love to sit down with Mr. Habig over a cup of coffee and talk about things, because he doesn't think he has the figures right.

Wes Montgomery: Asked where the cutoff is to replace a truck; is it how much that is put into it, age, etc. Commissioner Kugler noted that all that is considered as well as the recommendation of the officers. Commissioner Spackmann noted that generally speaking it is about 20-22 years. Mr. Montgomery asked how the trucks were serviced; it was noted that we have someone to do maintenance work and small repairs, anything major we have to go to the outside. FF Brian Bishop noted that just last year the Board changed vendors because of cost and went to a couple of vendors who are more local and less expensive. The previous vendor would charge for a couple of hours of travel time as well as repair time.

Walt Chandler, Greenfield Town Councilman: has been listening to everything that has been said the last two months, did his research and went out to the community; the community has



spoken and we need four companies. When the Commissioners are elected, we are electing them to keep us safe. The Board needs to come together; you can't run safety like a business and can't put a price tag on it. Requested that the Board try not to put a number to a call but try to remember to keep everybody safe and always remember we need you all. We know taxes are a burden but the people he has spoken to are more prepared to pay for the fire companies. He further noted he is very proud of Maple Avenue, very proud of what Chief Lant has accomplished, will support the fire companies, the Town Board wants to work with you more in the community, try to get all the support we can for you. The fire truck is an issue because people don't know how much fire tax Wilton brings in to the District, and that is part of the peoples' fault, but we need to communicate that more and start working together. We cannot afford to lose a fire company, and he is very proud of everyone of them.

Mike Chandler; 13 year member, has been an officer most of those 13 years: Commented that the Board is pointing fingers at things to save and he knows the Board has done a poor job for a long time and there are a whole lot more fingers pointed back at themselves. Need to take a look at what you've done, where you have been and where you need to be.

Shawne Perkins, proud member of Middle Grove: Commented the dysfunction is sickening. He has no problem with Maple Avenue and going over there for joint training or to Porter Corners with rope rescue, it's awesome. Morale matters, it's what gets him out of bed. Asked the Commissioners when they get these concerns brought up from the public are they spoken on record, and if not it should be on public record, and addressed on public record. Also questioned where the consultant report is, he has tried looking for it and could not find it, is it a public record? Commissioner Spackmann noted of course it is. Asked Commissioner Spackmann if he brought up to the Board prior to contacting that lawyer and what about our lawyer; Commissioner Spackmann noted he didn't, and he has spoken to Bill Young about a great many things. FF Perkins asked why it hadn't been brought up to the Board; that would indicate communication needs to happen amongst the Board in order to preclude things like this from happening again.

Commissioner Robarge noted he hopes things can move forward. Commissioner Spackmann commented that he thinks a committee needs to be formed and needs to come up with a 10 or 15 year plan.

Steve Rowland; resident: Commented he has not been a fireman, but has been a life long reside of Greenfield, and would be happy to serve on a committee. The Board needs to do something, needs to work together and all the firehouses need to work together. Commissioner Spackmann noted that these things need to be talked about, but when the rumor mill starts, it does not make firemen work together either. Also noted that this is nothing new, it has been going of for sixty something years and needs to be put to rest.

Vanessa Perkins, Deputy District Treasurer: New employee of the district, requested possibly moving workshops to Wednesdays instead of Tuesdays as that is a training night. There are a lot of talented people who want to help and be an asset to the community. As an employee of the District she feels she is wildly underutilized, the Board should use their resources more effectively from employees to firefighters and residents. Asked what exactly was accomplished tonight; Commissioner Spackmann noted nothing yet.

FF Brian Gibbins questioned if the Board could agree tonight that we are going to hold four stations and keep the District boundaries as is, and if the biggest concern is financial, set up committees and find ways within the budget to reduce the expenditures and purchases. Maybe more record keeping is necessary to see what we really have in inventory. One of the biggest line items is vehicle maintenance and repairs; maybe the maintenance guy has some ideas as to

how to save some money there.

## RESOLUTION #129 TO KEEP ALL FOUR STATIONS AND NOT TO CHANGE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.

MOTION: Waite

SECOND: Robarge

RESOLVED to keep all four stations and not to change district boundaries.

VOTE: All in favor, motion carried.

Commissioner Spackmann questioned FF B. Gibbins about combining Porter Corners and Greenfield Center into one firehouse. FF B. Gibbins noted there is a tremendous amount of building sites in Porter Corners; if you start moving stations you are going to increase response time. Back when he sat on the Board and Porter Corners was built, they knew it was going to be a twenty year building, it was a steel building and they paid cash for it. They knew back then that they were going to have to address the issue of Porter Corners in give or take 20 years but unfortunately through the years money was put elsewhere. Now we have to put in another \$57,000 but you will probably get another ten years out of it, then start putting some of your finances into reserve accounts so that the Board does not have to bond anything. The Board needs to get back into a saving program again

Chairman Kugler thanked everybody for coming out this evening, there are a lot of positive thoughts and hopefully the Board can start working on some of this and improve the Fire District. Chief Lant thanked the Board for coming this evening as well.

Special meeting ended at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce A. Petkus  
District Secretary