

February 3, 2022 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 February 3, 2022 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 Steven Cornine, Michael Dugan Sr., Michael Dugan Jr., and Robert O'Hare were present. Commissioner Mary Lou DeSimone was absent.

Chief DiGiorgio, FF Gilson, FF Martin, and EMT Perrone were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the January 20, 2022 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: Commissioner Cornine reported that Mr. Laszlo Csengeto's last name was omitted from the Correspondence section of the minutes.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to approve the amended minutes from the January 20, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Cornine seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner DeSimone was absent.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER:

Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked Chief DiGiorgio how the overtime could be at 247% of budget already this year. The bookkeeper noted that Commissioner Dugan Sr. was probably looking at the December 2021 P&L instead of the January 2022 P&L which shows overtime at 12% of budget. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that 12% sounded much better and that he did not have anything else to report. The bookkeeper reported that EMS income exceeded expectations in January.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio distributed his Bi-Monthly report along with the Monthly Specialty reports on February 2, 2022.

Chief DiGiorgio updated the Board on the following items:

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the bookkeeper reached out to PSE&G today and they are coming on Monday, 2/7, to replace the gas meter in case this is the reason for the unusually low bills. Commissioner Cornine asked if it was not said after the last meeting that the District prepaid large amounts at the beginning of the year and then had low bills the rest of the year. The bookkeeper reported that through 2019 the District had 3 months of high bills and then low bills the rest of the time but noted that the 3-month spike has not happened since then. Commissioner O'Hare felt the big question will be how much the District will owe once the meter is fixed. The bookkeeper noted that PSE&G will probably allow the District to set up a payment plan and we should know 30 days after the meter is replaced.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked Chief DiGiorgio about a 160-day outstanding fine for 64 South Jefferson that is mentioned in Lt. McGuinness's report. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District is still chasing that owner and he has been sent certified letters but he has still not paid the fine. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked what else the District could do. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he could go down to the Court and issue a municipal summons and the owner would have to appear in court to explain why he didn't pay the fine. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked if the fine would get compounded then. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the owner would be responsible for court costs in addition to the fine. Commissioner Cornine asked what type of business this was. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it is a restaurant supplier. Commissioner Dugan Sr. did not want this to get to the point of the other late fine and become a big issue. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would try to call the owner tomorrow and if he does not get a response, he will go down to the Court. Commissioner O'Hare asked if we could make a personal visit to the owner. Chief DiGiorgio reported that FF Gilson has done that. FF Gilson reported that when he has spoken with the owner he complains that business has been rough and tries to play the sympathy card. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked if

the issue has at least been fixed. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that the issue has been abated months ago.

Commissioner O'Hare asked if anyone had any questions for Chief DiGiorgio. There were no questions.

EMS: Chief DiGiorgio asked the status of setting up a follow up Zoom meeting with Coronis to go over EMS revenue. Commissioner O'Hare reported that Chief DiGiorgio beat him to the punch and asked what he knew about the meeting. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he forwarded the reports he received from Coronis but has not heard anything about a meeting. Chief DiGiorgio asked if he should schedule a meeting. Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked Chief DiGiorgio to schedule the meeting on either Tuesday or Thursday during the day. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will send an email out to the group and Administrator Schultz to set the Zoom meeting up.

Commissioner O'Hare asked if the District got dispatched to Boonton and Mountain Lakes a couple of weeks ago. FF Gilson confirmed that the District was dispatched to both Boonton and Mountain Lakes because initially we were the closest available unit. FF Gilson reported that 2 minutes after the District was dispatched a Par-Troy unit became available and took the call. Chief DiGiorgio noted that this is usually what happens with these types of dispatches.

BUDGET: Nothing to report.

PERSONNEL: Nothing to report.

NEGOTIATIONS: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Nothing to report.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that he helped open up the ceiling in the 3rd floor kitchen today. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that a box of soaking wet carpet tiles was found on the 4th floor that soaked through the floor and then through the ceiling on the 3rd floor. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that it looks like there is a roof leak which dripped onto the carpet tiles but that it has been checked all day and no one could find the leak. Commissioner O'Hare thought that maybe it only leaks if there is a wind driven rain. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the top of the chimney needs to be repointed and a new cap. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported

that the caulking around the chimney appear to be okay so he is not sure where the leak is. Commissioner O'Hare noted that nothing could be done until the source of the leak is found. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the wet sheet rock has been removed and new sheet rock has been put up so we will just have to keep an eye on it. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he applauds the work and is sure that staff are responding to some items in the survey but felt that maintenance items should be coordinated for budgetary reasons. Commissioner O'Hare noted that there is also some painting being done in the firehouse. Commissioner O'Hare felt that doing one project at a time would help the District monitor costs.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Chief DiGiorgio reported that Ambulance 39 is in Montville getting the front end done. Chief DiGiorgio reported that when Ambulance 39 comes back, Ambulance 32 will go down to be painted.

