

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

MINUTES December 15, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The regular 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 participate in the meeting published in the Times of Trenton, provided to Packet Publications, sent to the Borough Clerk for filing and posting, posted at the Board offices, the firehouse entrances and on the fire district's web site, as well as 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, Deputy Chief Demareski, Assistant Chief Baldorossi, Joe Carducci and Attorney Griswold.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

CHIEFS' REPORT

There were 26 calls in November, 2020: 4 in Pennington Borough, 18 in the Township, 1 in Hopewell Borough and 3 other. Calls included 1 residential, 1 wires/transformer, 1 automobile/machinery, 1 cellar/building pump, 1 CO call and 2 gas leaks. There were 10 accidental alarms and 4 mutual aid calls. To limit COVID19 risks no drills were held.

- 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 remains closed except for personnel responding to emergency calls.
- Operation Santa – Could not be held this year. Instead, this coming Sunday Santa will be driven around town on a firetruck to spread holiday cheer.
- COVID 19 vaccine – Cmsr. Fraser reported that the state has not adopted a policy to mandate employees be vaccinated against COVID19. At this time it appears the state, as well as most employers will encourage, but won't require vaccinations.

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. One invoice was added to the bills to be paid at this meeting: \$363.60 to Spectrum Limousine for transportation to and from the airport for the final truck inspection. 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. Hofacker and seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco, **Resolution 2020-30** - Paying bills in the amount of \$36,559.66 was approved by roll call vote.

The 4th Q tax payment was received from the township (\$75,408.63), as was the 2020 tax payment from Pennington Borough (\$217,838.00).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, the minutes of the October 20, 2020 meeting were approved.

On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, the minutes of the November 24, 2020 meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- **New Truck (pumper)** – The truck has been delivered to Campbell Supply where it will be lettered. The radios will be installed either at Campbell or at the firehouse, whichever is most convenient for the installer. Delivery is expected and payment likely will be due before the next meeting. On a motion by Cmsr. Fraser and seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker, **Resolution 2020-31** - Approving payment of \$493,130.00 to Spartan Motors USA per the final invoice for the pumper, and authorizing the titling and licensing of the vehicle with the Division of Motor Vehicles, was passed on a roll call vote.

- **Tablets and mounts** – The application to join the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey (ECSNJ) Cooperative Pricing System has been submitted to the state for approval. No word on the status at this time. On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, a Purchase Order was approved in an amount not to exceed \$2,400.00 to the co-op vendor, to be delivered once confirmation of membership in the cooperative pricing system is received.

- **Sale of Old Aerial** – The vehicle was posted for public auction on Municibid, the NJ State Contract vendor for government surplus property auctions. The auction will end on December 20th.

- **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** – No update.

- **Trailer Striping** – No update.

- **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.

2021 BUDGET – The proposed budget reflects revenue of \$724,312.00, which includes an amount to be raised by taxation of \$259,375.00, and appropriations of \$724,312.00. The amount to be raised by taxation is within the allowable levy cap and the estimated tax rate per \$100 assessed valuation is \$0.050 vs. \$0.043 last year. There are no new capital purchases in the budget. The public hearing on the approved 2021 fire district budget will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the January 19, 2021 board meeting, after which the budget will be presented for adoption.

On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. DiFalco and passed, the 2021 Fire District Budget was presented for approval (synopsis attached).

Resolution 2020-32 – Approval of 2021 Fire District Budget

Aye: Blackwell, Blauth, DiFalco, Fraser, Hofacker. Nay: None. Absent: None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Purchase Orders** – On a motion by Cmsr. Hofacker, seconded by Cmsr. Blauth and passed, the following requisitions were approved/ratified; purchase orders will be issued.

2020-72	Continental F&S (State contract) Gas meter	\$ 900.00	FF Equipment (01)
2020-73	Continental F&S (State contract) Hose	\$3,388.00	FF Equip. Repair (03)
2020-74	Witmer Public Safety – misc. fittings	\$ 722.00	FF Equipment (01)
2020-75	Continental F&S – CAFS foam	\$ 481.50	FF Equipment (01)
2020-76	Midstate Radio – 2 Minitor 6 pagers	\$ 933.00	FF Equipment (01)
2020-77	Witmer Public Safety – 1 set turnout gear	\$ 3,600.00	Turnout Gear (02)
2020-78	Mercer Spring – chief's vehicle frame (rust)	\$ 1,500.00	Truck Repair (05)

Issuance of PO's for new tires for the tanker, repairing the auto-inject door on the rescue and replacement of a hose reel and dry rotted hose on the vehicle were approved to the lowest quoting or authorized vendors (quotes not yet finalized). All will be charged to the 2020 budget.

