

**January 18, 2018 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 January 18, 2018 in accordance with the Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231.

**ATTENDANCE:** Commissioners Robert Callas, Peter DeNigris, Michael Dugan, Maria Florio and Tom Quirk were present.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Asst. Chief O'Hare, Lieutenant Belott, Lieutenant McGuinness, Lieutenant DeSimone, FF Ujfalussy and Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill were also in attendance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Commissioner Callas reported that the Board received a Thank You note from the family of Eleanor Lake. The Lake Family thanked the Board for their presence during their time of loss and for the flowers.

Commissioner Callas reported that the Board has received a letter to Chief DiGiorgio from the Township of Randolph regarding the MCPP 2018 membership fee that is due February 15, 2018.

Commissioner Callas reported that the Board has received a copy of the minutes from the December 2, 2017 quarterly meeting of the Association of Fire Districts.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**The minutes from the December 21, 2017 Regular Meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Florio made a motion to accept the minutes from the December 21, 2017 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Callas seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk abstained.**

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER:** Commissioner DeNigris reported that the final payment for the annual lease payment on the fire truck will be made in 2019, not in 2018 as was discussed at a previous meeting. This means that the Board will not see the benefit of no lease payment until 2020. Commissioner Quirk asked if the 2018 Budget included this lease payment and Commissioner DeNigris stated that it was included.

Commissioner DeNigris reported that the December 2017 financial reports were distributed before the meeting. Commissioner DeNigris reported that there was roughly \$111,000 surplus for the year. The Board will use some of this money in January through March until the first quarter tax payment is received. After the tax payment is received, Commissioner DeNigris reported that the Board can determine how much funds can be moved to the Management Account.

Commissioner Quirk made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Commissioner Callas. All were in favor.

### **Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:**

**CHIEF'S REPORT:** Chief DiGiorgio commented on some questions that were posed during the Public Session last month. There was a question relative to the actual number of calls vs the total number of calls answered by the Fire District. Unfortunately we do not separate which calls we respond to in District 2 vs the calls that we respond to in District 3. All of these calls are treated as Hanover Township because of EMS. Chief DiGiorgio indicated that he was able to run a report which indicated that in 2017 there were a total of 2056 calls. Of those calls, 1610 were EMS and 626 were Fire. The call numbers don't add up because some of the calls were dual response calls. Chief DiGiorgio reported that of the total 2056 calls, 1400 of 68% of the calls had no mutual aid given or received. Chief DiGiorgio said that if he had to figure out how many calls did this District provide into Whippany, he would say that about 170 calls were in Fire District 2 because the District is utilizing automatic aid given. Chief DiGiorgio indicated that in order to come up with a definite figure, each of the 2056 calls would need to be looked at individually in regards to which street they were on and whether they were Fire or EMS. Commissioner Quirk asked if the County could provide a breakdown. Chief DiGiorgio said that the information the County sends to us is imported into our reporting system and is where the above referenced figures were obtained. Commissioner Quirk asked why the information was being provided verbally to dispatch at the end of each call. Chief DiGiorgio stated that there is no need to give that information over the radio because it is not recorded. The information is transferred to the system from the report that is filled out back at the station. Chief DiGiorgio said that he could start to work on calculating the call figures if it is something that the Board wants to see. Commissioner Quirk indicated that he would like to see the figures given that the

