

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Pennington Borough Fire District No. 1
P.O. Box 387
Pennington, NJ 08534
February 21, 2023

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled remote ‘Zoom’ meeting was called to order by Commissioner Brian Hofacker at 7:30 p.m. following adequate and electronic notice under the Open Public Meetings Law and N.J.A.C. 5:39. The meeting was also opened at Pennington Fire House for a Hybrid meeting. 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 and Hopewell Valley News, 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 Robert DiFalco, Ryan Fraser, Sandra Radice and Brian Hofacker. Meeting is hybrid with remote access and in person at the Fire House. Quorum established.

Also present: Attorney Appleby, Auditor Carducci.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Attorney Appleby announced to the audience a request for public comments.

Nick Gaudio discussed that he was taking over the LOSAP representative position. He asked for a Resolution to approve the LOSAP list. Commissioner Fraser asked if the resolution that was sent from Attorney Appleby was for this issue.

RESOLUTION 2023-10 Resolution approving Final 2022 LOSAP Annual Certification List

Motion made by Commissioner Fraser and seconded by Commissioner DiFalco.

Roll Call:

Chairman Hofacker	yes
Commissioner DiFalco	yes
Commissioner Fraser	yes
Commissioner Radice	yes

With no further public comments made, Attorney Appleby closed the request for public comments.

CHIEF'S REPORT

31 calls for the month. 3 in the Borough. 18 in the Township. 1 in the Hopewell Borough. Car carrier fire on Route 295.

2 CO alarms, 1 Automobile/Machinery, 2 MVA/rescue, 5 accidental alarms, 8 mutual aid calls. 47 service hours for drills, 264 man hours for drills.

Discussion regarding tanker by Deputy Chief Baldorossi. Need main seal of motor replaced, which requires removing transmission. When pumping water, water going out of back side of water pump due to hole. Lose pressure and volume. Main intake valves are cracked and leaking. Air conditioning is outdated. Electrical problems also. Need \$40,000 to \$50,000 in repairs. If main seal blows, truck will be "dead dinosaur" stuck in middle of road. Maintenance budget will not cover. Request a committee on Specifications to replace tanker. Challenge to go from one shop to another shop to another shop to fix engine, fix the leak and fix the pump. If have to, defer the electrical. Transmission to be pulled to replace seal. Charlie can fix pumps and valves. Electrical could be done by Charlie and maybe another party. This is not fixing a spare; need this truck. Chairman Hofacker asked that spreadsheet be updated. Discussion as to amount needed. How to do an assessment on Rescue 2007 so don't have a problem in a year or two. Assessment from Campbell? Chairman said we need to get at least 5 years as cannot absorb too many payments. Chairman Hofacker stated that Township wants that truck kept in condition. Assessment on six wheeler, which is 18 years old and was bought with a grant from Bristol Myers. End of last Chief's tenure, "dust up" with Borough as to hydrant use. Not comfortable sending out names on a report as to hydrant use to Borough. Alleged that District is benefiting from "free" water. Discussion on accountability of water. Metered hydrants used usually. There was a car carrier fire on Route 295, tanker was filled from a non-metered hydrant. Councilperson wanted to know how much "free" water Company used. Fire Company never filled out a hydrant report. Chairman understands concept of accountability but does not have to be that detailed a report. If there is an issue, someone should come talk to the Commissioners.

Chaplain Riley would like to have a means of knowing what is happening as to significant scenes or funerals. Not a Fire Company member. Can he come as a member of the public to a fire scene – do not want him there in official capacity. Chairman said will check with insurance company. Commissioner DiFalco discussed previous issue where Prosecutor's office removed persons not part of Pennington Fire from fire scene.

Robert Ingram discussed major purchases and Airpacks. Significant purchase that has to be discussed. Eighty (80) airpacks needed, 300 masks, costs are \$7000 a pack. Possible group

purchase to get better quotes and trade-ins might be an option. End of life is 15 years for that gear.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Attorney Appleby requested any edits or comments regarding regular session minutes from January 17, 2023. Motion made by DiFalco to approve minutes from January 17, 2023 followed by second by Radice and all voted in favor. Commissioner Radice did read the minutes and voted. Voted All in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairman Hofacker sent bills for the month which \$45,616.01 total. Bookkeeper working out very well. Chairman needs to amend two PO's from last month. Attorney advised could just include as part of motion to approve bills. P.O. 2023-3 amended to \$535 (from \$335 because of some customization) and P.O. 2023-4 amended to \$500.98 for additional shields (originally \$410).

