

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

MINUTES
June 21, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled remote 'Zoom' meeting was called to order by Chairman Blackwell at 7:39 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 (12/29/21) and Hopewell Valley News (1/07/22), provided to the Hopewell Express, sent to the Borough Clerk for filing and public 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, Ryan Fraser, Brian Hofacker, Robert Ingram. Absent: None. Also present were Chief DeForte, E. Rodriguez, Fire Co. Trustee Gaudio, Jonathan Weiss, Attorney Appleby and Attorney Griswold.

CHIEF'S REPORT

There were 31 calls in May 2022: 4 to Pennington Borough, 16 to Hopewell Township, 1 to Hopewell Borough, 10 out of district. A discussion ensued as to number of calls to Trenton between Commissioner DiFalco, Commissioner Ingram and Chief DeForte. Calls included 1 trash/dumpster, 1 MVA rescue and 1 automotive. There were 11 accidental alarms and 0 false alarms. 3 scheduled drills and 11.5 special drill/work session were held.

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 2022 budget to pay the bills as presented. Attorney Griswold discussed check amount to Pennington Fire Company. Chairman Blackwell explained that a portion was for the insurance payment and the balance was rent.

Motioned by Hofacker and seconded by Fraser, approving payment of the bills as presented in the amount of \$ 45,058.62 was adopted by roll call vote. Commissioner Fraser abstained on invoice #4848. Commissioner Ingram abstained on #4849.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by DiFalco, seconded by Ingram and passed, the closed session minutes from the May 17, 2022 were approved as presented.

On a motion by Hofacker, seconded by Fraser and passed, the regular session minutes from the May 17, 2022 regular meeting were approved as presented.

On a motion by DiFalco, seconded by Hofacker and passed, the closed session minutes from the April 19, 2022 were approved as presented.

On a motion by Ingram, seconded by DiFalco and passed, the closed session minutes from the January 18, 2022 were approved as presented.

On a motion by Hofacker, seconded by Fraser and passed, the regular session minutes from the December 21, 2021 were approved as presented.

Attorney Griswold indicated that she would forward the approved minutes for posting on the website.

OLD BUSINESS

- New attorney retainer – approved at last meeting by Resolution and Chairman Blackwell to sign.
- Bureau of Fire Inspection – Commissioner Fraser discussed inspection process post-pandemic and certificates of occupancy. Chief DeForte will look into the question as to need for licensed electrician. The standards for certificate of occupancy are dictated by ordinance in each municipality.
- Audit – request for documents from auditor. Auditor Weiss explained that two vendor political contributions were not sent back yet, Witmer and Continental. Draft audit discussed and corrective action plan. Chairman Blackwell indicated that the corrective action plan is already being implemented. Attorney Appleby advised that form of Resolution and Affidavit were forwarded and can be considered at July meeting. Attorney Griswold questioned wording on LOSAP plan administrator language versus sponsoring agency. Enrique Rodriguez indicated that his understanding was that he was plan administrator.
- Driver Abstract updates - Commissioner Hofacker indicated that he was addressing this on Thursday and would have the first batch to send to MVC.

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- - Secure record storage - need discussed as to physical record retention in addition to electronic storage. Attorney Appleby recommended that all Commissioners begin to use the official email addresses. All Commissioners agreed and Chairman Blackwell will contact Mike Murphy at City Connections regarding setting this up. Commissioner Hofacker discussed looking into a climate controlled storage for records.
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- - Meetings – Discussion as to revising meeting format to hybrid at end of 2022.
- - Fire department spreadsheet of annual recurring expenses (for budget purposes): Commissioner Hofacker discussed 10 year budget plan. Chief DeForte to discussion plan with E. Rodriguez.
- - Epoxy floor and Payment to Township Board (budget): Attorney Griswold reminded that this needs to be considered for the next budget. Chairman Blackwell indicated that Township payment was reduced upfront. Commissioner DiFalco stated that it should be returned and be resubmitted with a detailed explanation. Commissioner DiFalco to write letter.
- - Fixed asset inventory update – Commissioner Hofacker discussed general clean up.
- - LOSAP – Non-vested, inactive member account reversion and how to stay in sync with Hopewell Borough’s manner of determining inactive status. Monies stay in LOSAP account to fund future years.
- Insurance – Nick Gaudioso requested 2021 copy of policy for FEMA.
- - Joint meeting of Valley boards – June (date?)
- Other Business:
- - Audit Resolution and Group Affidavit (if audit is completed)

NEW BUSINESS

Joint Meeting – The three valley boards may hold a joint meeting sometime in June to discuss call response allocation and responsibility among the Valley fire stations. Attorney Griswold reminded Board to advise new attorney so that proper notice could be made as it is a public meeting.

Software for Firehouse: E. Rodriguez discussed that software will no longer be supported at end of the year. Chairman Blackwell indicated that software in use was \$6000 in 2015. There is a State web-based platform to make NFIRS reports but data is not saved which is needed for accountability and monthly reports. Board to consider at next meeting and E. Rodriguez to have 3 vendor quotes.

Election: Attorney Appleby reminded Board as filing petition deadlines. Notice of Election will be published in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:14-72 and petitions must be delivered to County Clerk by 4:00 p.m. July 25, 2022.

Tools & Equipment – Need for accountability tags. Twelve sets cost \$361.36. Also, casters for racks discussed. Lowest quote was \$501.00 per Commissioner Ingram. Motion made to

approve up to \$501 for castes by Commissioner Hofacker and seconded by Commissioner Ingram. All voted in favor.

Tanker truck for pool filling – Chief discussed refurbishment of tanker truck.

All wished Attorney Griswold a happy retirement and indicated how much she will be missed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, motioned by Hofacker, seconded by DiFalco and passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will be held remotely, via 'Zoom', at 7:30 p.m. on July 19, 2022. Instructions for joining the meeting can be found on the board's website at www.pbbfc.org