District is considering the addition of more career firefighters. Commissioner Dugan asked if District 2 would be able to provide the information to the Board. Chief DiGiorgio stated that they are utilizing the same program that District 3 is and therefore would not be able to easily provide it. Chief DiGiorgio said that if the Board wants to know how many times our District provided mutual aid or automatic aid, that automatic aid given was 170 times and mutual aid was given 126 times. We were out of District 296 times. Chief DiGiorgio reported that our District received automatic or mutual aid 345 times so we are getting aid more than we are providing it. Commissioner Florio commented that there was an observation made at the December public meeting that District 3 covers 4 square miles while District 2 covers 8 square miles. Commissioner Florio asked how that was figured because she thought the coverage area was based on ratables. Commissioner Dugan said that his understanding was that when the boundaries were originally drawn, Cedar Knolls was more developed than Whippany. In order to make the ratables the same, District 2 received more land than District 3. Whippany has developed since then and this has created an unbalance of taxes. Commissioner Florio commented that District 3 is covering more territory with fewer ratables. Commissioner Dugan stated that District 3 is not primary for District 2 but there is automatic aid given between the two districts. Commissioner Florio asked if this put an unfair burden on District 3 because District 2 has higher ratables and is twice the size of District 3. Chief DiGiorgio said that you would need to look at the difference in the automatic aid given and received. Commissioner Dugan said that unless there is a boundary change, a consolidation or a municipal department formed, this is what we have to work with. Commissioner Dugan asked Chief DiGiorgio to research automatic aid given and received for the Board.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that another question was raised about the District looking at the structure of what is dispatched to alarms such as carbon monoxide alarms and elevator emergencies. Chief DiGiorgio said that this was revisited about 2 years ago and there is a single engine response after hours while during the day when it is less likely to have manpower, it is a dual dispatch with District 2. Chief DiGiorgio reported that District 3 responded to 16 carbon monoxide alarms and 2 stalled elevators last year and represents less than one percent of the responses. Chief DiGiorgio felt that this does not put an undue burden on anyone.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the final question that was raised at the December public session was about surveying surrounding districts, which he assumed to mean municipalities, to find out if they are having difficulty obtaining and retaining volunteers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will have an opportunity to ask that question at Black Meadows Mutual Aid Meeting next Wednesday. Chief DiGiorgio said that Chiefs from the lower quadrant of the County will be attending and he will pose the question to them. Commissioner Florio stated that the first question was if they are having difficulty with recruitment and retention. Commissioner Quirk reported that since last year's conversation about the possibility of hiring additional firefighters came up, he has started to research the recruitment and retention issue on his own so he can make an educated decision about any additional hiring. Commissioner Quirk reported that he did need contact information from every fire department in Morris County from Administrator Schultz. Commissioner Florio asked if this would be a spreadsheet. Commissioner Quirk said that it is in the early stages but that he will make a spreadsheet. Commissioner Quirk said that if the Board would like to make a committee to do this, he would be fine with that because he feels that the Board needs to have as much information as possible before making any decisions.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that Workplace Ethics and Conduct training is being planned for employees and membership. The program will be presented by Board Attorney, Mr. Richard Braslow and his associate, who is also an attorney and volunteer firefighter. This training will be available on two weeknights and a Saturday. Chief DiGiorgio asked the Board to make this mandatory for all Commissioners, employees and volunteer staff. Commissioner DeNigris said that he was in favor but the Board would need to discuss what the non-attendance consequence would be. Commissioner Dugan said that the Board needs to be sure to give enough notice of the required training to ensure that everyone will be able to make one of the sessions. He also said that prior to sending out the training notice, the Board needs to verify that everyone's email is up to date so that everyone receives the training notice. The Board should also heavily advertise the training. Commissioner Callas said that if the Board decides that it should be mandatory, then it has to be mandatory, and the Board will need to decide on the consequence of missing it. Commissioner Dugan asked if the Board felt the Ethics and conduct Training should be mandatory. All Board members agreed that it should be mandatory. Commissioner Quirk asked if anyone had

looked at the course offered in DMS. Chief DiGiorgio said that everyone is not loaded into Power DMS although it is being worked on. The other problem with this is that this training is not available in all DMS systems unless it has been paid for or mandated by the Attorney General's office. District 3 does not have these programs and Chief DiGiorgio felt that we should consider purchasing these programs to utilize as a refresher but that the initial training should be done in person to allow for questions. Commissioner Dugan liked the fact that the initial training was being done by the Board Attorney.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that Administrator Schultz has prepared a draft request for proposal (RFP) for EMS billing that will be distributed to the Board for review. This will allow the Board to solicit other vendors for EMS billing besides our current vendor since our contract is nearing expiration.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that Lieutenant McGuinness is in the process of adding the remainder of our members and staff to the Power DMS (Document Management System) for training and guidelines review. This should be completed in the next week or so.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that Administrator Schultz has prepared a draft RFP for Fire Apparatus Maintenance since the District was approaching the \$17,500 limit with Fire & Safety. This will allow the District to stay within the State guidelines for bidding. The draft RFP will be distributed to the Board for review. Commissioner DeNigris asked if this will cover all maintenance. Chief DiGiorgio said that it will cover fire vehicle maintenance.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Bureau of Fire Prevention has identified five vacant buildings along the southern portion of Ridgedale Avenue. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there have been some sprinkler breaks in these buildings since there it has been so cold and there is no heat, electric or gas. The water system has been shut down and notices have been sent and posted on the premises. Commissioner Dugan asked if there would be a chance for training to occur in the vacant buildings. Chief DiGiorgio said that after notice has been filed of the intent to demolish the building there is usually a two week window for training. This notice ensures that everything that can be hazardous has been shut off or abated.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the inspectors have started their 2018 annual inspections. The new carbon monoxide code regulations are being enforced with

