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

**MINUTES December 21, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled remote 'Zoom' meeting was called to order by Chairman Blackwell at 7:34 p.m. following adequate and electronic notice under the Open Public Meetings Law and N.J.A.C. 5:39 (annual meeting notice including information on how the public could access and participate in the remote meeting, make public comment and where relevant documents, if any, would be made available published in the Times of Trenton (1/27/21) and Hopewell Valley News (1/29/21), provided to Packet Publications and Hopewell Express, sent to the Borough Clerk for filing and posting and posted on the board's website, at the firehouse entrances and at board offices, as well as provided to any person requesting same in advance of the meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Present by roll call were Commissioners Mark Blackwell, Robert DiFalco (arrived late), Ryan Fraser, Brian Hofacker, Robert Ingram. Absent: None. Also present were Chief DeForte, Joe Carducci, E. Rodriguez, and Attorney Griswold.

**INSURANCE PRESENTATION** – Postponed until the January meeting.

**CHIEF'S REPORT**

There were 37 calls in November, 2021: 9 in Pennington Borough, 21 in the Township, 1 in Hopewell Borough and 6 other. Calls included 4 residential, 1 motor vehicle/rescue, 2 automobile/machinery, 2 brush, 1 wires/transformer, 1 gas leak, and 1 hazmat. There were 15 accidental alarms and 7 mutual aid calls. 2 scheduled drills were held.

Operation Santa is underway.

- Aerial – Leak in foam tank; 4 Lanes End will checking it out.
- New Engine (pumper) – Light tower warranty repair being addressed by Wilburton; additional minor issues still to be addressed.
- Brush Truck Decking – On hold until spring.
  
- Rescue – Hydraulic hose reel - no update.  
Door switches. Repair will be done by 4 Lanes End. -
- Tanker – Leak on transfer case – 4 Lanes End to address. Alternator issue fixed. New tires.

## **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. The Chief Financial Officer certified there were sufficient encumbered funds from a prior year's budget and/or funds in the 2021 budget to pay the bills as presented. Motioned by Hofacker and seconded by Fraser, **Resolution 2021-41** – Approving payment of the bills as presented in the amount of \$28,946.74 was approved by roll call vote.

*Commissioner DiFalco signed in to meeting.*

On a motion by Ingram, seconded by Hofacker and passed, the following PO's were issued:

#2021-95- Dryer racks (hose) (4 ea.); from Continental Fire & Safety \$1,151.00; chargeable to FF Equipment

#2021-96- Throw ropes (1 ea.), flat head ax, halligan bar; from Continental Fire & Safety \$489.16; chargeable to FF Equipment

#2021-97- Vehicle flashlight, 2.5 water can extinguisher, 20 lb. ABC dry chem extinguisher, all with vehicle mounts; from Continental Fire & Safety \$578.00; chargeable to FF Equipment

#2021-98 – Sensit calibration gas, regulator w/ adapter and calibration cup assembly; from Continental Fire & Safety \$783.00.; chargeable to FF Equipment

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - none

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by Fraser, seconded by Hofacker and passed, the minutes from the October 19, 2021 and November 16, 2021 regular meetings were approved as presented (Cmsr. DiFalco was not at the October 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and did not vote on the motion insofar as approving those minutes).

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- SOG's – Draft revised and under review.

- Outstanding Pagers – No update.

- Fixed Asset Inventory and Appraisal – No update.

- Tablets – PO issued to mount and install.

- Obsolete or Surplus Equipment – Work in progress.

- Attorney Search – Underway.

- LOSAP (inactive unvested member accounts) – Clarification of procedure to return funds to district will be addressed at a future meeting.

- **2022 Budget** – The proposed budget reflects revenues of \$795,419.00, which includes an amount to be raised by taxation of \$314,043.00, and appropriations of \$795,419.00. The amount to be raised by taxation is within the allowable levy cap and the estimated tax rate per \$100 assessed valuation is \$0.059. There are no new capital purchases in the budget. The public hearing on the approved 2022 budget will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the January 18, 2022 board meeting, after which the budget will be presented for adoption.

On a motion by Fraser and seconded by Hofacker, the 2022 Fire District Budget was presented for approval (synopsis attached).

### **Resolution 2021-42 – Approval of 2022 Fire District Budget**

Aye: Blackwell, DiFalco, Fraser, Hofacker, Ingram.

Nay: None.

Absent: None.

