

August 6, 2020 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 August 6, 2020 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 Robert Callas, Michael Dugan Sr., Michael Dugan Jr., and Robert O'Hare were present. Commissioner Thomas Quirk was absent.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Lieutenant McGuinness, Asst. Chief of EMS DeSimone and FF Ujfalussy were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: Administrator Schultz reported that the Board received a request from Hanover Township to use the facility on November 7, 2020 for a rabies clinic. Administrator Schultz reported that all the proper paperwork was received with the request. Commissioner O'Hare asked if the Board should make social distancing stipulations a requirement of approval. Administrator Schultz reported that he would remind the Township that all social distancing guidelines must be maintained during the event. Commissioner Callas made a motion to accept the use of facility request, seconded by Commissioner O'Hare. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk was absent.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the July 16, 2020 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Callas made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2020 Regular Meeting. Commissioner O'Hare seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk was absent.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the July 2020 YTD financial reports were distributed to the Board. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the numbers are creeping up a little bit but they are what they are.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the new check signing procedure was implemented tonight and asked if anyone had any questions on it. There were no questions. Commissioner O'Hare noted that it was much more efficient. Commissioner Dugan Sr. agreed but noted that three signatures are still required on checks.

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

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio distributed his Bi-Monthly Report and outlined the following items:

Chief DiGiorgio reported that Fire Prevention continues to do their job with 58 of 60 Life-Hazard Use Inspections completed. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the of the two remaining businesses, one is still closed due to COVID and the other has requested to stay on the regular September schedule for inspection. Chief DiGiorgio reported that all the inspectors have been out doing there building inspections and if there are tenants in the buildings, the inspectors have been assigned those as well. Chief DiGiorgio noted that since the District was ahead of schedule on the inspections before the pandemic, the District is not too far behind now. Chief DiGiorgio reported that invoices for the completed inspections have been sent out and payments have started coming in.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he asked Captain Thompson to reconvene the Ambulance Acquisition Work Group to review the four vendor submissions. Chief DiGiorgio hoped that the Apparatus Committee will be available to attend the meeting so that everyone remains on the same page.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he sent out a memo requesting clarification from the Board on the 24-hour Career Shift rule. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the recent MOA that was signed with the career staff has created a discrepancy with a General Order that he had in place. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke with

Administrator Schultz about the discrepancy. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the language in the MOA reads that the career staff cannot work beyond a 24-hour period and the District has been utilizing them up to 6 hours beyond that shift as past practice. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this past weekend there was an issue with filling a shift, he made the recommendation that someone be held over. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he discovered that the MOA clearly states that career staff cannot work beyond a 24-hour period. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he needs the Board's guidance on how to reconcile the MOA to his General Order. Commissioner Callas felt that if the career personnel could not be held over, the District would have to look at different schedules. Commissioner Callas felt that the District needs to be able to hold over the career personnel if needed. Commissioner Callas noted that they could not be held over another 24-hour shift, but could be held over an additional 10-hours maximum. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the intent of the Board was that the career personnel not be scheduled for more than one 24-hour shift but that if needed the 24-hour shift could be extended. Administrator Schultz felt that it would be easily remedied by the addition of words outlining the exception for a holdover or early call in. Commissioner O'Hare asked for clarification that the MOA would need to be amended. Administrator Schultz reported that it would need to be amended and should go to Mr. Trimboli for review. Administrator Schultz noted that due to the importance of the matter, the Negotiations Committee should be given some latitude to rectify the issue. Chief DiGiorgio noted that his General Order states that the time limit on the call in and hold over is 8 hours. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked what the issue was this past weekend. Chief DiGiorgio explained that a volunteer was called in to their primary job and had to call in sick at the firehouse. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the career staff on duty was released because it was felt that MOA did not allow them to stay on. Commissioner Callas noted that the career staff should not be allowed to leave until the next shift arrives.