each inspection. The group homes, daycare centers and schools have been targeted as priorities. Commissioner Callas asked if there was a mandated time frame to install the carbon monoxide alarms. Chief DiGiorgio said there was no specific reference to time frame so it would be covered under the normal 30 days but there was the potential to grant extensions.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that was brought up relative to a motor vehicle accident response on January 10, 2018. There was an accident on Rt. 287 South which was reported as a motor vehicle accident with a car into the guardrail and the car was smoking. The caller indicated that the accident was at Exit 36 which is Lafayette Avenue in Morristown. The Morristown and Morris Township Fire Departments along with Morristown EMS were dispatched to the call. The actual mile marker of the accident was 37.4 which is just under the Hanover Avenue Bridge and puts the call in District 3 jurisdiction. Hanover Police located the vehicle and the driver was removed from the vehicle with a suspected seizure. There was a question as to access points and why District 3 was not dispatched. After investigating with the County, it was determined that the first two callers gave Exit 36 as the scene of the accident which puts the call in Morristown. Hanover Police relayed the correct location approximately 7 ½ minutes after the initial calls came in. By that point, Morristown and Morris Township were already on route and this created a little bit of coax. The District 3 engine crew did respond once they heard the revised location.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District 3 Fire Officers, EMS Officers, Career Staff Officers and Crew Chiefs are going to attend a First-Line Supervision seminar at the Morris County Public Safety Academy. Commissioner DeNigris asked if this was mandatory training. Chief DiGiorgio said that at this point it is voluntary.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he and the Engine 35 Replacement workgroup had a chance to meet with Eric from Fire and Safety and were able to secure final numbers for the purchase of the apparatus. The final number from Co-Operative pricing is \$494,521.00. Chief DiGiorgio said that if the Board made a prepayment of \$400,000, the Board would be given a credit of \$20,568 off the total price. The Board would need to decide if they wanted to take advantage of this offer. Commissioner DeNigris asked if this would affect the delivery time frame. Chief DiGiorgio said that this would not speed up the building of the engine although the Board would get an estimated delivery date when the contract is signed.

Chief DiGiorgio said that the sales rep estimated the delivery would be 8 months after the contract is signed. Commissioner DeNigris asked what would happen to the old Engine 35. Chief DiGiorgio said that the Board would have to make a decision to either sell it on GovDeals or if it can be sold to any interested parties in Morris County. Commissioner DeNigris asked about trading it in. Chief DiGiorgio said that the Board could inquire about the trade in value but in the past this has not been the best option. Commissioner DeNigris asked when the Board needed to make a decision on the prepayment by. Chief DiGiorgio said that a decision would be needed by the first meeting after the budget vote. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the credit of \$20,568 could be beneficial when the workgroup makes the first trip out to Wisconsin factory to look at the plans. This trip may highlight some changes that should be made to the original plans. The prepayment credit would allow the District to make these changes without going over budget.

**EMS:** Commissioner DeNigris welcomed Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill to the meeting and offered him a tour of the facilities when it is convenient for him.

Commissioner DeNigris reported that the committee is looking into the possibility of changing the billing vendor. Commissioner DeNigris reported that the committee would like to pay the vendor between 4% and 5% as opposed to the 8% which the Board is currently paying. Administrator Schultz reported that the County is paying 4.75%. Commissioner DeNigris gave Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill a quick rundown of how the EMS Billing process is handled.