- Fire Protection Agreement – By Resolution adopted at its recent meeting the township board agreed to maintain the same terms and condition as contained in the expired Agreement for Fire Protection until December 31, 2022. This will provide the time needed to update the document and prepare a new agreement. On a motion by Fraser and seconded by Hofacker, **Resolution 2021-43** – Approving the Agreement for Fire Protection with the township for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022 was adopted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Return of Funds to Hopewell Township Fire District – Pursuant to the long-standing Fire Protection Services Agreement between the township and Pennington boards the township board pays a percentage of the Pennington fire district's annual budget. In some years not all of the budgeted funds are spent and for a number of years the Pennington board has set aside the township board's percentage share of the prior years' unspent operating appropriations. Commissioner Blackwell presented a proposal to return a portion of those accumulated funds to the township board for its use. After discussion, on a motion by Hofacker and seconded by Ingram, **Resolution 2021-44** – Authorizing payment to the Hopewell Township Board of Fire Commissioners of its percentage share of some surplus funds from prior years' budgets was adopted.

COVID 19 – Commissioner Fraser asked the chief about the current impact, if any, that the resurgence of COVID is having on firefighters. Although there have been no reports of illness he asked the chief to be prepared to reinstitute safety measures should the situation change. Commissioner Ingram reported that FEMA reimbursement for COVID related expenses incurred for emergency protective measures has been extended through April 1, 2022 and that it would be a good idea to stock up on materials while they are still available.

2022 Annual Meeting Notice – On a motion by Fraser and seconded by Hofacker, **Resolution 2021-45** – Adopting the Pennington Borough Board of Fire Commissioners annual meeting schedule for 2022 and January, 2023 was adopted.

Public Agency Compliance Officer – On a motion by Fraser and seconded by Hofacker, **Resolution 2021-46** – appointing Cmsr. Hofacker as the fire district's PACO for the calendar year 2022 was adopted.

Public Hearing on 2022 Fire District Budget – On a motion by DiFalco and seconded by Fraser, **Resolution 2021-47** – setting the date and time for the public hearing on the approved 2022 budget was adopted.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the board, motioned by Hofacker, seconded by Ingram and passed, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board, at which a public hearing on the approved 2022 budget will take place, will be held remotely, via 'Zoom', at 7:30 p.m. on January 18, 2022. Instructions for joining the meeting can be found on the board's website at [www.pbbfc.org](http://www.pbbfc.org)

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

The budget approved for the year 2022 by Resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 1, Pennington Borough, Mercer County, New Jersey, at its meeting held on December 21, 2021, is as follows:

Anticipated Revenues		
Interlocal Service Agreement (Hopewell Twp)	318,318.00	
Capital Purchase reimbursements (Hopewell Twp)	163,058.00	
Amount to be Raised by Taxation	<u>314,043.00</u>	
Total Revenues		\$795,419.00 =====
Operating Appropriations		
Administration:		
Election	\$ 1,500.00	
Office Expense	5,500.00	
Professional Service	42,500.00	
Telecommunications	8,000.00	
Awards	2,500.00	
Subscriptions & Advertising	5,139.00	
Medical	1,000.00	
Contingent Expenses	<u>4,500.00</u>	
Total Administration		\$ 70,639.00
Cost of Operations:		
Insurance	\$ 80,000.00	
Apparatus Housing	59,748.00	
Truck Repair & Maintenance	20,000.00	
Operating Supplies	2,250.00	
Education & Training	15,300.00	
Fuel & Oil	12,000.00	
Firefighting & Radio R&M	<u>17,178.00</u>	
Total Cost of Operations		206,476.00
Turnout Gear	\$ 16,800.00	
Firefighting equipment	34,825.00	
Radio Equipment	<u>5,100.00</u>	
Total Other Assets - non-bondable		56,725.00
LOSAP Appropriation		85,000.00
Capital Appropriations:		
Principal Payments on Debt	\$ 154,367.00	
Interest Payments on Debt	26,787.00	
Reserve for future capital purchases	<u>195,425.00</u>	376,579.00
Total Appropriations		\$ 795,419.00 =====

Estimated Tax Rate per \$100.00 = \$0.059

A copy of the budget is available for review at the Pennington Borough Municipal Building during normal business hours, or a copy may be obtained by calling (908) 782-7900. A copy is also on the fire district website ([www.pbbfc.org](http://www.pbbfc.org))

The Board will conduct a public hearing on the approved budget at its regular business meeting to be held virtually via ZOOM at 7:30 pm on January 18, 2022. Information on how to join the meeting and participate in the public hearing can be found on the board's website at [www.pbbfc.org](http://www.pbbfc.org).