

January 17, 2019 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 17, 2019 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 and EMT Waldron were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the January 3, 2019 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Florio made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2019 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Callas seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner DeNigris abstained.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Commissioner DeNigris reported that the final payment has been made on Truck 34 and Chief DiGiorgio and Administrator Schultz are working into getting the title. Commissioner DeNigris noted that the District has no outstanding debt at the moment.

Commissioner DeNigris distributed the December 2018 financial reports and indicated that the District was approximately \$103K under for the year.

Commissioner DeNigris reported that the 2018 paperwork will be sent to the accountant for the annual audit

Commissioner DeNigris asked if the Board had any questions about the Treasurers' Report. The Board had no questions. Commissioner Callas made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Florio seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio distributed his Bi-Monthly Report on January 13, 2019 and sent out updates on January 16, 2019. Commissioner Dugan asked if anyone had any questions on the Chief's Report. Commissioner Florio asked if there was a career individual who did not yet complete their physical. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there were some individuals who still had pending items outstanding for their physicals and other individuals who are currently in college and have not gone for a physical. Chief DiGiorgio also noted that there were a few individuals started recently and had a physical less than a year ago. These individuals were not required to go for another physical. Commissioner Florio said she was concerned about the career individual since the Board had decided that an individual could not ride if they had not completed their physical by December 31, 2018. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would contact the individual tomorrow to find out the correct status of the annual physical and let the Board know. Commissioner Quirk asked if any volunteers have been told they could not ride. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the active volunteers have all gone for the initial physical but that some still have pending items. Chief DiGiorgio noted that none of these pending items have been outstanding for a long enough time that they would be considered past due. Commissioner Dugan noted that the individuals who are on college leave should not ride when they come back. Commissioner Dugan asked Chief DiGiorgio to notify these individuals that upon their return, they will be required to complete the physical prior to riding. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would notify the individuals. Chief DiGiorgio noted that he would also set a date of January 31, 2019 for pending items to be completed and notify individuals with pending items of this date. Commissioner Quirk noted that it was important that the deadlines and consequences are applied uniformly for both career staff and volunteers. Both Chief DiGiorgio and the other Commissioners agreed. Commissioner Dugan asked if the Board was in agreement on the January 31, 2019 deadline. The Board agreed.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that attached to his report are three volunteer fire division job descriptions. Chief DiGiorgio reported that in Fall 2018 there was discussion about filling some of the fire officer positions, emotions amongst the fire officers and the possibility of eliminating the crew chief position and instituting another rank instead. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he met with Asst. Chief Martin on multiple occasions to revisit the job descriptions and training requirements for each of the positions. The training requirements for the

positions would then be in line with State of New Jersey requirements. Chief DiGiorgio reported that a new Second Lieutenant position and job description were created which would encourage the younger members who are starting to climb up the officer ladder. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the current Table of Organization for the Volunteer Fire Division would need to be modified to reflect a maximum of five captains and/or lieutenants and a maximum of five second lieutenants. Chief DiGiorgio reported that a draft of the modified structure was rolled out at the Officers' Meeting on Monday and it seemed to be well received by the current officers. Chief DiGiorgio noted that he planned to have an Operations Meeting on January 29 to receive feedback on the proposal. Chief DiGiorgio reported that three of the four requirements to implement the change have been completed. The first was to review and identify the necessary changes. The second was to come up with the language and the training requirements for any changes. The third was to introduce the proposal to the current fire officers. The fourth requirement is to determine if the Board is in agreement with modifying the Volunteer Fire Division Table of Organization to encourage additional officers. Commissioner DeNigris asked why the changes were needed and if the crew chief position was disliked. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the proposed structure will better match the State of New Jersey job titles and the new training requirements for these positions. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this will hopefully encourage new members to become officers. Commissioner Dugan felt that the job of second lieutenant would boost morale and give the position a little more authority than the crew chief position currently has. Chief DiGiorgio asked the Board for permission to change the current Volunteer Fire Division Table of Organization to reflect the proposed new structure. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the draft of the new Pay Per Call Resolution may include the encouragement of an officer incentive. Commissioner Quirk noted that the crew chiefs did not historically have the certifications to be considered a lieutenant and asked how the District would get around that. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the current officers would be grandfathered into the positions that they currently hold. The exception would be that the current crew chief would become a second lieutenant, a position that the individual has the necessary certification for. Chief DiGiorgio noted that there is no rank structure that the State recognizes but there is a bare minimum to be an officer. Commissioner Quirk asked why the job description for the fire lieutenant was included twice in the

report. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Asst. Chief job description was omitted and he would forward it to the Board. The Board granted permission to change the Volunteer Fire Division Table of Organization.