**BUDGET:** Commissioner DeNigris reported that the 2018 Budget has been approved by the State and is ready to be put on the ballot. Commissioner DeNigris distributed copies of the December 2017 financial reports and reported that the District was in good shape for year end.

**PERSONNEL:** Commissioner Callas reported that the Board would need to go into closed session.

**NEGOTIATIONS:** Commissioner Quirk reported that they are very close to being able to send a document to the Board attorney for review. Commissioner Quirk suggested that the Board review the document in closed session.

**LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS:** Commissioner Florio reported that the Fire Co. cancelled their meeting due to weather and they rescheduled for that Wednesday and unfortunately could not get a quorum of the executive committee so that meeting had to be cancelled also. Commissioner Dugan reported that the meeting will not be rescheduled so they will meet again at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Commissioner Quirk asked if the Fire Co. had a new executive board. Commissioner Florio stated that they did have a new executive board. Commissioner Quirk asked if the new board was aware of the Fire Commissioner's request that the Fire Co. send a representative to the Fire Commissioner meetings. Commissioner Dugan reported that the Fire Co. executive board was aware of this and that he believes that individual is ill right now.

### **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:**

Administrator Schultz reported that Commissioner Florio raised a concern to him about the staircase between the second and third floor. Commissioner Florio reported that the staircase does not sound good. Administrator Schultz added that it is also moving. Commissioner Dugan asked Administrator Schultz to arrange to have someone come out and look at it as soon as possible.

Commissioner Florio asked if the ribbons were still on the markers along the driveway and suggested that they be removed so that they can be used again next year. Chief DiGiorgio said that there has been discussion about taking all the decorations down this Saturday because the weather is supposed to be so warm. Administrator Schultz reported that the check to reimburse the Fire Co. for the Board's half of the expenses for the Tree Lighting Ceremony has been cut and will be given to them after it is signed tonight. Commissioner Quirk noted that there is one more outstanding invoice from the police for their help with traffic control. Commissioner Dugan said that the Board had agreed to pick up this cost so no expense sharing is needed.

### **2017 Building Improvements**

**Day Room:** Commissioner Dugan reported that work had stalled because of the holidays and some bad weather to start the year. Commissioner Dugan said that the counter over the refrigerator and a cabinet over the counter are the two items that need to be completed.



**Parking Lot Lights:** Commissioner Dugan reported that the parking lot lights have been ordered.

**Electronic Sign:** Commissioner Dugan reported that the permit needs to be closed out. Commissioner Florio recommended that the date be added to meeting announcements displayed on the sign to avoid confusion in case the sign does not get updated each day. Administrator Schultz said that this change has been taken care of.

**APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE:** Nothing to report.

**INSURANCE:** Commissioner DeNigris reported that he will reach out to our insurance representative about the renewal for the health insurance policy that expires at the end of March.

Commissioner Florio reported that the committee has been looking into insurance for the District Medical Director and have reached out to the company out of New Mexico. Commissioner Florio received a copy of a sample policy from the company. The first paragraph of the sample policy indicates that the insurance company is not authorized by the State of New Jersey to write insurance in the New Jersey and therefore if the company becomes insolvent, there is no guarantee for payment of claims. Commissioner Florio reported that the Mr. Braslow indicated that it would not be wise to use a company that is not authorized to do business in New Jersey. Administrator Schultz reported that he spoke with a gentleman from the NJ Division of Banking and Insurance. This gentleman indicated that the State of New Jersey does not have a line for surplus line insurers, does have a fund for malpractice insurance for surplus line. The Board would need to go to the company who is writing the policy to find out how much of it is for professional liability and how much is for malpractice. The State of New Jersey would cover the malpractice side of the policy but would not cover the professional liability. Administrator Schultz said that he apprised Mr. Braslow of the details of his conversation and sent him a couple of alternatives which should be discussed in closed session.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Nothing to report.

**BY-LAWS:** Nothing to report.

**WEBSITE:** Commissioner Florio reported that the petitions for the upcoming election are on the website. On the petition it indicates that petition must be turned in 28 days prior to the election. Commissioner Florio asked if in the future a specific date could be listed on the petition.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Callas reported that he and Commissioner Dugan hope to meet with Chief DiGiorgio next week.