- **Air Compressor** – During the month Cmsr. Blackwell discovered an issue with the air compressor and arranged for emergency repair and general servicing of the compressor and dryer, which was long overdue. He presented a proposal from the manufacturer's (Ingersoll Rand) authorized service vendor for an annual service/maintenance contract at a cost of \$874.26. After lengthy discussion and intense opposition to the proposal by the Assistant Chief no action was taken.

- **New Chief's Vehicle** - The fire company purchased the vehicle and has money in its budget to up-fit it for command purposes. However, after researching options and for safety purposes, the vehicle committee would like to install a power bed slide system and custom command box instead of a manual slide system and reuse of a heavy 20-yr. old box. This upgrade will put the project over budget by about \$6,000.00. The chief, on behalf of the committee, asked whether the board would help fund either the power slide and command box or some emergency lighting. After detailed explanation of the proposals and comment by each of the commissioners, on a motion by Cmsr. DiFalco, and seconded by Cmsr. Blauth, **Resolution 2020-33** – Authorizing the purchase of miscellaneous emergency lighting, pursuant to NJ State Purchasing Contract from East Coast Emergency Lighting in the amount of \$8,500.00 was passed. PO 2020-79 will issue for the purchase.

- **Winter Storm clarification** – Cmsr. DiFalco inquired into use of the firehouse should it be necessary. The firehouse is not a designated emergency shelter and due to Covid 19 restrictions it will remain closed should the major storm forecast for this week materialize.

- 2021 Annual Meeting Notice – On a motion by Cmsr. DiFalco and seconded by Cmsr. Blauth, **Resolution 2020-34** – Adopting the Pennington Borough Board of Fire Commissioners’ annual meeting schedule for 2021 and January, 2022 was passed. Until the governor lifts the declared public health emergency and the board deems it safe to resume in-person meetings all meetings will be held remotely via Zoom, at which time the annual meeting notice will be amended and published to inform the public of the change of format/location.

- Public Agency Compliance Officer – On a motion by Cmsr. Blackwell, seconded by Cmsr. Hofacker and passed, **Resolution 2020-35** – Appointing Cmsr. Wayne Blauth as the fire district’s Public Agency Compliance Officer for calendar year 2021 was adopted on a roll call vote.

2021 Annual Election – The election and budget referendum will be held on Saturday February 20, 2021, with polls open from 2-9 pm. The closing date for the receipt of candidates’ petitions to run for the one 3-year seat and one 2-year seat on the board is 5pm on January 15, 2021. Petitions are available from, and shall be submitted to the Clerk of the Board, Wayne Blauth (see web site for contact info www.pbbfc.org). Petitions can also be secured by calling 609-466-3967.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at 10:41 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board and public hearing on the 2021 approved budget will be held via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. on January 19, 2021. Information on how to join this, and future meetings will be published in the fire district’s Annual Meeting Notice and will be posted on the fire district’s web site at least 2 days before each meeting – www.pbbfc.org

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
PENNINGTON BOROUGH FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1**

The budget approved for the year 2021 by Resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 1, Pennington Borough, Mercer County, New Jersey, at its meeting held December 22, 2020, is as follows:

Anticipated Revenues		
Interlocal Service Agreement (Hopewell Twp)	302,833.00	
Capital Lease reimbursement (Hopewell Twp)	162,104.00	
Amount to be Raised by Taxation	<u>259,375.00</u>	
Total Revenues		\$724,312.00
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Operating Appropriations		
Administration:		
Election	\$ 2,500.00	
Office Expense	5,500.00	
Professional Service	34,000.00	
Telecommunications	8,000.00	
Awards	2,500.00	
Subscriptions & Advertising	5,139.00	
Medical	1,000.00	
Contingent Expenses	<u>500.00</u>	
Total Administration		\$ 59,139.00
Cost of Operations:		
Insurance	\$ 80,000.00	
Apparatus Housing	58,500.00	
Truck Repair & Maintenance	20,000.00	
Operating Supplies	2,250.00	
Education & Training	8,500.00	
Fuel & Oil	12,000.00	
Firefighting & Radio R&M	<u>10,000.00</u>	
Total Cost of Operations		191,250.00
Turnout Gear	\$ 16,250.00	
Firefighting equipment	35,275.00	
Radio Equipment	<u>11,550.00</u>	
Total Other Assets - non-bondable		63,075.00
Deferred Charge-expenditure w/o appropriation		77,694.00
LOSAP Appropriation		85,000.00
Capital Appropriations:		
Principal Payments on Debt	\$ 150,056.00	
Interest Payments on Debt	31,098.00	
Reserve for future capital purchases	<u>67,000.00</u>	248,154.00
Total Appropriations		\$ 724,312.00
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Estimated Tax Rate per \$100.00 = \$0.050
Based on 2020 assessed valuation of district \$510,984,696.00