Commissioner Florio asked for clarification on why Message Board Policy was considered an outstanding item because she thought that it was completed. Administrator Schultz indicated that the Message Board Policy was complete. Chief DiGiorgio asked whether it should be included in the Policies and Procedures Manual. Administrator Schultz noted that it was on the website. The Board felt that it should be included in the Policies and Procedures Manual also. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will work with Administrator Schultz to include it in the manual. Chief DiGiorgio reported that some of the other outstanding items will be addressed at the Operations Meeting on January 29. These items include the Fire Officer Job Descriptions, the Pay Per Call revisions and final revisions on the Membership Residency Requirements.

EMS: Nothing to report.

BUDGET: Commissioner DeNigris reported that everything for 2018 is completed and the District is operating in 2019.

PERSONNEL: Nothing to report.

NEGOTIATIONS: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Commissioner Dugan reported that he attended the meeting. Commissioner Dugan reported that the Fire Dept. wanted to buy a Fast Sled for fire rescue. Commissioner Dugan reported that the sled will cost about \$2,000 and some members of the Fire Dept. asked if the Board would be contributing. Commissioner Dugan noted that Chief DiGiorgio recommended that the \$1,000 donation from IHOP be put towards the equipment purchase and the Fire Dept. put in the additional \$1,000. Commissioner Dugan reported that the Board was not aware of the intent to purchase a rescue sled and also felt that partnering on equipment purchases should be reserved for larger scale equipment. Commissioner Florio asked if the Fire Dept. was made aware of the ongoing maintenance for the various pieces of equipment and understands the cost to the District of maintaining all of the equipment, including the newer pieces. Commissioner Dugan noted that not all members of the Fire Dept.

requested a sharing of the cost of this purchase. Commissioner Florio felt that the Fire Dept. should be made aware of the ongoing equipment maintenance cost if they are not already aware. Commissioner Florio felt it was a shame that given the large vested dollar amount that the Fire Dept. keeps in the bank, that they are continually looking for a dollar for dollar match for what they are interested in purchasing. Commissioner Dugan reiterated that a majority of the Fire Dept. was in favor of purchasing the sled. Commissioner Florio noted that the District does not ask the Fire Dept. to contribute to equipment maintenance bills and since public donations go to the Fire Dept. it is appropriate that the Fire Dept. utilize their funds to purchase equipment. Commissioner Callas noted that if the District needed this piece of equipment, it should have been included in the budget that was just completed. Chief DiGiorgio reported that equipment purchase requests had to be prioritized during the budget process. Chief DiGiorgio noted that when he identified the IHOP donation, he felt that it would be good community relations to be able to report that the donation was used to purchase a specific piece of equipment. Chief DiGiorgio felt that reporting on the purchase along with photos of the equipment would reverberate throughout the community. Chief DiGiorgio pointed out that after lengthy discussion at their meeting, the Fire Dept. did vote to purchase the equipment. Commissioner Dugan noted there was very little opposition to the purchase.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Administrator Schultz reported that the Department of Labor visited and requested records on the ramp construction project. After a discussion with council, the records were forwarded to the Department of Labor. Commissioner DeNigris asked if the case was coming up soon. Administrator Schultz noted that there is no case with the District but the records request was part of an investigation into the construction company that worked here.

Commissioner DeNigris asked if any decision had been made about the landscaping contract. Administrator Schultz noted that the process will not start until February.

Commissioner Dugan reported that the tent has been ordered and has not been received yet. Commissioner Florio asked about the shed roof. Commissioner Dugan reported that extra shingles from the new fire house roof will be used for the new shed roof. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the contractor should be lined up since the shed roof needs to be completed prior to putting up the tent.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Chief DiGiorgio reported that both ambulances are back in service. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Ambulance 38 was out of service for warranty repair of brake lines and Ambulance 39 had to have the starter replaced again. Chief DiGiorgio noted that there was a short period of time where neither ambulance was in service. Mutual aid was lined up and Director Paul assigned an ambulance to the firehouse for a good part of Friday.

INSURANCE: Administrator Schultz reported that he received a question from Fire Dept. President Hark regarding surety bonding for the new Fire Dept. bookkeeping position. Administrator Schultz forwarded the question to Pam Brown from the insurance company. Ms. Brown added the Fire Dept. Bookkeeper position to the policy for about \$150. Administrator Schultz reported that Ms. Brown is researching the cost of increasing the total insurance coverage from the current \$1M to the next level which would be more consistent with our accounts. Commissioner Florio asked if the Fire Dept. was going to pay or if the District was going to pay the additional cost. Administrator Schultz reported that he did not know if the Board wanted him to ask the Fire Dept. to pay. Administrator Schultz noted that the current policy covers the Fire Dept. and is paid by the District. Commissioner Florio reported that it is not the money that she is questioning but the liability if the District pays the bill. Administrator Schultz reported that the District has historically paid the bonding insurance for the Fire Dept. positions and that this would just be an addition to the policy for the new bookkeeper position. Administrator Schultz noted that Ms. Brown asked for confirmation that an independent audit is done of the Fire Dept. books annually. Commissioner Florio noted that she is concerned about the liability given that the Fire Dept. as a separate legal entity with compliance requirements etc., they should pay for their liability insurance. Commissioner Florio noted that the District has no authority over what the Fire Dept. positions do so the District should not open itself up to liability. Administrator Schultz noted that most times both the District and Fire Dept. have been named in suits and the District has always covered both suits. Commissioner Florio felt that the Fire Dept. has raised the question sometimes about having separate legal counsel and it seems that when it is convenient to go under the District insurance and counsel, they go with it. Now the District is questioning the need for an independent insurance policy due to the fact that there will be an individual who will have a foot in each camp, should we begin the

