

November 29, 2017 Special Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners

District #3 in the Township of Hanover

County of Morris, Cedar Knolls, New Jersey

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. on November 29, 2017 in accordance with the Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231.

Attendance: Commissioners Robert Callas, Pete DeNigris, Maria Florio, Tom Quirk, and Michael Dugan, were present.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Asst. Chief O'Hare, Lieutenant Belott and FF Ujfalussy were also in attendance.

Public Participation: None.

Presentation by the Chief: Chief DiGiorgio gave a presentation to the Board on the Staffing & Scheduling Proposal for 2018.

Chief DiGiorgio started the presentation by defining Fire & EMS Business Model for Fire District 3. Chief DiGiorgio stated that District 3 is in the business of protecting life & property in addition to the customer service delivery business.

Chief DiGiorgio outlined the two divisions within the District and displayed an organization chart for Fire District 3. Chief DiGiorgio explained that in the Volunteer Fire Division there are 22 Interior Qualified Firefighters, 5 Exterior/Support Firefighters and 2 Junior Firefighters. Of the 22 Interior Qualified Firefighters, 12 are dual role Firefighters/EMTs and 3 are Officers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District is down 2 Interior Firefighters since March of this year. Chief DiGiorgio explained that the Volunteer EMS Division has 13 Emergency Medical Technicians (over the age of 18), 6 Junior/Trainee EMTs, 9 College Leave EMTs and 2 EMS drivers (non-EMTs). Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Volunteer EMS Division is up 3 members since March of this year but the increase occurred in the College Leave EMT category which means they are not available while in school. Commissioner DeNigris asked if it would be beneficial to have the EMTs learn to drive the ambulance because it would eliminate the need for a separate driver. Chief DiGiorgio stated that all EMTs are encouraged to learn to drive the ambulance but some of them are only interested in patient care and choose not to drive. Asst. Chief O'Hare stated that of the 13 EMTs, 9 are drivers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that realistically there are 13 EMTs available year round. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Career Division is made up of a chief, 3 lieutenants, 2 firefighter/EMT/inspectors and 10 part time EMTs. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the district is currently down 3 part time EMTs and some are out on

medical leave. Commissioner DeNigris asked why the number of part time EMTs was increased by 4 in 2016. Chief DiGiorgio said that this was when it was decided to have 2 part time EMTs on the ambulances during the day because the district was not able to get volunteers during the day.

Chief DiGiorgio presented the Board with the 2017 Response Statistics (Year to Date) and reported that the district is on target to surpass last year's response totals. Chief DiGiorgio presented a graph showing that incidents are highest from 7 am to 8 pm each day with the highest spike at 10 -11 am. Another graph showed that Thursday is the busiest day of the week and the weekends are the least busy.

Chief DiGiorgio delineated all of the Community Participation that District 3 is involved with including sport's standby and Township Events.

Chief DiGiorgio outlined the Mutual and Automatic Aid Partnerships for both Fire Response and EMS Response. Chief DiGiorgio pointed out that at a recent fire the 2 District 3 EMTs on the scene were also firefighters and were able suit up and help fight the fire after mutual aid ambulances were on scene.

Chief DiGiorgio reviewed the shift coverage data that was presented at the November 16, 2017 Regular Meeting. Chief DiGiorgio presented a 2017 Evening & Night Crew EMS Schedule which highlighted the shifts that are open on a regular basis and need to be filled each week. Chief DiGiorgio also presented the 2017 Weekday Daytime EMS Crew schedules. Chief DiGiorgio presented the 2017 Weeknight Fire Crew Schedule which utilizes a scramble schedule for Fridays but has a set crew for Monday thru Thursday. The Rotating Weekend Fire Crew Schedule was also presented.

Chief DiGiorgio presented the following Cost / Benefit Analysis for Implementing 2 Full Time Firefighter / EMTs:

1. The current Per-Diem salary and overtime budget continues to rise due to availability and staff decreasing. Two Full Time FF/EMTs will stabilize approximately 80 hours per week of EMT hours.
2. Some Per-Diem Staff are currently working beyond a 40-hour work week and receiving overtime / holiday time that approaches the threshold for health benefits.
3. Per-Diem Candidate pools continue to be threatened by staff obtaining full time employment, leaving for other agencies and leaving for higher salary per-diem jobs. Full Time FF/EMTs will provide approximately 80 hours per week, which can include holidays.

4. Streamlining personnel for dual functions can provide multi-role, multi-discipline positions to cover dual roles.

Chief DiGiorgio presented a 2018 Proposed Schedule that illustrated the decrease in the open time slots from the current 2017 Schedule. Commissioner Quirk asked if the benefit could be realized by hiring strictly EMT full time personnel. Chief DiGiorgio said that this would not allow for dual coverage if needed.

Chief DiGiorgio felt that the Board supporting this proposal would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of an EMS program designed in 2011 and allows it to continue to function in 2018 with the increase in call volume and decrease in per-diem employee and volunteer base. This proposal recognizes the need of the District to progress forward with the residential and business changes in Hanover Township and the surrounding areas. Chief DiGiorgio said that the 2 additional Firefighter / EMTs is the next step toward the long term stability of the District to provide services currently being enjoyed and at time expected by our community. Chief DiGiorgio stressed that firefighters are not just firefighters anymore but dual purpose, multi-disciplined personnel who can carry out a multitude of on-scene tasks. The dual role of FF/EMT also moves the District closer to compliance with national standards in the most economical manner.

Chief DiGiorgio presented that the ultimate goal is to enhance the ability of the District to attain and maintain 24-hour staffing utilizing volunteer and compensated employees to assure our community has adequate protection from Fire, EMS and the All Hazards requests from our tax payers.

Lastly, Chief DiGiorgio provided statistics on Comparison Departments in the area.

Chief DiGiorgio asked if anyone had any questions. The Board did not have any questions about the presentation.

Administrator Schultz outlined the action that Board needs to take at the next Regular Meeting to meet the 2018 Budget submission dates.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Callas, seconded by Commissioner Quirk, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Robert Callas, Secretary