

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Date/Time:	Thursday, July 10, 2025 6:30pm
Place:	Bonnet Shores Fire District Community Center
Zoom ¹ :	<p>Virtual access is being provided only as a convenience and is not an official “location” where access to the meeting is guaranteed. If there are technical difficulties with the zoom, we will proceed with the meeting. Therefore, being physically present at the meeting is the only way to guarantee complete and uninterrupted access to the meeting.</p> <p>Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83953458824</p> <p>Cut & Paster URL Method: If you are having trouble with the above link, please cut and paste the below into your browser or visit the BSFD Website Calendar.</p> <p>https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZckcuqsqzMtGNCTiUGI9oiRZSWaumUmfVy/ics?icsToKen=DOzRoYZccm4ognSY9gAALAAADuinoGi9hmF_XrEkeIOUm0yr5lRoMf-Fkac7bbWNqBnvzP4tEFodFeq0ImTKVNZ1-F9QpvOGJwHbBNHrjAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=g73sCMLZQVeWgSVInobHLQ</p>
Designated area for recording/ photography	To preserve order and decorum, and to avoid interfering with the ability of spectators to see and hear, any members of the public video recording or photographing the meeting should do so from the designated area.

- I. **ADDRESS THE RESIGNATION OF THE BSFD FIRE DISTRICT CLERK** - Motion-Second-Discussion- Vote:
 1. Appoint council member to take minutes - Motion-Discussion-Vote
 2. Motion to appoint Janice McClanaghan as clerk - Motion -Discussion-Vote
- II. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM 7/1/15 Special Council Meeting** – Motion, Discussion, Vote
- III. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** Public comment is being offered before the council agenda items below to hear the opinions of our community before we begin the discussions. Public comment is for in-person attendees only. Please approach the microphone, identify yourself including BSFD address. Limit 3 minutes. *Note: In an effort to promote decorum and move the agenda forward in a timely manner, you will be allotted one opportunity for public comment. All additional comments can be addressed with council members after the conclusion of the council meeting. We also encourage you to email council members with comments.*

IV. **FISCAL RESPONSIBLE BY LAW CHANGES:**

1. Update on consultation with BSFD legal counsel regarding process for proposed bylaw changes, and comments by Council person Faith LaSalle, Council designee - legal.
2. Review, discussion, revisions, consideration and vote on bylaw changes regarding Fiscal Responsibility Proposed Amendments involving Capital Reserve Fund, Storm Infrastructure Repair Fund, Operating Reserve Surplus Account, Extraordinary Capital Purchases, Grants, Tax Exemptions consistent with the Town of Narragansett, Levy Cap re taxes similar to Towns and Cities in Rhode Island, and Extraordinary Costs. (Fiscal Responsibility Proposed Bylaws attached).
3. Discussion, consideration, and vote on placing Proposed Fiscal Responsibility Amendments to the bylaws on the agenda of the Annual Meeting for a vote and format for same.

V. **ANNUAL MEETING:**

1. **Annual Meeting Agenda** – Review, discuss, revise, reconsider and re-vote on changes to draft Annual Meeting agenda based on further research conducted. This includes an update on the consultation with BSFD legal counsel regarding the proposed opinion poll and the scenarios to be included.
2. **Annual Meeting Process** – Review, discussion, revisions, consideration and vote on any additional edits to the Annual Meeting processes in an effort to modernize and create efficiencies. Items to be discussed will include registration process, Annual Meeting agenda flow, election nominations from the floor, voting process and task/timeline plan.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

ATTACHMENT #1: Proposed Fiscal Responsibility By Law Changes

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS IN FURTHERANCE OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Existing Article VI of Bylaws

ARTICLE VI

Fiscal Year

Section 1. End of. The fiscal year of the district shall end on the thirtieth day of April in each year.

(There are no other Sections to Article VI)

Proposal is to amend Article VI as Follows:

ARTICLE VI

Financial Matters

Section 1: The fiscal year of the district shall end on the thirtieth day of April in each year.

Purpose: Retitle Article VI to encompass financial matters. The fiscal year will remain April 30th.

Section 2: Capital Reserve Fund – The district shall establish a Capital Reserve Fund dedicated to the maintenance and replacement of equipment, software, and capital assets. Each fiscal year, an amount equal to five percent (5%) of the previous year's tax levy will be allocated to the Capital Reserve Fund. At the discretion of the District Council, an amount greater than five percent (5%) of the prior year's tax levy may be allocated to the Capital Reserve Fund from the operating surpluses of previous years.

The Capital Reserve Fund shall be considered minimally funded at one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) and fully funded at five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000). If the Capital Reserve Fund falls below the minimal funding amount, the budget allocation for the fund in the following year must be at least ten percent (10%) of the previous year's tax levy. Once the Capital Reserve Fund reaches the maximum funding amount, the annual funding allocation of five percent (5%) is suspended until the Capital Reserve Fund falls below this maximum.

