

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

**MINUTES November 22, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The rescheduled monthly meeting was conducted remotely via ZOOM and was called to order by Commissioner Blackwell at 7:30 p.m., following notice under the Open Public Meetings Law (rescheduled and revised meeting notice including information on how the public could access and join the meeting published in the Times of Trenton, provided to Packet Publications, sent to the Borough Clerk for posting, posted at the Board offices and on the fire district's web site, and provided to any person requesting same in advance of the meeting).

**ROLL CALL**

Present by roll call were Commissioners Mark Blackwell, Wayne Blauth, Bob DiFalco, Ryan Fraser and Brian Hofacker. Absent: None. Also present were Chief DeForte, Assistant Chief Baldorossi, Jon Weiss and Attorney Griswold.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**CHIEFS' REPORT**

There were 35 calls in October, 2020: 8 in Pennington Borough, 20 in the Township, 2 in Hopewell Borough and 5 other. Calls included 1 residential, 2 wires/transformer, 2 motor vehicle/rescue, and 3 gas leak. There were 17 accidental alarms and 7 mutual aid calls. 3 scheduled drills were held.

- Apparatus - The rescue was out of service briefly for repair of the a/c compressor. The engine has a slow leak that is being watched. The aerial will have a sensor replaced (on site) in the next few days.
- New Chief's Vehicle – Has been delivered but still needs outfitting and won't go into service immediately.
- Hose Purchase – No update.
- Rescue Truck – "Open Door" warning light system – no update.
  
- Firehouse Procedures – In light of the COVID19 situation and in response to the governor's Executive Orders the firehouse is again closed except for personnel responding to emergency calls. Duty crews will likely be reinstated soon. On-site meetings, training and drills have been suspended. Enforcement of guidelines for PPE, distancing and regular sanitizing of equipment and apparatus, etc. remains in place.
  
- Operation Santa - The traditional delivery of gifts will not take place this year but the fire company will arrange an alternative means of wishing happy holidays to residents.

## **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. Fraser and seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker, **Resolution 2020-26** - Paying bills in the amount of \$26,198.61 was approved by roll call vote.

The township board's last payment on the exhaust removal system was received (\$18,404.09).

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting will be held for approval at the next meeting

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **New Truck (pumper)** – Cmsrs. Blackwell and Fraser and ex-chief Gaudio attended the final inspection at Spartan's South Dakota plant. A checklist of minor repairs and modifications was prepared and approved. The truck should arrive at Campbell Supply in the next few weeks, where it will remain while equipment is mounted, lettering done, and pre-delivery prep completed. Radios will be installed after delivery to the firehouse. On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker and seconded by Cmsr. Blauth, **Resolution 2020-27** - Ratifying approval of Change Orders for the Spartan truck and accepting Reimbursement for inspection trip expenses was approved by roll call vote.

- **Tablets in vehicles** – Cmsr. Fraser found options through the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey (ECSNJ) Cooperative Pricing System for purchasing tablets and mounts. On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker and seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco, **Resolution 2020-28** – Authorizing the fire district to enter into a Cooperative Pricing System with ECSNJ as the lead agency was approved by roll call vote. Membership in the program will have to be approved by the state prior to the fire district being allowed to make purchases through the system.

- **Sale of Old Aerial** – The vehicle was reposted for auction on GovDeals but the auction was canceled for procedural reasons. GovDeals is no longer the NJ State Contract vendor for government surplus property auctions and additional documentation is required prior to utilizing their services. Upon a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker and seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco, **Resolution 2020-29** – Authorizing the auction of the old aerial as soon as possible, through GovDeals if it can be done in a timely fashion or the current NJ State Contract Vendor, was passed on a roll call vote.

- **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** – Being ordered – On a motion by Cmsr. Blackwell, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, a purchase order was issued with NJ State Contract vendor Witmer Public Safety Group in the sum of \$6,915.00.

- **2021 Budget** – The budget will be presented for approval at the December meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Tanker Truck** – Discussion of possibly doing a minimal refurbishing to extend its life for another few years to spread out the timing of apparatus replacements. The discussion will continue.

- **Fire Company Pantry Project** – Discussed. The general consensus among board members is not in favor of the project. In view of approved and proposed construction in the fire district's response area, and in the township in general, members do not feel they should give up any space in the engine bays. If that space disappears there will be no room for additional equipment, gear, or apparatus needed to fight fires. Board members acknowledge that their fundamental job is to provide fire protection, extinguishment, and other emergency services and they are responsible for planning for the future needs of the fire services and emergency personnel. There are projects they feel would be more beneficial to this mission than building a pantry. They anticipate that in the foreseeable future the fire district will need space in question. Cmsr. DiFalco said he had not yet formed an opinion.

- **Purchasing** – There was discussion of methods of improving the purchasing process.

### **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 December 15, 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](http://www.pbbfc.org)