Resolution 2023-11 Resolution for payment of monthly bills (January 2023)

Motion to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$45,616.01 made by Commissioner DiFalco and seconded by Commissioner Radice.

Roll Call:

Chairman Hofacker	yes
Commissioner DiFalco	yes
Commissioner Fraser	yes
Commissioner Radice	yes

No abstentions.

Purchase Orders needed were listed by Chairman Hofacker. PO's 2023-8 through 2023-18 listed by Chairman. P.O. requests from Fire Company (R. Ingram): 2023-20 through 2023-32. Items include Witmer for gas meters and mask cleaner, State Contract for turnout gear, vehicle repair. Fire Company addressed radios for P.O. 2023-33. Additional P.O.'s 2023-34 to -35 (Four Lanes End – fluid services on engine, rescue and tower).

Discussion on 2022 P.O.'s. Had a PO for Four Lanes last month. Water and ice rescue from 2022. Chairman asked if could issue PO for 2022? Auditor Carducci stated that Board could not. Any open PO left over from 2022 to use? Can amend the vendor? Booked by Hopewell Township. Auditor Carducci stated that will accrue liability back to 2022 on balance sheet – just pay it. It will be a 2023 PO. Can't create another PO for last year. You could amend or change if original PO not fulfilled. In Audit it will be pulled back, but just drop it in this year.

Attorney stated that could approve PO's by Motion. Motion by Commission Fraser and seconded by Commissioner DiFalco. All voted in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Attorney advised that the meeting notices was published, and Commissioner DiFalco posted notice at Borough Hall and Fire House. Also, Budget notices were published in accordance with statute.

Inventory tracking: Chairman Hofacker stated that this could be taken off. Buying stickers for inventory and have a good handle on it.

- Driver Abstract updates – Chairman Hofacker indicated in progress.
- new email addresses for Commissioners – any issue with set up? Commissioner Radice set up with Mike Murphy/Citi Connections.
- District vehicle transfer of title to District – did it occur? Chairman Hofacker indicated that MVC problem and it was a work in progress. We have not gotten a new registration.
- Tanker refurbishment and dealing with Hopewell Township. Already addressed. Chairman indicated it will be a topic of discussion with Township

NEW BUSINESS:

-Filling vacancies under N.J.S.A. 40A:14-70.1(c)(5): filled by remaining members until next succeeding annual election held at the time of the general election, at which time a resident of the district shall be elected for the unexpired term. One seat filled by Commissioner Radice. Attorney Appleby indicated that no statute or law was found other than a reasonable period of time to fill vacancy. Commissioner Hofacker indicated that possible person to fill vacancy.

- Attorney Appleby discussed Political Contribution/Vendor list.
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- Chairman Hofacker and Vice Chairman DiFalco met with Hopewell Township to try to smooth things over. Asked to have a seat at the table. Discussion as to closing of First Aid Squad and building. Open to share building. Don't know next step – meet with Mayor? Draft proposal from Fire Company? Discussions regarding use of building and plan. List of radios, can get their Knox box, maybe use ambulance as water rescue truck. Not looking for vehicle – maybe some furniture. Hope gets first crack since right next door. Survey conducted to encourage membership and ensure

coverage Sunday through Thursday. Member need place to stay to cover duty. Also a place to work out. Maybe that is something to use building next door for. Chairman discussed increase of budget line. Could have on two nights a week; trend that members living outside district. Towns are losing volunteers. Auxiliary or first responder category? Bylaw change discussed.

Auditor Carducci stated that Audit was progressing and probably would be done by April 30th. Due in May. LOSAP is a different level of assurance, a step down from audit. Under ERISA rules – done every year. Nick G. needs to give information to Auditor Carducci. Auditor will talk to Nick G.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner DiFalco and seconded and Commissioner Fraser. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.