

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Pennington Borough Fire District No. 1
P.O. Box 387
Pennington, NJ 08534

MINUTES December 20, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Blackwell at 7:55 p.m. at the Pennington Firehouse, following adequate notice under the Open Public Meetings Law (annual notice provided to the municipal clerk, posted at the Pennington Borough Municipal Building and Board offices, posted on the fire district's web site and published in the official newspaper of the district and the Hopewell Valley News).

RESIGNATION AND SELECTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER

After more than 25 years of service to the Board of Fire Commissioners and the residents and voters of Pennington Borough, Commissioner Timperman submitted his resignation from the board effective December 7, 2016. The board accepted his resignation, they and fire department personnel noting with thanks all the time he devoted and the expertise he provided to the fire district during his tenure.

On a Motion by Cmsr. Blackwell, seconded by Cmsr. Meytrott and passed, Robert M. DiFalco was nominated and elected to fill the seat vacated by Cmsr. Timperman and to serve as Commissioner and Treasurer (Chief Financial Officer) until the next annual election. Mr. DiFalco was sworn in by Attorney Griswold.

ROLL CALL

Present by roll call were Commissioners Mark Blackwell, Bob DiFalco, Brian Hofacker, Bill Meytrott and Gene Scooley. Absent: None. Also present were Chief DeForte, Dep'ty Chief Gaudioso, LOSAP coordinator Hallock, Accountant J. Carducci and Attorney Griswold.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a Motion by Cmsr. Schooley and seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker and passed, the minutes of November 15, 2016 were approved as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

A copy of the treasurer's report was made available to each Commissioner with a list and description of the bills to be paid. Chairman Blackwell certified there were sufficient unencumbered funds to pay the bills as presented.

On a Motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. Meytrott and passed, **Resolution 2016-29** – Paying bills in the amount of \$37,796.86, was unanimously approved by roll call vote, with Cmsr. Blackwell abstaining insofar as payment to Metal Fab Pro Race Shop.

LOSAP Report

To date, 18 additional members have qualified for first-year LOSAP awards, 16 of whom have already completed the necessary paperwork with Lincoln Financial. A question arose as to whether junior members are eligible to participate in the program.

CHIEF'S REPORT

There were 30 calls in November, 2016: 12 of them in Pennington Borough, 14 in the Township, 4 other. Calls included 3 residential, 3 brush fires, 2 gas leaks, 2 CO alarms, and 4 mutual aid calls. The fire company responded to 13 accidental alarm calls. Earlier this month they responded to a motor vehicle accident on Rt. 95 involving a State Trooper and a tractor trailer fire at the Rts. 95 and 31 entrance/exit.

Fire School - 6 new members will begin fire school next month – 1 in Mercer County and 5 in Burlington County.

Engine 51 – Out of service due to mechanical issue. It will be sent out for diagnosis of the problem, at which point the economics of repairing this 25 year-old vehicle will be addressed. The chief has upgraded mutual aid plans to accommodate its absence. Hopewell Borough fire district will loan its engine to Pennington in the interim.

Aerial Truck – The final inspection trip will take place in mid-January. Pending testing results it is expected to be delivered to the manufacturer's representative in NJ for installations and prep, hopefully being delivered to the fire district in late-February/early-March. Cmsr. Blackwell will coordinate finalizing the financing as approved by the Local Finance Board.

Activities – A live-burn training session was held December 17th. There was a good turnout of volunteers to help with the borough's Holiday Walk. Operation Santa is underway.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

OLD BUSINESS

Special Vote of Taxpayers - Vehicle Exhaust System for Firehouse – Held on December 19, 2016, taxpayer approval of this project and inclusion of its cost (\$68,000.00) in the fire district's 2017 budget was approved by a vote of 18 YES votes/ 0 NO votes. The cost will be paid from fire district funds reserved for future capital purchases (savings) and will not affect the amount to be raised by taxation or the tax rate.

Shared Service Agreement (Hopewell Township) – Under review by the township board.

2017 Fire District Budget

The proposed budget for 2017 was presented for approval. It reflects total revenue of \$547,187.00, including an amount to be raised locally by taxation of \$204,412.00, and total expenditures of \$547,187.00. The budget includes the capital purchase and installation of a vehicle exhaust/ventilation system for the firehouse. The amount to be raised by taxation is within the 2% cap. The estimated tax rate is \$0.040; there is no increase from the 2016 budget. The public hearing on the approved 2017 fire district budget will be held at 8 pm at the next board meeting (January 17, 2017), after which the budget will be presented for adoption.

On a Motion by Cmsr. Blackwell, seconded by Cmsr. Meytrott and passed, the 2017 Fire District Budget was presented for approval.

RESOLUTION 2016-30 – Approval of 2017 Fire District Budget.

Aye: Blackwell, DiFalco, Hofacker, Meytrott, Schooley. Nay: None. Absent: None.

NEW BUSINESS

2017 Election and Budget Referendum: Voting will take place on February 18, 2017. There are four seats open on the Board: two 3-year terms and two 2-year terms. The deadline for filing petitions to run for a seat on the fire commission with the Clerk of the Board (Gene Schooley) is 5 pm on January 13, 2017. Petitions can be obtained from the Clerk or by calling (609) 466-3967.

New Member – 1 new junior membership was approved.

Banking – The signature authorization cards for PNC Bank need to be updated. On a Motion by Cmsr. Blackwell, seconded by Cmsr. Meytrott and passed, **Resolution 2016-31**, Directing the removal of all signature authorizations at PNC Bank for Board of Fire Commissioners and/or Pennington Fire District account(s) except those of persons presently serving as Fire Commissioners, and approving the issuance of signature authorizations for those commissioners currently on the Board of Fire Commissioners who do not have authorizations on record with the bank, was unanimously passed.

PACO Appointment – On a Motion by Cmsr. Schooley, seconded by Cmsr. Blackwell and passed, **Resolution 2016-32**, Appointing Brian Hofacker as Public Agency Compliance Officer of the fire district, was unanimously passed.

2017 Annual Meeting Notice – On a Motion by Cmsr. Meytrott, seconded by Cmsr. Blackwell and passed, **Resolution 2016-33**, Adopting the Pennington Borough Board of Fire Commissioners' annual meeting schedule for 2017 was unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT

On a Motion by Cmsr. Meytrott and seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker, the meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will be held at 7:30 p.m. on January 17, 2017, at which meeting the public hearing on the 2017 fire district budget will be held.