Chief DiGiorgio asked if the Board had a chance to review the Staffing Policy / Guidelines that he sent to them. Commissioner O'Hare asked Chief DiGiorgio to go through the document with the Board because he felt a couple of things needed clarification. Chief DiGiorgio reported that one of the advantages of the policy would be to create call in or hold over policy to cover open shifts. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the purpose of the policy is to identify a minimum staffing level, the organization structure and the expected number of people for functions

that the District is expected to perform. Chief DiGiorgio noted that this is in the PEOSH requirements that the employer will provide that guideline. Chief DiGiorgio reported that section 4 of the proposed guideline shows all types of shifts that the District currently has in place as well as the organization structure for both the Fire and EMS Divisions showing the chain of command. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Procedures and Guidelines section outlines how each Division should operate, the number of personnel assigned to each shift and what constitutes the minimum number of personnel to operate safely and efficiently. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the EMS Division shall operate with a minimum of one certified EMT, who is the officer or single resource unit leader, and one EMT. Commissioner O'Hare asked if on any given overnight, the District would have two EMTs on duty, but asked if one would necessarily be an officer. Chief DiGiorgio reported that in the absence of an officer, one of the EMTs would be a single resource unit leader which designates that an individual is responsible for the apparatus or ambulance. Chief DiGiorgio noted that certain qualifications must be met in order to be designated a single resource unit leader. Commissioner Dugan asked if that meant that if two EMTs were scheduled who did not have these qualifications the ambulance would not be allowed to go out. Chief DiGiorgio agreed that this was the case and reported that 99% of the time the District operates the ambulance under these guidelines but would not say that the District never sent an ambulance out even when both EMTs on the ambulance do not have the qualifications for a single resource unit leader. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked which organization made these rules. Chief DiGiorgio reported that NIMS (National Incident Management System) requires that there be a single resource unit leader on every single ambulance and fire apparatus. Chief DiGiorgio noted that this is why the fire apparatus cannot go out unless someone on the apparatus has I200 Incident Management. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the proposed Staffing Guidelines states that the District will be following the State and National procedures. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked if all other districts follow this. Chief DiGiorgio reported that all other districts should be following this. Administrator Schultz noted that the District is bound to follow the guidelines because the District has accepted FEMA grants in the past and should continue to do so especially because the District will be applying for FEMA reimbursement. Administrator Schultz noted that one of the requirements for accepting the FEMA money is that you are NIMS compliant. Chief DiGiorgio

reported that the same requirements are in place for the Fire Division so an officer or single resource unit leader must be on the apparatus along with two certified interior firefighters and at least one certified driver. Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked if I200 Incident Management is what is learned if the Firefighter One course. Chief DiGiorgio acknowledged that this was the case. Commissioner O'Hare asked if a fire call went out at 2 AM this guideline states that four personnel must be here before the fire truck can go out. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the minimum would be someone in charge and two firefighters. Commissioner Dugan felt this would be the recommended minimum but the District could not guarantee that and reported that it is not happening now. Chief DiGiorgio acknowledged that this is not what is happening now and asked if the objective of the Board was to send out a truck with one officer / single resource unit leader and one firefighter for a minimum of two people. Commissioner Dugan Sr. thought that the Board said that the minimum was one and noted that during the day if one fire officer is on the engine and the other is on the ambulance, the fire officer is going out on the engine himself. Chief DiGiorgio asked what the Board was comfortable with putting in the Staffing Policy. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that it was not an issue of what the Board was comfortable with sending the engine out with one person on it. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that at the same time the single firefighter is not going to be operating at the scene but can assess the scene. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the purpose of the Staffing Policy is to develop what the minimum staffing on each apparatus is. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the proposed Staffing Policy also details the minimum staffing per shift. Commissioner O'Hare asked if the Board was saying that an engine cannot go out without the four personnel. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that there were minimum requirements for both the Fire and EMS sides. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the minimum would be two people on the fire truck and two people riding on the ambulance. Commissioner O'Hare noted that on most days the District meets these proposed guidelines but asked if on the days that the guidelines are not met, does the engine not go out. Commissioner Dugan Jr. noted that if the Board approves this Staffing Policy, that is what it will mean. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the Board needs to decide if it wants the engines sitting in the bay because the proposed criteria are not met or does the Board want the engine to get on the scene to make an assessment. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that this District goes with the Whippany Fire

