

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

MINUTES
July 19, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled remote 'Zoom' meeting was called to order by Chairman Blackwell at 7:32 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, Fire Co. Trustee Gaudio, Auditor Joseph M. Carducci and Attorney Appleby. Present in audience, "Matt P" and "Michael".

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner DiFalco clarified the correct title of the District for the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve June 21 minutes with no corrections made by Commissioner Hofacker and seconded by Commissioner DiFalco. All voted in favor.

CHIEF'S REPORT

There were 43 calls in June 2022: 10 to Pennington Borough, 26 to Hopewell Township, 1 to Hopewell Borough, 6 out of district. Calls included 2 CO alarms, 4 MVA/Rescue, 3 residential, 2 Wires/Transformer, 7 Mutual Aid and 19 accidental alarms. There were 4 scheduled drills and 10 service-hours for drills held. Chief DeForte advised that Tanker 53 (reserve) is being taken out of service by Hopewell Township, equivalent to District tanker. Repair estimate over \$65,000 and Township would not undertake the work. This has effect on District 1. When

District tanker is out, District will not have a reserve tanker truck. Hopewell Township does not have the money to do the repair. Chief suggested perhaps all three Boards could coordinate and possibly budget for repair. Many trips to Trenton for covers. OEM Coordinator Jack Oakley putting a task force together for Trenton. Chief discussed need to replace certain fittings.

Chief DeForte paused his report.

7:38 pm PFC Deputy Chief Roger Demareski joined meeting.

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. Chairman Blackwell asked if there were any questions on the bills. There were no questions.

Motioned by Hofacker and seconded by DiFalco, approving payment of the bills as presented in the amount of \$ 17,718.44 was adopted by roll call vote. Commissioner Ingram abstained on invoice #4859. Commissioner Blackwell abstained on #4853.

CHIEF'S REPORT (CONT'D)

Chief advised that he was working on the budget. Some changes needed to prices increasing. Chief DeForte asked Chairman Blackwell as to refurbishment plans for tanker. Chairman Blackwell indicated that pricing is 7 months old at this point and will need to be in budget for next year. It is taking 2 ½ years to build a truck now. Progress at firehouse. Floors to be done 1st week of August.

OLD BUSINESS

- Audit – no corrective action needed. Audit is finalized.
- Driver Abstract updates - Commissioner Hofacker indicated that more than half are done.
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- Bureau of Fire Inspection – Chief indicated that he had no further information. Commissioner Fraser spoke to Mayor and was following up. Township Council was unaware that fee was being assessed for self-inspection.
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- Secure record storage – The secure record storage is operational and can be used to share data. Attorney Appleby advised that she spoke with Mike Murphy and the dedicated official email addresses were established and we should be able to start using them.
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- Fixed asset inventory update – Commissioner Hofacker discussed general clean up and will have a list for next meeting. Found a lot of surplus that is not functional.

Chairman Blackwell stated that some old gear could be donated to a small volunteer fire company in Pennsylvania. Commissioner Ingram will put a list together of surplus equipment. Commissioner Fraser asked if a policy was in place to dispose of end of life equipment. Attorney Appleby indicated that she knew of no policy in place, but this could be addressed by Resolution, with a list of items and determination that the items have no useful purpose to the District.

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- Policies for SOG: Committees are still working on drug and alcohol policy, social media policy, etc. PFC Deputy Chief Roger Demareski stated that SOG in draft form. All members of Company got a copy and had a chance to comment. Senior members had some concern with overlap in by-laws. Deputy Chief will forward to Attorney Appleby for legal review.
- Political Contribution forms: Commissioner Ingram stated that he was in the process of collecting political contribution forms. Forms sent to insurance company, Nottingham, Whitmer and Continental and only heard back from Whitmer. Chairman Blackwell indicated that he received Continental's form just the other day and he will forward to Commissioner Whitmer. Also received from Nottingham via email and he will forward also.
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- Audit Resolution and Group Affidavit (if audit is completed): Auditor Carducci indicated that the audit is finalized and no corrective action required. Attorney Appleby stated that the Resolution needs to be approved as to the audit and the group affidavit needs to be executed. Commissioner Hofacker asked which Resolutions were needed. Commissioners need some more time to review so this will be carried to next meeting. Resolution 2022-26 will be revised and addressed at August meeting. Auditor Carducci will circulate the Audit again to all Commissioners.

NEW BUSINESS

Joint Meeting – Nothing heard by Chairman regarding the three valley boards holding a joint meeting to discuss call response allocation and responsibility among the Valley fire stations.

Agreement for Fire Services: Chairman Blackwell stated that this agreement will be coming up for renewal as it expires at end of year and he will reach out to Matt Martin to get their position on the agreement.

Election: All petitions due by July 25, 2022. Commissioners indicated that the petitions were filed at Board of Elections.

Software for Firehouse: Knox box software is due September 24, 2022 and is \$468. It is District's turn to pay and it can come out of radio repair line item.

Chief DeForte has sought quotes for Knox box for engine. Enrique Rodriguez is getting quotes for firehouse software. Chairman Blackwell stated that need to consider annual service contract with Clean Air Company. Chairman will forward the quote to Board to review and see if this is needed.

Insurance: Nick Gaudio got the check.

Equipment: Chief DeForte discussed need for a few purchase orders. A junior member needs a size 16 boot. Commissioner Ingram asked about the three open PO's. Two PO's, \$11539.46 and \$478, are open for over a year. Chairman Blackwell indicated that they were for gear. The District has been waiting for gear for over a year.

PO 2022-33 issued for \$1,071.98 for Whitmer for gear.

Chief stated that some work needed for Yukon (2 chargers and broken antenna).

PO 2022-34 issued for \$550.00 for MidState (radio repair line item).

Joint education with the Valley needs a PO but do not have all details. It will be PO 2022-35 to Hopewell Township. Chief DeForte will get details for next meeting.

***Power outage occurred and Commissioner Hofacker and Commissioner DiFalco were dropped from the meeting. Still have a quorum with three Commissioners.

Commissioner Ingram double checking the amount for joint education for PO 2022-35.

Deputy Chief stated that he was advising the Board regarding rebuilding of vestibule at firehouse. Concept plans to make slightly larger but will affect rental space. Board had previously not approved of doing this. Now doing epoxy floors at firehouse. Chairman Blackwell indicated that concern with fitting a truck in space.

Commissioners Hofacker and DiFalco rejoined the meeting at 8:12 pm.

PFC Deputy Chief will forward plans for Board to consider.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, motioned by Fraser, seconded by DiFalco and passed, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board will be held remotely, via 'Zoom', at 7:30 p.m. on August 16, 2022. Instructions for joining the meeting can be found on the board's website at www.pbbfc.org