Commissioner O'Hare asked the status of the garage door opener repair. Chief DiGiorgio reported that we are still waiting for parts so it is still manual.

INSURANCE: Nothing to report.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that there is language on our website referring to our EMS collections that needs to be removed. Commissioner O'Hare asked who could remove it. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that Administrator Schultz can update the website and needs to be notified about what needs to be taken down.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the first time the structural engineer came to the firehouse he referenced areas that he wanted to investigate. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District was going to drill holes and have Rescue 5 use a camera to look inside areas. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the structural engineer wanted to see how the tie rods on the 3rd floor was done to make sure it was done properly. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the structural engineer found 18 inch I beams in the ceiling of the 2nd floor that are supporting the 3rd floor and that was a good thing. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that in the ladder bay the structural engineer

wanted a hole dug so he could see the footings to see if it will hold an additional structure. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he wanted to see the trusses going across the ladder bay which would require drilling a hole. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the hole and drilling may not be needed if a blueprint can be located. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he will have the structural engineer and the camera here in a couple of weeks to look at the various areas. Commissioner Dugan Sr. noted that the structural engineer also wants to see how wide the walls are on the 3rd floor by the fire escape because in some places they appear to be a foot wide and in others they appear to be 8 inches.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that a Consolidation meeting was held on Tuesday, February 1 and Mr. Braslow attended via Zoom. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that meetings will continue to be held the first Tuesday of every month. Commissioner Cornine asked if everyone had received the email from Administrator Schultz about the Open Public Meeting Act. Commissioner Cornine reported that since the Board discussed Consolidation during the Executive Session at the last meeting, he will publish minutes from that discussion that can be attached to next meetings minutes. Commissioner Cornine reported that transparency is one of the biggest things that the Board has been pushing for and publishing minutes from Executive Session will help maintain transparency. Commissioner Cornine reported that the Consolidation Committee has a draft resolution that can also be attached to the resolution so that everyone can see that the Committee is making sure that everyone has a seat and what the actual goals are. Commissioner Cornine reported that at the last Consolidation meeting the Commissioners felt that a resolution was needed so Jim Davidson and himself wrote one that was submitted to Mr. Braslow. Commissioner Cornine reported that Mr. Braslow approved the resolution. Commissioner Cornine reported that the resolution covers that there will be recognized committees for the prospect of consolidating both Districts, said committees will meet as needed and are authorized to make sub-committees. Commissioner Cornine reported that the resolution states the committees will meet with the various stakeholders and a report will be prepared and presented to the Board regarding the feasibility of consolidating. Commissioner Cornine reported that it is going to be as transparent as possible and everyone will be heard. Commissioner O'Hare asked if this was a formal resolution. Commissioner Cornine reported that this is not a formal resolution today but will hopefully be on the next agenda. Commissioner

O'Hare asked what the resolution said. Commissioner Cornine read the resolution.

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hanover Township Fire District 2 and Hanover Township Fire District 3 believe it could be in the best interest of both Fire Districts to explore the prospect of consolidating both Fire Districts. Whereas both Board of Fire Commissioners wish to begin said exploration, now therefore be it resolved:

- 1. A recognized Committee shall be formed to discuss the prospect of consolidating both Fire Districts.*
- 2. Said Committee shall meet as needed.*
- 3. Said Committee is authorized to for sub-committees and work groups as needed.*
- 4. Said Committee is authorized to meet with the various stakeholder groups as identified by the Committee.*
- 5. Said Committee shall prepare a report which will be delivered to each Board of Fire Commissioners as to the feasibility of combining both Fire Districts.*

Commissioner Cornine reported that the resolution is almost final but that a couple things may get added. Commissioner Cornine reported that the stakeholders were identified to an extent and will all be sub-committees. Commissioner Cornine reported that the stakeholders include the Companies, all the sub-groups of the Companies, Career staff, Exempt Associations, Relief Associations, taxpayers, public, and the Boards. Commissioner Cornine emphasized that everyone will have a seat at the table. Commissioner Cornine reported that Jim Davidson has taken the lead on the sub-committee organization so he will meet and get everyone together and schedule and take on that task. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Committee is made up of 2 liaisons from District 3, 2 liaisons from District 2, the Chiefs, and Mr. Cahill as the representative from the Township Committee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the discussion was to create a sub-committee made up of all the stakeholders. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the sub-committee could met on separate occasion than the Committee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the sub-committee is led by a project manager. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the project manager named by the Committee is retired Chief Davidson. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the stakeholders have not all been identified. Chief DiGiorgio asked if some of the wording in the draft