process of separating the policies and becoming independent. Commissioner Florio noted that she had concerns about the raffle license and the fact that the Fire Dept. makes independent decisions on legal requirements that the District has no control over. Commissioner Quirk noted that the raffle during the Tree Lighting was correctly filed and approved as Whippany Fire Dept. raising money for Cedar Knolls Fire Dept.

COMMUNICATIONS: Commissioner Quirk asked Chief DiGiorgio about a communication issue between an ambulance and the County this weekend where a police officer had to intervene. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there were two crew members on the ambulance who both had their radios on the wrong channel. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the ambulance crew members were standing in the house with the police officer. The two ambulance crew members were both on the same incorrect radio channel, when one would transmit, the other member would hear it. This led both ambulance crew members to believe that the transmission was going through. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he was at the firehouse when the ambulance returned and he immediately looked at the radios to see what had happened. The radios were set to the fire ground channel which is why they heard each other but did not allow them to communicate with the County. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the ambulance crew received refresher training on the radios.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Commissioner Florio reported that she received communication from Verizon indicating that they were interested in adding the Spanish option to the District website. Administrator Schultz contacted Verizon and this option has been added. Administrator Schultz asked for a status report on the implementation of the new Township website. Commissioner Florio reported that she would discuss this in the Hanover Township Committee report.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Commissioner DeNigris reported that the scheduled Township audit of the financial position of District 2

has been cancelled when it was discovered that the District cannot sign because they never went to the public to see if they could make a commitment to support the loan.

Commissioner Florio reported that Civic Plus is done with their drafting of the Township website. Commissioner Florio reported that economic development got a draft of the website and sent it out along with a survey to different populations, generations, etc. Commissioner Florio reported that there is a meeting tomorrow to discuss some of the recommendations received from the survey. There was a marketing meeting last night to discuss how the new website will be marketed. Commissioner Florio reported that there will be direct mailings to both businesses and residents. There will also be newsletter publications and messages through the eblast system. Commissioner Florio reported that the goal is to let people know that this is a site where they can get up to the minute accurate information. Commissioner Florio noted that the website will allow the public to ask questions and they will receive a response within 24 hours on Monday through Friday. Questions submitted after business on Friday will be answered on Monday morning. Commissioner Florio reported that the Township marketing committee had asked if the Fire District would allow the Township to advertise the new website on the electronic sign when the website goes live in February. Administrator Schultz asked Commissioner Florio to send him an email about the request. Commissioner Florio said that she would if the Board finds the request is in line with the District policy for sign usage. The Board agreed to the request because it does not violate the District policy.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Quirk reported that the Township will be offering the Public Safety Academy again this summer. Commissioner Quirk reported that based on feedback, the dates will be changed. The Academy previously was held for two weeks starting the week of 4th of July. The start date will be moved back one week to accommodate those who vacation the week of 4th of July. Commissioner Quirk asked the Board if will support the Public Safety Academy again this year. Commissioner Quirk noted that Chief DiGiorgio took a class on certification that will allow him to certify the participants. Both the Board and Chief DiGiorgio agreed to support the Academy.

Commissioner Quirk reported that Congresswoman Sherrill had to cancel her appearance at the Community Center on January 22 because Congress was called back due to the government shutdown. It may be rescheduled on Friday, February 1 if the shutdown ends. Commissioner Quirk said he will keep Chief DiGiorgio in the loop about rescheduling.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

Petitions for Candidacy are due on January 18, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.

The Hanover Township Fire District 3 Annual Election will be held on February 16, 2019 from 2 P.M. to 9 P.M.

The Hanover Township Fire District 3 Reorganization Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 6:30 P.M.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

RESOLUTIONS: Commissioner Callas read Resolution 19-01-17-04 accepting the resignation of Volunteer Member Sainato. Commissioner Florio made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Callas. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk abstained.

Commissioner Callas read Resolution 19-01-17-05 setting Terms and Conditions of Employment for the Fire Chief. Commissioner Dugan made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner DeNigris. All were in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Callas read Resolution 19-01-17-06 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Dugan made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner DeNigris. All were in favor. The Board went into closed session at 8:00 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed. Action will not be taken.

The Board came out of closed session at 8:15 p.m.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Callas, seconded by Commissioner Florio, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Robert Callas, Secretary