**LIASON TO EXEMPTS:** Nothing to report.

**RECORDS RETENTION:** Chief DiGiorgio reported that progress is being made. Administrator Schultz reported that he got a records request for an accident that occurred in 1991. In compliance with the State guidelines, these records have been destroyed.

**LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:** Commissioner DeNigris reported that a Healthcare Center across from Wegman's has been approved. Commissioner DeNigris reported that there is a concept plan to build a Starbucks on the site of the old District 2 Firehouse. Chief DiGiorgio asked if a restaurant was also approved near the Healthcare Center. Commissioner DeNigris said that only the pad had been approved but it has not been determined what will go there.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Commissioner Quirk thanked the District for their help with the Football Parade. Commissioner Quirk said the parade was a great tribute to the kids and felt it was important that the District was seen taking part in the community event.

Commissioner Florio reported that the Board has hired two individuals to help with the Election in February.

Administrator Schultz reported that the documents for the dialer program has been approved by the attorney. These documents include emergency contact information and release forms. Chief DiGiorgio reported that now that the legalities have been addressed, the Board can look at the expense sharing and manpower issues of the program.

Commissioner Florio reported that she and Administrator Schultz have worked on regulations of who and what can be posted on the electronic sign. Commissioner Florio said she will review them and then submit them to the Board for

consideration at the next meeting. Chief DiGiorgio asked if this would be an addition to the Policies and Procedures Manual or the By-Laws. Commissioner Dugan said it would fall under Policies and Procedures.

Commissioner Dugan reported that he spoke with Fire Co. President Hark and recommended that the Fire Co. buy a shed for the back of the parking lot to store the hand cart. Commissioner Dugan reported that Chief DiGiorgio recommended that the Fire Co. purchase an enclosed trailer to store hand cart. Commissioner Dugan reported that President Hark plans to bring this up at the next Fire Co. meeting and recommend the purchase of an enclosed trailer.

Commissioner Dugan reported that since the sirens are still on the premises that the Board prepare a resolution declaring them surplus. This will allow the Board to attempt to sell them and if there are no buyers, to scrap them.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Quirk reported that there has been talk on social media about the Brickyard Pond boating policy since signs are posted indicating that boats are not allowed. After reviewing the policy, the ordinance states that you can have a sailboat on any pond. Commissioner Quirk reported that the Town is aware of the issues with the ordinance and will be reviewing and revamping it.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.

The Annual Election will be held on Saturday, February 17, 2018 from 2 p.m. until 9 p.m. at the firehouse.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill asked about the rules of order for the meeting as pertain to the liaison function. Commissioner Dugan said that the precedent is that the Hanover Township Committee liaison has given their statement during public session but the Board will not cut you off from commenting at other times as the Board values the input. Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill thanked the Board for welcoming him. Hanover Township Committeeman Brian Cahill made the Board aware of the Rapid SOS Program, a phone app that was discussed at the last Hanover Township committee meeting. If someone calls 911 from the cell phone, the emergency responders are able to track you through the cell phone.

Administrator Schultz said that he will look into it and pass the information to the District website. Chief DiGiorgio explained how the dialer program works and how it is different from the Rapid SOS program.

**RESOLUTIONS: Commissioner Callas read Resolution 18-01-18-02 appointing Volunteer Member Babbage, Resolution 18-01-18-03 appointing Volunteer Member Shen, Resolution 18-01-18-04 Appointing Volunteer Member Smith and Resolution 18-01-18-05 appointing Volunteer Member Vagell.**

**Commissioner Dugan made a motion to introduce the resolutions, seconded by Commissioner DeNigris. All were in favor.**

**Commissioner Callas read Resolution 18-01-18-06 setting salaries / rates of pay for certain employees. Commissioner Quirk made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Callas. All were in favor.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Callas read Resolution 18-01-18-07 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Callas made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan. All were in favor.**

**The Board went into closed session at 8:45 p.m.**

Personnel matters were discussed. Action was taken.

**The Board came out of closed session at 10:42 p.m.**

**ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Callas, seconded by Commissioner DeNigris, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:44 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by

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Robert Callas, Secretary