

October 2, 2025 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 October 2, 2025 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 Michael Dugan Sr., Thomas Harrington, and Gary Keyser were present. Commissioners Mary Lou DeSimone and Robert Gallagher were absent.

Administrator Hark Jr., Asst. Chief McGuinness, Deputy Chief Costello, and members of the public were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the September 18, 2025 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to the Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2025 Regular Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Sr. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

The minutes from the September 4, 2025 Executive Session were reviewed.

Amendments to the Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 4, 2025 Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Sr. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Commissioner Dugan Sr. distributed September 2025 financials and reported that through 75% of the year the District has spent 75.6% of the budget. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that things are still tight.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the Board was signing checks totaling \$8,456 tonight. Commissioner Keyser asked if this figure includes payroll. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the figure is just the total of the checks being signed tonight and does not include payroll.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

MONTHLY REPORTS: Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that Ambulance 39 sustained body damage while at the mechanics for warranty work. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the mechanic has arranged to have the ambulance repaired and the District was able to pick it up a couple days ago.

Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that Engine 34 had an issue with the turbo which has been fixed.

Deputy Chief Costello distributed the 3rd quarter data for volunteer participation. Deputy Chief Costello reported that for the incident response staffing there are 5 more people showing up duty shift coverage for Fire and EMS. Deputy Chief Costello reported that the data shows almost 670 hours of in volunteer station time this quarter. Deputy Chief Costello reported that more volunteers are signing up for shifts, primarily EMS. Deputy Chief Costello noted volunteer Junior FF Addeo has about 270 hours of in station staff time. Deputy Chief Costello noted that the Open House volunteer hours do not currently show in the data and there was a pretty good volunteer (and compensated staff) response. Deputy Chief Costello reported that volunteer training time has also increased this quarter and again FF Addeo is leading the pack. Deputy Chief Costello reported that he is going to bring up training at the Fire Co. meeting to see what else can be done to increase turn out. Commissioner Harrington felt that the Fire Co. committee meetings data for events such as the Open House or Tree Lighting should also be included in the reported data. Deputy Chief Costello reported that currently the only events that are in the data are the ones that are run by career staff who are inputting the data and noting that volunteers attended the event. Commissioner Harrington felt that there should be a mechanism for volunteers who attend committee meetings to be included in the data. Deputy Chief Costello reported that currently the only way these meeting would be included would be if volunteers filled out a sheet during the meeting and left it for someone to enter. Deputy Chief Costello acknowledged that a sheet is not filled out at a lot of the committee meetings. Deputy Chief Costello reported that he will look into fixing the process by the end of the year but did not know if data from past meetings could be input if there is no record of attendance.

EMS: Nothing to report.

BUDGET: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the Board would discuss the preliminary 2026 Budget tonight in Executive Session.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked the other Board members if they had a chance to review the preliminary 2026 budget and if they had any suggestions for areas where changes were needed. Commissioner Keyser reported that he is still reviewing the numbers. Commissioner Harrington reported that he is waiting to hear the results of the meeting with the Town. Commissioner Keyser reported that the meeting with the Town will be discussed under Old Business.

PERSONNEL: Commissioner Keyser reported that the Board needs to go in to Executive Session.

NEGOTIATIONS: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Commissioner Harrington reported that the Fire Co. hosted an Open House at the firehouse on September 20, 2025 from 3 PM to 7 PM and felt that there was a great turnout.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Nothing to report.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Nothing to report.

INSURANCE: Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the Workers Compensation audit has been completed and it appears that the District owes an additional \$23,000. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District is going to appeal a few items but they will not affect the amount owed significantly.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the website is up to date.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he hopes to hear from the architect soon with a renovation idea for the building.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Administrator Hark Jr. reported that progress has been made and the District hopes to be able to submit records for destruction in November.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Commissioner Keyser reported that the report will be under Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS: Deputy Administrator Schultz reported that the new 5-year contract with the Post Office regarding the parking lot rental is in the process of being signed with an effective date of January 1, 2026.

Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the staff has been given until October 14th to complete the workplace conduct training because only 50% had met the original October 1st deadline. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that anyone who has not completed the training by October 14th will be operationally suspended. Commissioner Keyser noted that there are members of the Board who still need to complete the training and it will be difficult to enforce a policy that the Board itself does not follow. Commissioner Keyser asked that the Board members who have not completed the training to please do so now.

NEW BUSINESS: Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the District needs to change our reporting software to be compliant with the new National Guidelines. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the District chose to use Red NMX but the implementation process has been a nightmare and the District is very unhappy with what they sold us. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the Red NMX software is not nearest compliant even though that is what they told the District. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the District is now looking at First Due and after meeting with them for a demo it appears that this program blows Red NMX out of the water. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the software also has a time clock and scheduling component which would eliminate another program that the District is currently using and save the District about \$5000 a year. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that total cost for the 1st year for First Due is \$17,950 which contains a one-time implementation fee. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that he is working with Administrator Hark Jr. to find lines in the budget where the monies can be pulled from. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the District has to get this software up and running by January 1, 2026 to remain compliant with State and Federal guidelines. Commissioner Harrington asked if there are any other Fire Departments in the area utilizing this software. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that Morris Township and Denville use the software and like it. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the District explored this software last year and it was our original choice. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that it was explored as a Joint Board purchase and when it came down to it the Joint Board did not want to do it. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that both District 3 and District 2 individually went with Red NMX and now both are extremely dissatisfied with it and going with First Due. Commissioner Keyser asked how much the District paid for Red NMX. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the cost was \$7,000 and Asst. Chief McGuinness noted it illustrates that you get what you pay for. Administrator Hark Jr. noted that the District's contract with Red NMX will be up January 1, 2026. Commissioner Harrington asked how much First due will cost

annually after the implementation year. Asst. Chief McGuinness reported that the annual cost will be \$14,000 but this will be offset by the cost savings of the 2 programs that it is replacing. Commissioner Harrington asked why District 2 and 3 don't purchase the program together to save money. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that this was voted down last year because District 2 is only going to utilize 4 of the program modules while District 3 is going to utilize 8 program modules and District 2 did not want to pay for modules they are not going to use. Administrator Hark Jr. reported that he and Asst. Chief McGuinness are meeting with First Due next week to finalize the quote and will keep the Board informed of the progress.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the old bar area on the 2nd floor is currently being used to store staff bedding and the bedding is just piled in the area. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he would like to have the staff build a shelving unit and purchase cloth bags to issue to each employee to store their bedding in on the shelves. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that this will make the area look neater and reported that he will discuss this with Commissioner Gallagher.

REMINDERS:

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

A Special Meeting of the Joint Fire Prevention Board will be held on Monday, October 27, 2025 at 7 P.M. at the District 3 Firehouse.

The next scheduled Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 6:30 P.M. at the District 2 Firehouse. Commissioner Keyser suggested changing the duration of the quarterly Joint Board meetings because 30 minutes is not enough time to discuss all that is needed. Commissioner Keyser indicated that he will bring this up when the Joint Board schedules meetings next year.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Ms. Atkinson asked if there have been any consolidation committee meetings since the last Joint Board meeting. Commissioner Keyser reported that there have not been any committee meetings but that some of the information that District 2 requested at the last meeting has been sent to them.

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Harrington read Resolution 25-10-02-99 authorizing a COE be extended to Full Time EMT. Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Keyser. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

Commissioner Harrington read Resolution 25-10-02-100 appointing Permanent FF/EMT Shay. Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Keyser. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Harrington read Resolution 25-10-02-101 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Keyser. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

The Board went into closed session at 7:30 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed, and action will be taken.

The Board came out of closed session at 8:10 p.m.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Dugan Sr., seconded by Commissioner Harrington, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Commissioners DeSimone and Gallagher were absent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Robert Gallagher, Secretary