Department most of the time. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that if one certified person is at the station, then the truck should go out. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the safety requirements of two out / two in must be followed which means there needs to be at least 4 people on the scene. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the District was not following that requirement now because the engine goes out with only one person on it. Commissioner Callas noted that not every call is a two in / two out call. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that the two in / two out requirement pertains to operating at a scene not arriving to the scene. Commissioner Dugan Sr. clarified that he meant that if the engine arrived on the scene with one person, they could at least assess the scene and let dispatch know to hit the second alarm because no one else is coming. Commissioners Callas, Dugan Sr. and Dugan Jr. agreed that there is a lot that the single firefighter can do while waiting for backup to arrive. Commissioner O'Hare asked if that meant that the Board was going to say that one person on the engine was okay. The Board agreed that it was important to get an engine on scene even if only had one person on it. Commissioner Callas noted that if the call comes in as a structure fire, automatic aid would kick in and more districts would respond anyway. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that the policy would be that the minimum number of people on an engine would be one firefighter / single resource unit leader. Commissioner O'Hare confirmed that this would be the policy. Chief DiGiorgio read through more of the proposed staffing guidelines concerning who was responsible for maintaining staffing levels on each shift. Chief DiGiorgio reported that mandatory callback is instituted when voluntary means to return to work have not produced required staffing levels which gives the officer on duty the ability to call back and / or call in personnel. Chief DiGiorgio outlined that order in which open shifts will be offered to staff, starting with the volunteers and working up to the career officers. Chief DiGiorgio noted that if no career personnel are available within 24 hours of a posted open shift, he will be notified and make a decision on what to do. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked why the District would wait until 24 hours before the shift to call someone in and felt that the open shifts should be assigned when they appear on the schedule. Chief DiGiorgio reported that assigning overtime for the open shifts for an upcoming month, would not be fiscally responsible so every means is used to get someone who is not in an overtime position to take the shift. Chief DiGiorgio noted that if this fails and no one takes the shift by 24 hours before it starts, then someone will be assigned the

shift. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the time frame for assigning someone a shift should be longer, maybe 48 or 72 hours, so that it gives the assigned staff member a little more notice. Chief DiGiorgio asked if the Board was comfortable with a 72-hour timeframe. The Board agreed to the 72-hour timeframe. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that if in the 72-hour timeframe someone volunteers to take the shift, the person assigned the shift can decide to either give it up or keep it. Chief DiGiorgio reported that an employee must report to work within 2 hours of being called in and the employee on the current shift must be held over until the call in arrives. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the proposed staffing policy will mean that if the staffing levels drop below the required levels, the apparatus will not be allowed to go out and mutual aid will be utilized until staffing level requirements can be met. Chief DiGiorgio thanked the Board for their help and reported that he will make the required modifications to the staffing policy before sending out the final version.

Chief DiGiorgio concluded his report.

EMS: Nothing to report.

BUDGET: Nothing to report.

PERSONNEL: Nothing to report.

NEGOTIATIONS: Commissioner Callas reported that there is a meeting scheduled with the FMBA on August 11.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Nothing to report.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Nothing to report.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Chief DiGiorgio reported that one of the ambulances was out of service for two days to have a door handle replaced.

INSURANCE: Nothing to report.

COMMUNICATIONS: Chief DiGiorgio reported that three towers that the police department utilize for their radio system and noted that the police are operating on their backup radio system because the power is out at one of the towers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke to the officer in charge of the police communications to offer assistance. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he told the

officer that the District has a shed, generator and propane system that powers equipment at the Fieldstone tower. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Joint Fire Prevention Board continually asks why the generator and propane system are being maintained. Chief DiGiorgio reported that if the Joint Fire Prevention Board and the Water Authority do not need the system perhaps the police could take the shed, generator and propane system to help them keep their radio system running when they lose power. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the police department will contact the Water Authority to see if they still need the generator system.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the website is up to date.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the committee met about a week ago and started talking about where the District is right now and the effect that COVID had on some of the plans. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that one of the top priorities is bunking for the members now that the shifts are 24 hours. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that Chief DiGiorgio came up with the idea of reconfiguring the 3rd floor a little to accommodate the bunks.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that one of the other items that was discussed was getting an architect to look getting an elevator for the building.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that this would allow the second floor to be utilized for public meetings. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that the first floor could then be utilized for bunking and locker rooms. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that perhaps the existing bathroom by the door could be made into an office so that someone would be there to greet people.

