

**October 15, 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 October 15, 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., Robert O'Hare and Thomas Quirk were present.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, and Captain Thompson were also in attendance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**The minutes from the October 1, 2020 Regular Meeting were reviewed.**

**Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.**

**Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 1, 2020 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Callas seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER:** Commissioner Dugan Sr. distributed the preliminary October 15, 2020 financial reports. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that more expense lines were over budget, but that the overall expenses were running at budget. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the 2021 budget process will begin next Thursday and asked that budget requests be forwarded to him before the meeting.

Commissioner Callas made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Commissioner Quirk. 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 October 13, 2020 and did not have anything to add.

Commissioner O'Hare asked if anyone had any questions on his submitted report. There were no questions.

**EMS:** Commissioner O'Hare asked Chief DiGiorgio for an update on the FEMA Reimbursement Application process. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District is moving forward with both the FEMA Reimbursement and the AFG grant applications. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he received some information about local government services monies that are being released to the municipalities. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the funds are similar to CARES funds but will be distributed to counties that did not receive CARES funds. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has a listing by county and municipality outlining how much money each municipality will be eligible for. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Hanover Township is eligible to receive \$163,000. Chief DiGiorgio noted that he is not sure if this is the maximum Hanover Township is eligible to receive or if the Township will just receive a check for that amount. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District will have a meeting with Sue from Millennium next week to discuss the progress and answer questions that she has for the District. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will ask Sue if the COVID-19 expenses that are not eligible through FEMA should be pursued through the AFG grant or are eligible for reimbursement through the Township funds. Chief DiGiorgio noted that all three of the applications should be applied for in the next few weeks so it is important to determine which expenses are going to be applied to which of the three applications since the District cannot overlap items on multiple applications. Commissioner Quirk reported that he heard about the funds on social media and spoke with Mr. Silvio who told him that the Mayor received the letter on the funds. Commissioner Quirk reported that the Mayor turned the letter over to Mr. Giorgio who is still trying to determine if the funds need to be applied for or if the Township will just receive a check. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he had a packet announcing the funds allocation from Millennium. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the District may have to make a decision about whether it is worth going forward with the AFG if the supplemental CARES money is going to cover whatever is not reimbursed through FEMA. Commissioner Quirk reported that he and other Township representatives hope to speak with Millennium in the next few days about handling the FEMA

reimbursement application for the Township. Commissioner Quirk reported that he hopes to find out what Millennium knows about the funds available to municipalities and will report back to the District whatever he finds out.

Commissioner O'Hare noted that the question is basically how the Township will disburse any funds that they receive. Commissioner Quirk reported that he will see if he can get a copy of the letter that the Township received about the funds. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked if Commissioner Quirk knew if the Township put out a lot of money for COVID-19. Commissioner Quirk reported that the Township put out a fair amount of money; PPE for the police department, a sanitizing system, and salary expense to have extra employees to clean public restrooms in parks, etc. Chief DiGiorgio noted that some of that could be FEMA reimbursable. Commissioner Quirk reported that he hoped the state letter provided an explanation as to the things the funds could be used for.

**BUDGET:** Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that a meeting is scheduled for next Thursday to start the 2021 Budget process. Commissioner O'Hare asked if there was any progress made on looking for an architect to help outline future plans for the firehouse. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the Planning Committee had not met again yet but that funds should be added to the 2021 budget for this. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that the Planning Committee would need to determine what route they would like to take with the firehouse before an architect can be brought in. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the Planning Committee would like to have someone advise them about the feasible options so the committee can make educated decisions about future plans. Commissioner O'Hare asked if the committee had found an advisor yet. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that they had not connected with anyone yet. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that they would like to show someone the current setup, tell them what the District needs, and have them outline the feasible options.

**PERSONNEL:** Commissioner Quirk reported that the Board would need to go into Executive Session.

**NEGOTIATIONS:** Commissioner Callas reported that there is a meeting scheduled for next week and he would report more in closed session.

**LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS:** Nothing to report.

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:** Chief DiGiorgio reported that the electrical situation was rectified for the Christmas tree.

**APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE:** Chief DiGiorgio reported that normal maintenance including replacing some batteries was done on the ambulance 39.

**INSURANCE:** Administrator Schultz reported that he spoke with Mr. Siino and sent some information over to VFIS to get a quote on life insurance for the staff. Administrator Schultz reported that he would like to meet with the committee before the next meeting to discuss the proposal from VFIS and have a conference call with VESO if the committee decides to change carriers. Commissioner O'Hare asked if it was safe to say the District is going to change carriers and it was just a matter of who to change to. Administrator Schultz felt there was a strong inclination to change carriers because he did not think that VESO would fall in line with what the District wants.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Chief DiGiorgio reported that he heard at a meeting he attended that the County has been given approval to move ahead on replacing the portable and mobile radios.

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

**WEBSITE:** Nothing to report.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that everything was covered in the Budget Committee report.

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

**RECORDS RETENTION:** Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that Fire Prevention records are being reviewed to see what can be disposed of.

**LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Quirk reported that the Committee is holding a Special Meeting tonight.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the District should put together a report or presentation and address the Town about the inequality of the two Fire Districts tax rates. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that much of the new construction / new rateables will be going the other way which will allow District 2 to maintain a lower tax rate while District 3 will have to increase each year. Commissioner

Dugan Sr. felt that the District should discuss options to address the disparity such as giving District 3 the Eden Lane property or possibly consolidating the fire districts. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it was just announced that Hamilton Township nine fire districts have consolidated into a municipal district and noted that this could be used as a template if consolidation talks start up in this town. Commissioner O'Hare felt that Commissioner Dugan Sr. raised a fair point as far as changing the tax base.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Chief DiGiorgio commended Lt. DeSimone, Battalion Chief Perrello, and FF Vagell for their work getting the Fire Prevention Program together. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Superintendent Wasko provided the thumb drive for the video that was shot as part of the virtual Fire Prevention Program this year. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the video will be put on the District website after the schools have shown it to students. Commissioner O'Hare thought this was a great public service. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there was a small fee incurred for the program that has to be paid. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked who was going to reach out to District 2 about the fee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Administrator Schultz has sent them a letter.

**REMINDERS:**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, November 9, 2020 at 6:30 P.M. at the Whippany Firehouse. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he and Administrator Schultz were not able to connect with Whippany on rescheduling past meetings so decided let Whippany know that it was their turn to host and that the meeting will be publicly announced and that District 3 will show up to try and force their hand.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Commissioner Quirk read Resolution 20-10-15-98 appointing Volunteer Member McPhee.**

**Commissioner Callas made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Quirk. All were in favor.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner O'Hare read Resolution 20-10-15-99 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Callas made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Quirk. All were in favor. The Board went into closed session at 7:25 p.m.**

Personnel matters were discussed. Action will be taken.

**The Board came out of closed session at 9:14 p.m.**

**ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner Dugan Jr., seconded by Commissioner Callas, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by

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Thomas Quirk, Secretary