

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

MINUTES October 20, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting was conducted remotely via ZOOM and was called to order by Commissioner Blackwell at 7:40 p.m., following notice under the Open Public Meetings Law (revised meeting notice including information on how the public could access and join the meeting provided to the Times of Trenton, provided to Packet Publications, sent to the Borough Clerk for posting, posted at the Board offices, and provided to any person requesting same in advance of the meeting).

ROLL CALL

Present by roll call were Commissioners Mark Blackwell, Bob DiFalco, Brian Hofacker, Ryan Fraser. Absent: Wayne Blauth. Also present were Chief DeForte, Deputy Chief Demareski (joined late), Assistant Chief Baldorossi (joined late), Joe Carducci and Attorney Griswold.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

CHIEFS' REPORT

There were 33 calls in September, 2020: 8 in Pennington Borough, 20 in the Township, 2 in Hopewell Borough and 3 other. Calls included 1 residential, 1 non-residential, 3 wires/transformer, 1 motor vehicle/rescue, 3 CO calls and 1 gas leak. There were 16 accidental alarms and 5 mutual aid calls. 3 scheduled drills were held including a 2-day joint extrication drill with area departments.

- Hurst Tools – The hose reel on the truck was replaced. A hydraulic hose blew during the drill. The tools are scheduled for regular maintenance soon and the hose line will be repaired/replaced at that time. The manufacturer's authorized service dealer's quote for the annual service and hose repair/replacement is \$4,971.00. On a motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, seconded by Cmsr. Fraser and passed, a purchase order was authorized to MES for this work (#2020-60).

- New Chief's Vehicle – Has been delivered but still needs outfitting and won't go into service for a month or two. The fire company, not the fire district, purchased the vehicle.

- Hose Purchase – The chief is researching hose options and prices. He will make his recommendation next month.

- Dispatch – No update.

- Rescue Truck – "Open Door" warning light system; repair in progress. Deputy Chief Demareski stated the pump valve issues still must be rectified and recommended the pump panel electronics be refurbished.

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. After certification that there are sufficient encumbered and unencumbered funds in the 2020 budget to pay the bills as presented, on a Motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker and passed, **Resolution 2020-24** - Paying bills in the amount of \$16,781.07 was approved by roll call vote.

The first loan payment on the engine (pumper) is due in early November. Provision for this payment was inadvertently omitted from the 2020 budget but payment will be made from available funds and will be approved as an expense without appropriation, to be addressed in the 2021 budget. On a Motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker and passed, **Resolution 2020-25** - Paying US Bancorp the sum of \$77,693.40 for the lease-purchase payment on the Spartan engine (pumper), was approved by roll call vote.

Assistant Chief Baldorossi joined meeting

OLD BUSINESS

- Gas Meters – Received.
- Tablets in vehicles – Cmsr. Fraser found options through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey (ECSNJ) Cooperative Pricing System for purchasing tablets. He will pass the information on to Ass't. Chief Baldorossi.
- New Truck (pumper) – Due to factory closures associated with COVID19, followed by short notice and scheduling conflicts the mid-construction inspection did not take place as planned. To the degree possible, it will be combined with the final inspection. Quarantine requirements are restricting the ability of the chief and other members of the truck committee to attend the on-site final inspection. As a result Cmsr. Blackwell, ex-chief Gaudio and Neal Blackwell travel for the inspection, at this time scheduled for November 16,17,18.

Deputy Chief Demareski joined meeting

- Sale of Old Aerial – Cmsr. Hofacker will report.
- SOG's – Draft revised and under review.
- Outstanding Pagers – No update.
- Insurance – The insurance broker's presentation to the board and to fire company members will be held as soon as feasible.
- Gear Dryer – The chief will report.
- Trailer Striping – Cmsr. Blackwell will report.
- Turn-Out Gear- Awaiting a fitting for 2 members expected to graduate from fire school soon. The previously approved order will be placed promptly thereafter.
- Hopewell Township Fire District – At a recent meeting there were comments about the length of time it was taking to dispose of the old aerial. Cmsr. Blackwell provided information substantiating the Pennington board's coordination with the township board in this so far unsuccessful effort. Apparently not all members of the township board were aware of the history and the matter was laid to rest.
- **2021 Budget** – Discussion. Cmsr. Blackwell will present the operating and capital truck budget numbers to the township at its next meeting. The budget should be ready for approval at the December meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker and passed, the minutes of the August 18, 2020 meeting were approved.

On a motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, seconded by Cmsr. Fraser and passed, the minutes of the September 15, 2020 meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- November 2020 Meeting Reschedule - The date of the board's regular November business meeting conflicts with the final inspection for the new engine. On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, the November board meeting will be rescheduled to November 22, 2020, at 7:30 pm, and will be conducted via ZOOM. Notice will be published, provided and posted as required.

- Fire Company Pantry Project - The members approved building a new entry from the engine bays into the hall, increasing the size of the pantry, with storage above, and converting the old pantry into a rest room. The area in question is approximately 90 sq.ft. of the engine bays, which the fire district now rents from the fire company. Plans and specs have already been submitted to the Borough and a permit has been issued. Deputy Chief Demareski stated the fire company is looking for input from the board and invited board members to review the plans and survey the proposed area to be affected. Board members expressed concerns about permanently losing that space, particularly given the present and future planned construction in the southern end of the fire district and the likelihood that they will need the space for emergency service purposes in the future.

- Recruitment Program - The township board is holding a meeting to discuss a recruitment program. Cmsr. Hofacker will represent the Pennington board.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will be held via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. on November 24, 2020.

Information on how to join the meeting will be posted on the fire district's web site at least 2 days before the meeting - www.pbbfc.org