

July 15, 2021 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 7:00 p.m. on July 15, 2021 in accordance with the Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231. The Board observed a moment of silence for all those who have given their lives in service of their communities and nation.

ATTENDANCE: Commissioners Steven Cornine, James Davidson, Mary Lou DeSimone, Michael Dugan Jr., and Robert O'Hare were present.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Fire Co. President Hark Jr., EMT Thompson, Fire Co. Member Keyser, and Michael Dugan Sr. were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Fire Co. President Hark Jr. reported that at meeting about the moving of the cubicles that took place a few weeks ago a deadline was set for July 16. President Hark Jr. reported that Chief DiGiorgio sent out an email asking the Fire Co. to move their items out of the 3rd floor cubicle by that date. President Hark Jr. reported that he had multiple conversations with Chief DiGiorgio that he would arrange for Fire Co. members to go through and move the items prior to the deadline but when he came in for the Fire Co. meeting this Monday, July 12, he found that a lot things had already been moved to the second floor. President Hark Jr. noted that one of the items that was moved was a file cabinet which he was told could remain on the 3rd floor. President Hark reported that it was a little upsetting because items had just been thrown in bins and individual members could not find their stuff. Commissioner O'Hare reported that there was a breakdown in communication and apologized that people took it upon themselves to start doing things without proper direction. Commissioner DeSimone reported that it was unfortunate and she saw how the cubicle was left and that documents that were being prepared for an audit were disturbed. President Hark Jr. reported that he could not find the checks that were prepared for signature. Commissioner O'Hare again apologized and noted that there needs to be better communication. Commissioner DeSimone asked if President Hark Jr.'s communication on his intent was sent to everyone or just Chief DiGiorgio. President Hark Jr. was not sure if he replied to everyone and asked if Chief

DiGiorgio recalled. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he just recalled a conversation with President Hark Jr. about his intent to move items out of the cubicle. President Hark Jr. was pretty sure he also sent an email.

EMT Thompson asked what came from the Board looking into his questions from a few meetings ago. Commissioner O'Hare invited EMT Thompson to come to the closed session to hear the Board's answer to his questions.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the July 1, 2021 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to approve the amended minutes from the July 1, 2021 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Cornine seconded the motion. All were in favor.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Commissioner Davidson reported that the Board had checks #12352 to 12371 totaling \$18,817.24 in front of them to be signed. Commissioner Davidson reported that two additional checks #12372 and #12373. Commissioner Davidson reported that #12372 for \$196,754.88 is the balance due on the new ambulance along with two additions identified at the final acceptance meeting. Commissioner Davidson asked Chief DiGiorgio if the ambulance was expected within the next 2 weeks. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the ambulance should be in Flanders by next Wednesday. Commissioner Davidson reported that check #12373 is for bedding for the new sleeping area.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio reported that the new mobile radios have been installed with the exception of the ladder truck, which is down at Pierce, and the new ambulance. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the remainder of the portable radios have been delivered and distributed to most of the officers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the remaining portable radios are waiting for cradles and modified charging systems, which he is waiting to get pricing on. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the radios do not fit in the cradles that are currently in the apparatus. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the new radios are operating on the c

current County frequency but once all the County towers and infrastructure is in place the radios will switch over to the new 70 megahertz frequency.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he met with Chief Perrello to discuss the shared service agreement for the storage of an ambulance. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Chief Perrello also discussed the proposed shared service agreement with the Board of Fire District 2 and they are very interested in working with us to store the ambulance in their facility. Chief DiGiorgio reported that District 2 was also interested in the possibility of utilizing the ambulance and responding to calls along with us. Chief DiGiorgio reported that District 2 Commissioner Cobane asked if a member or members of this Board would be interested in meeting with them to discuss "consolidation". Chief DiGiorgio reported that the discussion on storage led to discussing using the ambulance which then led to wanting a meeting. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he told Chief Perrello that these were great goals and he would at least like to get the ambulance stored there. Chief DiGiorgio felt that this would be a great opportunity for himself, Chief Perrello, and two members of each Board to get together to discuss the options. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this is something that they are looking to schedule relatively quickly. Commissioner O'Hare asked what they wanted to do relatively quickly. Chief DiGiorgio reported that they would like to have the meeting relatively quickly.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the New Ambulance workgroup had a virtual tour / final inspection for a little over two hours today. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there are some modifications that need to be made because they were different from the spec. Chief DiGiorgio reported that some of the modifications will be made before the ambulance leaves the factory and the rest will be addressed once it gets to New Jersey.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke earlier today with Retired Chief Postorino who is also the representative for Revenue Guard because the EMS receipts for June were a little less than anticipated. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Retired Chief Postorino would look into it and would like to set up a meeting to discuss the matter. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Retired Chief Postorino indicated that the insurance industry has changed post COVID and some companies are not paying as quickly as they have in the past. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Retired Chief Postorino indicated that Medicare has drastically slowed down payments as