Purpose: This fiscal responsibility proposal is to have funds available for capital improvements as needed. Presently the surplus is about \$128,000, so that is why the minimum is at \$100,000.

Section 3: Storm Infrastructure Repair Fund: A restricted fund with a minimum balance of sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) shall be established for infrastructure repair caused by extreme weather events. The District Council shall vote on using this fund to pay for weather-related infrastructure costs.

When the fund balance at the end of a fiscal year is below the minimum amount, a budget allocation shall be made for the subsequent year to bring it up to the minimum amount.

Section 4: Operating Reserve Surplus - The District shall establish an Operating Reserve Surplus Account, "a rainy day" fund, to address extraordinary cash flow needs for district operations that arise from lower-than-expected revenues or unanticipated increases in necessary expenditures. The use of this fund to pay for any expenditure line-item requires the approval of the majority of the District Council.

Purpose: This fiscal responsibility proposal is to have funds available for unanticipated but necessary expenses.

Section 5: Extraordinary Capital Purchases – The District may raise money through debt or liabilities, to cover extraordinary capital expenditures for which the District Council deems the Capital Reserve Fund either insufficient or inappropriate to pay. Debt obligations must first be passed by the majority of the District Council. Debt obligations exceeding seventy-five thousand (\$75,000) in any fiscal year must additionally be approved by at least two-thirds of the qualified voters through a referendum at the Annual Meeting or a special meeting.

Purpose: This proposal is a check and balance provision before incurring large debt by giving the voters a voice about the expense.

Section 6: Grants - All grants, including those for the benefit of the Bonnet Shores Land Trust, must receive approval from the District Council before authorization. Grants exceeding a monetary contribution of \$200,000 by the District will be processed through a budget amendment and approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the qualified voters through a referendum at an Annual Meeting or a special meeting.

Purpose: This proposal is a check and balance provision before incurring large debt by giving the voters a voice about the expense.

Section 7: Tax Exemptions - Taxpayers who reside in the District shall be entitled to certain property tax exemptions from the District allowed by the Town of Narragansett provided that they have applied for and received these exemptions from the Town. The Town assessment after Narragansett has applied the exemptions shall be used by the District to set its taxes.

Taxpayers in the District who have not applied for and received these exemptions from the Town of Narragansett are not eligible to receive them from the District. The exemptions cannot be applied to vacant, rental, or leased properties. The District reserves the right to challenge the Town's granting of the exemptions based on information known to the District and deny them to the District taxpayer upon a vote by the District Council.

Purpose: This proposal is to allow taxpayers who make their permanent residence and home in the district to be eligible for the same tax exemptions of the Town of Narragansett.

Section 8: Levy Cap -The District shall restrict any increase in its property tax levy (Levy Cap) to a maximum of ten percent (10%) over the previous year's amount that is budgeted to be raised by taxation, or by the amount of annual inflation (per the CPI index, All Urban, Consumers, New England).

The District may increase the amount by taxation by a percentage greater than 10 percent (10%) or the annual inflation rate, if the increase is approved through a referendum during the district's Annual Meeting.

The mill rate shall then be calculated using assessed values to determine the budgeted tax collection.

Purpose: This change is a prudent measure to provide for a cap on tax increases consistent with the Levy Cap for cities and towns in the State of Rhode Island. The mill rate in the original Charter is outdated, based upon the current value of the properties in the district, potentially allowing for taxes of about \$7,500,000 (million). This is an effort to ensure greater fiscal responsibility to the community. Cities and Towns have a 4% Levy Cap by state law. This bylaw does not change the Charter as the mil rate remains the same but reflects the

district's realization that the archaic mill rate is not relevant today, and is a fiscal responsibility measure to align taxes with current municipal tax trends.

Section 9: Extraordinary Costs – Those costs associated with a declared emergency may be excluded from the District Levy Cap. “Extraordinary costs” are expenses incurred for immediate response, preparation, recovery, and restoration of district services following extreme weather events or catastrophic occurrences. This exception applies only to those costs that exceed what would typically be incurred under normal, non-emergency conditions.

Approval of these extraordinary charges require support by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the District Council. Funds allocated for these costs shall be treated as a one-time request subject to adjustment based on any federal or state reimbursements.

Purpose: This addition is to allow for unforeseen emergency expenses that may occur above the Levy Cap.

ATTACHEMENT #2: Revised Draft Annual Meeting Agenda (Color Coding: BLUE = proposed reposition in agenda based on previous annual meeting agendas, RED = follow-up item from last meeting; GREEN = new administrative items proposed; yellow highlight – need to discuss and reconsider)

BONNET SHORES FIRE DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING August 2, 2025

Date:	Saturday, August 2, 2025
Place:	Bonnet Shores Fire District Community Center
Time:	REGISTRATION - 8:00am-10:00am ANNUAL MEETING - 10:00am – 1:00pm
Zoom:	Zoom will not be offered.
Designated area for recording/ photography	To preserve order and decorum, and to avoid interfering with the ability of spectators to see and hear, any members of the public video recording or photographing the meeting should do so from the designated area.

