

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Pennington Borough Fire District No. 1
P.O. Box 387
Pennington, NJ 08534
August 15, 2023

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled remote 'Zoom' meeting was called to order by Chairman Hofacker at 7:32 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 Chairman Hofacker, Commissioner Robert DiFalco, Commissioner Ryan Fraser, Commissioner Sandra Radice and Commissioner Scott Schaub. Meeting is hybrid with remote access and in person at the Fire House. Quorum established.

Also present: Attorney Appleby.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Hofacker opened the meeting up for public comments.

With no one in the public asking to speak on Zoom or at the Fire House, public comments were closed.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Demarski gave the Chief's report. 42 calls for the month. 3 in the Borough. 30 for Hopewell Township-51. 2 calls for Hopewell Township-52. 4 calls for Hopewell Township-53. 2 calls for Out of District (Ewing), 0 for Out of District (Trenton), 1 for Out of District (other), and 0 for

Hopewell Borough. 60 total service hours, 303 total man hours at fires. 1 Building fire, 1 dumpster/trash fire, 2 water rescue, 4 electrical/power line issue, 16 unintentional alarms.

Chief Demarski wished Commissioner Ryan Fraser in his new position. Relatively quiet month. Solar array component caught fire. Property on Route 31 – brush fire intentionally set. Working on budget for 2024. Tanker is in good shape. Incentives discussed. Need day time paid position. Building manager who could also take care of the trucks and driver would be needed. Borough has not provided any new information on First Aid Building. Suggestion to make presentation to Council in person with Commissioners. Hopewell Township has a software program (Spyrix) which could give access to more information. Discussion as to subcommittees. Commissioner Schaub and Commissioner Radice to participate in committee.

Discussion of independent rescue organization for water rescue. All equipment is District equipment and “not well thought out”. Chief does not think one central spot is prudent; should be spread out. Issue is money from grants per Assistant Chief Ingram.

Request for funds made by Chief as to funding which can only go to a non-profit. Chairman Hofacker said could go through federal 1033 program for high water truck.

High water truck could also be brush truck. Discussion as to squad surplus and willingness to help. Borough has the building; squad has control of assets. Company asked for \$100k from First Aid Squad. Discussion as to make a presentation to Borough Council in person, so residents can be aware. Chief discussed positive nature of gym. Duty crew could work if have place to sleep. Rent too expensive for volunteers to live in town.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Attorney Appleby requested any edits or comments regarding regular session minutes from July 18, 2023. Motion made by Commissioner DiFalco to approve minutes from followed by second by Commissioner Schaub. All voted in favor.

Chairman Hofacker read letter from Commissioner Fraser. **Motion to accept resignation of Commissioner Ryan Fraser**, with regrets, made by Commissioner DiFalco, seconded by Commissioner Schaub. All voted in favor.

Attorney Appleby explained that the vacancy created by resignation of Commissioner Fraser was for the balance of his term which ends December 12, 2023. Election in November will fill two three (3) year terms and one 1-year unexpired term.

Motion made to appoint **JOHN O’CONNOR** to fill vacancy created by resignation of Commissioner Fraser made by Commissioner Radice and seconded by Commissioner Hofacker. All voted in favor.

Oath of Office for John O'Connor. Attorney Appleby swore in new Commissioner O'Connor. Oath of Office to be executed and notarized and forwarded to Borough Clerk and County Clerk.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Radice indicated budget looking "stout" after August bills paid. Insurance audit discussed.

Resolution 2023-19 Resolution for payment of monthly bills (July/August 2023)

Motion to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$53,442.20 made by Commissioner DiFalco and seconded by Commissioner Radice.

Roll Call:

Chairman Hofacker	yes
Commissioner DiFalco	yes
Commissioner O'Connor	yes
Commissioner Radice	yes
Commissioner Schaub	yes

No abstentions.

Purchase Orders previously sent out to Board for review. Numbers assigned and provided to Assistant Chief Ingram in accordance with spreadsheet (2023-95 through and including 2023-120). Total PO's \$41,243.96. Truck repairs only has \$428 in line item. Can start moving funds in November.

Discussion as to contacting Auditor to discuss pertinent items.

OLD BUSINESS

- Emergency Appropriation resolution was passed by Pennington Borough approving the appropriation. Attorney Appleby will contact Borough Clerk to get certified copy of the Resolution.
- **Motion** made by Commissioner DiFalco and seconded by Commissioner Schaub to nominate Commissioner John O'Connor as **Clerk/Secretary for the Board of Fire Commissioners**. All in favor.
- Discussion as to replacing tanker. Chief stated that Hopewell Township Chief is Rosenbauer representative.

- Elections. All petitions dropped off to County Clerk.
- Shared Services Agreement. No contact from Hopewell. Same terms continue.
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- PILOT with Bristol Meyers discussed and effect on tax dollars for fire service.
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NEW BUSINESS:

Auditor Carducci joined the meeting.

- Auditor Carducci discussed draft of Audit and LOSAP review.

RESOLUTION 2023-20 Review of Audit by Board for year ending December 31, 2022.

Motion made by Commissioner Schaub and seconded by Commissioner DiFalco.

Roll Call:

Chairman Hofacker	yes
Commissioner DiFalco	yes
Commissioner O’Connor	yes
Commissioner Radice	yes
Commissioner Schaub	yes

Board to execute and notarize Group Affidavit, after Attorney adjusts so correct names on Resolution. Auditor will send to State after approval.

Auditor Carducci ask for representation letter from Chairman Hofacker. Chairman asked for Auditor to resend the letter. Letter needs Treasurer’s signature and one other Board member who has provided information to Auditor.

Chairman asked when money can start to be moved around. Auditor Carducci said to start looking after Labor Day. PO’s can go no more than a year and must have a dollar value. PO’s from 2022 must be closed by this December 31st.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Schaub and seconded by Commissioner DiFalco. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.