Commissioner O'Hare reported that Commissioner Quirk has requested to be removed from the Planning Committee due to time constraints. Commissioner Dugan Jr. agreed to take the Planning Committee seat and give Commissioner Quirk his seat on the Website Committee.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District will check for records that are able to destroyed.

Administrator Schultz reported that some filing cabinets may be moved from the third floor to the second floor to accommodate bunking on the third floor.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner O'Hare reported that he, Commissioner Dugan Sr., Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz and the bookkeeper participated in a Zoom presentation with Millennium Strategies and they will do all of the FEMA filing for the District and that 75% of their fee should be reimbursed through FEMA. Commissioner O'Hare noted that Millennium Strategies has a lot of experience doing this and have had success with many other municipal governments and agencies. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he was impressed with their presentation and noted that they also have the ability to do grants which the District might utilize at a later date. Commissioner O'Hare felt that their scope of services and what they offer meets the District's needs and would eliminate the need for the data processing person that the District advertised for. Commissioner O'Hare asked if anyone had any questions. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the District has started compiling some of the data in a format that Millennium Strategies can utilize and felt that going with them would be more efficient than doing the project in house. Commissioner O'Hare noted that he did not see the dollar amount that the District would like to cap Millennium Strategies at in the contract. Administrator Schultz reported that the cap amount would be \$17,000 to avoid exceeding the bid threshold. Administrator Schultz noted that the District did solicit a quote from a second company, but they did not respond. Commissioner O'Hare noted that he found the cap amount in the contract. Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to accept the Millennium Strategies contract, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk was absent. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked Administrator Schultz to send out letters to all applicants for the data entry position thanking them for applying and stating that the District was going in a different direction.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

REMINDERS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, August 20, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be rescheduled. Administrator Schultz reported that he will attempt to set up a meeting for September 17 at 6:30 at the Cedar Knolls Fire Station.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Asst. EMS Chief DeSimone asked when the volunteers who took calls during the COVID period could expect to receive their Standby payments. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Lt. Belott and FF Sulpy are finalizing the numbers but have been sidetracked because of the storm. Chief DiGiorgio hoped that the checks can be signed at the August 20, 2020. Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked when the Enhanced Pay per Call payments would be paid. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he planned to pay those out with the standard Pay per Call payments in December. Asst. EMS Chief DeSimone asked if the volunteers are aware that the Enhanced Pay per Call is being paid in December. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the time frame of the payments was declared. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he could calculate those payments for the next meeting but asked the Board if these payments would reduce the budgeted Pay per Call payout in December. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the Enhanced Pay per Call should be in addition to the budgeted Pay per Call and that the District would decide where to charge it after talking with the bookkeeper. Chief DiGiorgio noted that one of the criteria for FEMA reimbursement is that proof of payment must be shown so it would be better to make the payments sooner than December. Commissioner Dugan Sr. agreed.

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner O'Hare asked if anyone had any objections to voting by consent agenda for the following resolutions. There were no objections.

Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-08-06-76 accepting the resignation of Nikhil Avadhani.

Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-08-06-77 accepting the resignation of Beata Gelman.

Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-08-06-78 to make a conditional offer of Volunteer employment to Jessica Perrone.

Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-08-06-79 accepting the resignation of Ryan Houser.

Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-08-06-80 authorizing the sale of a utility trailer.

Commissioner O'Hare made a motion to introduce the resolutions, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Sr. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk was absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Callas, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Sr., to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Commissioner Quirk was absent. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Thomas Quirk, Secretary