well. Commissioner Davidson reported that Chief DiGiorgio had forwarded him a few reports from Revenue Guard that show that a lot of the District payments are 90 – 180 days out and he felt that some of them the District is never going to recover. Commissioner O’Hare asked for clarification on Medicare slowing down the payments and if the District is still receiving the same amount as before only it is taking longer to receive. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Medicare rates have not changed, only the speed in which they process the payments.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has some updates on the FF/EMT process that he would like to discuss in closed session.

Commissioner O’Hare asked if anyone had any questions for Chief DiGiorgio. There were no questions.

EMS: Nothing to report.

BUDGET: Commissioner Davidson reported that he is starting to work on the 2022 budget and asked that a special meeting be scheduled in the next couple of weeks to discuss some direction and decision making that needs to be finalized to help guide the budget. Commissioner Davidson reported that one of the interesting things is that the salary line is derived from how many people the District employs and what their salary is as opposed to how many hours of paid coverage the District is looking for. Commissioner Davidson noted the two calculation methods do not necessarily come together. Commissioner Davidson reported that the District is looking to employ people for more hours than their budgeted salary, which is one of the reasons why overtime is out of whack. Commissioner Davidson reported that 20 – 30 hours each week needs to be filled with overtime and this does not even take into account PTO.

Commissioner Davidson reported that he has been reviewing some Revenue Guard reports and found it interesting that the District does not have a policy about writing off bad debt. Commissioner Davidson noted that the District cannot write off bad debt against anything because we are government. Commissioner Davidson felt that the District should not be covering debt from 2018-19. Commissioner Davidson reported that the reports indicate that the District has about \$150,000-\$160,000 in personal payment debt, which is a patient that the District transported that does not have insurance. Commissioner Davidson noted that the District is waiting for these people to pay us.

Commissioner Davidson reported that there is a history with the Board utilizing collection agencies but it never yielded anything substantial. Commissioner Davidson felt that the Board should come up with a financial policy for writing off some of this old debt. Chief DiGiorgio felt that this is something that could be discussed with Retired Chief Postorino when we meet with him. Commissioner Davidson reported that he would like to have the meeting before he goes on vacation the second week of August. Commissioner O'Hare asked when Commissioner Davidson would like to have the special meeting to discuss the 2022 budget. Commissioner Davidson reported that he would like to have that meeting towards the end of August.

PERSONNEL: Commissioner O'Hare reported that the Board had items to discuss in Executive Session.

NEGOTIATIONS: Commissioner Cornine reported that the EMTs reached out and he would like to discuss it in closed session.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Nothing to report.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Commissioner O'Hare reported that there is a meeting scheduled for next Thursday with the bay floor contractor to look at the floor in the ambulance bay again and hopefully will be able to schedule a time to rectify the issue.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if the committee had gotten in touch with the landscaper about the flag, the bushes and the weeds that are growing along the fence. Administrator Schultz reported that he would reach out to him.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Nothing to report.

INSURANCE: Nothing to report.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Up to date.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that a meeting needs to be scheduled because the committee has not met for a long time and there are things that need to be done. Administrator Schultz reported that he was going to reach out to the committee to check availability for next Thursday night since it is an off week for Board meetings.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Commissioner Davidson reported that the records destruction project is status quo.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will update the Board on the FF/EMT hiring process in closed session.

Chief DiGiorgio asked if there was a committee formed to meet with District 2 to discuss the MOA on the ambulance storage, utilization, and consolidation.