Draft Agenda

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** District Moderator to call the meeting to order
 - a. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
 - b. **REFLECTION ON DECEASED MEMBERS OF THE BSFD COMMUNITY**
2. **PROPER NOTICE AND QUORUM ATTESTATION** – Clerk to attest to proper notice and quorum required for the annual meeting to proceed.
3. **REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Nominations for the following offices:
 - a. Nominating Committee Candidates:
 - i. Council Candidates *(2 Needed)*
 - ii. Land Trust Candidates *(1 Needed)*
 - iii. Other Candidates for BSFD Offices (Moderator *(1 Needed)*, Tax Collector *(1 Needed)*, Treasurer *(1 Needed)*, Clerk *(1 Needed)*, Fire Warden *(1 Needed)*, and Tax Assessors *(3 Needed)*).
 - b. Other Candidates that identified themselves prior to the Annual Meeting including Nominating Committee candidates
 - c. Nominations from the floor *(Candidates nominated from the floor will not have an opportunity to share remarks)*
4. **REPORT OF THE TAX COLLECTOR** - Presented by District Tax Collector or designee
5. **REPORT OF THE TREASURER** - Presented by District Treasurer or designee
6. **VOTE TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING 2025-2026 BUDGET ITEMS PURSUANT TO THE BSFD BY LAWS:**
 - a. BSFD Land Trust Allocation (\$1,500)
 - b. Rates of Compensation for the following elected officials:
 - i. Tax Collector (\$6,000)
 - ii. Clerk (\$6,000)
 - iii. Treasurer (\$6,000)

7. **RATIFICATION OF 2024 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES** – Motion, Discussion, Vote
8. **OLD BUSINESS**
9. **NEW BUSINESS**
10. **REVIEW OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY BY LAW CHANGES ITEM ON BALLOT – **CONTINGENCY:****
This agenda item is contingent based upon the outcome of a special meeting. Explanation of the ballot item that would implement fiscally responsible bylaw changes involving capital expenditures, emergency expenditures, debt approval by taxpayers, tax increase limitations and exemptions consistent with Narragansett.
11. **REVIEW OF NON-BINDING REFERENDUM ITEM ON BALLOT (OPINION POLL)**
CONTINGENCY: This agenda item is contingent based upon the outcome of consulting with BSFD Counsel to confirm a non-binding opinion poll can be included on the annual agenda. Explanation of the non-binding referendum on the ballot. Its purpose is to gauge the level of community support for potential electorate structures. The referendum will propose electorate scenarios below and voters will select one and only one to register their opinion. Failure to select only one will result in the opinion not being counted. The options include:
 - a. **Current State of the Electorate:** BSFD Narragansett registered voters, BSFD deeded residential property and landowners, and deeded BSBC owners.
 - b. **Proposed Electorate #1:** BSFD Narragansett registered voters, BSFD deeded residential property and landowners, and one deeded designated BSBC owner per unit.
 - c. **Proposed Electorate #2:** BSFD Narragansett registered voters only
12. **VOTE BY BALLOT**
13. **ELECTION RESULTS**
14. **ADJOURNMENT**

Attachments for Annual Meeting Agenda:

- 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Reports: Treasurer and Tax Collector Reports
- Final By Law Changes (**Contingent**)
- **Dates of regularly scheduled BSFD Council Meetings.**

1 Zoom Details

Topic: BSFD COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING INVITATION

Time: Jul 10, 2025 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZckcuqsqzMtGNCTiUGI9oiRZSWaumuUMfVy/ics?icsToken=DJvUGZtZmxPfj8xQAALAAAAK5lgFEqcT8lQMngrNEehpsHF2ft3DgznAyZhI4Wn44sViIK6YRB5Vulo4D-8V2nU8e93B0ziopLid07cTAWMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=g73sCMlZQVeWgSVInobHLQ>

Join Zoom Meeting

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Meeting ID: 839 5345 8824

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Dial by your location

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- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US
- +1 669 444 9171 US
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- +1 689 278 1000 US
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- +1 253 205 0468 US
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 360 209 5623 US

Meeting ID: 839 5345 8824

Zoom Launch Instructions: If you would like instructions on how to load the Zoom for the Reconstituted Charter Review Committee Meetings from the BSFD Website, a movie clip is available from this link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/vlw8VGqhDG4jUpC1eSXg6H1k8GX4JoOHpL0sclOSePP9PtFr3qfbB_YJrgL1Ftoa.R8X3jicMt0DB3h7q