Commissioner Davidson reported that the by-laws have a consolidation committee set up but that no one is assigned to it. Commissioners Davidson and Dugan Jr. volunteered to be on the committee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would set up a meeting between the two District committees and Chiefs.

Commissioner Davidson reported that our next Regular meeting is August 5 and District 2 has a meeting on August 9, so he would like to schedule the committee meeting before August 5. Commissioner Davidson reported that he would like to get the MOA ready for signature by both Boards for the early August meetings.

Commissioner Davidson reported that he is up to 2021 on his Resolution Log project and he has not found a resolution on physicals.

Commissioner DeSimone asked Chief DiGiorgio to forward copies of the three exit interviews that he received to herself and Commissioner Cornine. Commissioner DeSimone asked the Board to approve having all future exit interview forms be sent to Administrator Schultz, who will forward them to Commissioners Cornine and DeSimone for review. Commissioner DeSimone reported that any common thread or theme in the exit interviews would be shared with Chief DiGiorgio. The Board agreed. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that if the exit interviews are mailed out they should be returned to Administrator Schultz, but in person exit interviews should be done by the supervisor. Commissioner DeSimone felt that an alternate supervisor should conduct the in person exit interview, not the direct report. Commissioner Davidson suggested making a flow chart of the exit interview process.

Administrator Schultz reported that Chief DiGiorgio brought up impairment recognition training for the new drug and alcohol policy at the last meeting.

Administrator Schultz reported that he worked with Lt. Meehan at the Academy and with a patrol sergeant from Mendham County whose brother does this type of training. Administrator Schultz reported that he reached out to the brother, who does impairment recognition training throughout the State and is waiting to hear back. Administrator Schultz reported that it might be beneficial to offer the training to surrounding departments especially since Mr. Trimboli indicated that each department will need to have someone who has impairment recognition skills because of the new legislation legalizing marijuana. Administrator Schultz noted that this will enable the departments to share the cost of the training. Commissioner Davidson asked if the District should have an MOU with another department in case the DRE / IRE was on vacation. Administrator Schultz felt that it would be prudent in case all the DRE / IRE personnel here were out at the same time. Administrator Schultz reported that once this new laws are put in place, Mr. Trimboli said there are about ten different legislative efforts which will have to be met. Administrator Schultz noted that in the State of Delaware there are nine types of IREs. Commissioner Davidson asked what an IRE was. Administrator Schultz reported that an IRE was an Impairment Recognition Expert. EMT Thompson asked if the District insurance company might pay for the training. Administrator Schultz felt that they might.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner DeSimone reported that she received an email Fire Co. Member Donofrio asking if the District would be willing to work with the Hanover Park Special Education Department to allow students come to the District one or two hours a day to learn work skills. Commissioner DeSimone reported that the students would volunteer their time to sweep, dust, clean, file, etc. and would be supervised by an instructional aide at no cost to the District. Commissioner Davidson asked if the aide would be with them all the time. Commissioner DeSimone reported that they would be supervised the entire time. Commissioner Davidson felt that it was a positive thing for the community and felt that Administrator Schultz should reach out to our insurance company to find out what they would need from the Special Education Department. Commissioner O'Hare asked how many students would be coming at a time. Commissioner DeSimone indicated that one to two students would be here at a time depending on what the Board would want. Commissioner O'Hare was in favor as long as the insurance was not an issue. The rest of the Board was also in favor.

REMINDERS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, August 5, 2021 at 7:00 P.M at the firehouse.

The next Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on September 13, 2021 at 6:30 P.M. at the Whippany Firehouse.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-70 approving salaries and terms/conditions for certain employees. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-71 approving the permanent appointment of EMT Bergman. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. Commissioners Cornine, Davidson, Dugan Jr. and O'Hare were in favor. Commissioner DeSimone was against.

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-72 appointing probationary FF/EMT/Inspector Sulpy. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-73 accepting the resignation of EMT Geary. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-74 appointing Per Diem EMT Kuzemczak. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-75 authorizing payment of PTO balance to Lt. Francesco DeSimone. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor. Commissioner DeSimone abstained.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 21-07-15-76 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Davidson made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor. The Board went into closed session at 7:39 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed. Action will not be taken.

The Board came out of closed session at 9:15 p.m.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner DeSimone, seconded by Commissioner Cornine, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Steven Cornine, Secretary