resolution addresses the concern about whether they are staying within the Open Public Meetings Act. Commissioner Cornine reported that Mr. Braslow and another lawyer were asked their opinion on the Open Public Meetings Act concern and both felt that the way the Committee is being formed and handled is not in violation of the Open Public Meetings Act. Commissioner O'Hare asked if this meant that the Committee meeting times do not need to be published. Commissioner Cornine confirmed that this was correct. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that there should still be minutes done for the Committee meetings. Commissioner Cornine reported that notes were being taken on the scope of the meeting, who the attendees are, what goals were identified, and any future stuff or anything that the Committee is supposed to be acting on. Commissioner Cornine reported that he was informed that the Fire Co. is going to hold a Special Meeting to discuss this. Commissioner Cornine commended the Fire Co. for putting the extra time and effort in to come down and discuss it because without everybody's feedback and hearing all the negatives and everyone's concerns, we are never going to be able to move past it. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he had heard about the meeting as well. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the project is in the exploration stage and there have only been 2 meetings so far. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the intent of the sub-committee is to make sure this study does not have the loose ends that the previous study did. Commissioner O'Hare asked when the Fire Co. meeting was. Chief DiGiorgio reported that their monthly meeting was Monday, February 14.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he was at the firehouse looking for blueprints and there are papers in the filing cabinets in the Commissioners Room that are not needed and do not need to be destroyed through the records retention process. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that there were papers about the Commissioners' Picnic in 1984, Pancake Breakfast, etc. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he is going to go through the filing cabinets and pull out all the paperwork such as who won the door prize at the Pancake breakfast that the District does not need to keep. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that there are papers on the elections and Board meetings that need to be kept. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he also emptied the safe because there were things like Ladies Auxiliary minutes from 1947. Commissioner

Dugan Sr. reported that it has some historical value but he wants to turn it over to the Fire Co. and they can secure it wherever and however they want.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the safe is now empty. Chief DiGiorgio suggested that the Pancake Breakfast papers also be given to the Fire Co. since they would have held it. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the papers were all things that the Commissioners hosted but that he would look back through them to verify there was nothing for the Fire Co. Chief DiGiorgio felt that all those things should be given to the Fire Co. so they can make the decision to throw them out or not since we know there is someone in the Fire Co. who is a bit of an historian.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: Chief DiGiorgio reported that he realizes why the Board meetings are held in the engine bays but noted that it is not optimal for the apparatus to sit outside in these temperatures and asked if the Board would consider going back to the Commissioners Room for the meetings. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District runs the risk of water freezing in the lines. Commissioner O'Hare felt that was a fair point and that based on what we see statistically with the infection rate way down, the meetings can be held in the Commissioners Room starting with the next meeting. Commissioner O'Hare noted that everyone will need to wear a mask. Commissioner Dugan Sr. agreed, unless something changes. Commissioner Dugan Sr. also felt that it was tough to hold the meetings in the Commissioners Room because there is so much stuff in there. Commissioner Dugan Sr. clarified that he is not saying he wants to stay out here but there is so much stuff around the firehouse and felt it was time to clean house. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Commissioner O'Hare touched on this topic when the kitchen needed to be cleaned out. Chief DiGiorgio felt that some of the true garbage could be thrown out and then some of the stuff in the Commissioners Room could be moved. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the 3rd floor looks like a bomb hit. Commissioner O'Hare felt that the 2nd floor looked like that too. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the Fire Co. cleaned out the back room and moved everything into the main room. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the District should get a dumpster to throw out stuff and get a C container if more storage was needed. Commissioner O'Hare felt that it was a great idea to get rid of some of the stuff that has accumulated over a few decades. Commissioner O'Hare felt

that the District needs to be organized in how we approach it and maybe start on the 3rd floor and work our way down. Commissioner O'Hare also felt that there should be proper representation from the Fire Co. who can authorize getting rid of items. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the 3rd floor should not be the Fire Co. and that the Fire Co. should clean out the 2nd floor themselves. Commissioner Cornine reported that Fire Co. President Hark Jr. is looking to put a committee together to address the issue but President Hark Jr. reported that it is not easy. Commissioner Cornine felt that the District could offer them help if it needs to get done if room needs to be made for gym equipment. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that all crews needed to help. Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that the fire Co. needs to be involved because the District cannot go onto the 2nd floor and start throwing things out. Commissioner Cornine reported that the Fire Co. is going to try and the District should try to give them whatever support we can.

Commissioner O'Hare felt we should start on the 3rd floor because there is a lot of stuff that can just be tossed and even some records that are not needed. Chief DiGiorgio reported that since it seems like everything had come to a halt with proper record retention, the District has started putting the records up in the mezzanine to get it out of the way. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that there was also a double recliner that was bought as a place to sleep that is not needed because there are 2 other beds that can be set up instead if needed.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. felt that in the meantime the mattresses could be stored against the wall in the sleeping cubicles. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would like to finish the painting and fixing the kitchen before starting the clean-up project. Commissioner Cornine reported that this conversation started with a discussion about using the bays and asked if there would be an issue with moving the ambulances outside so meetings could be held in the ambulance bays. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there would be no issue and the meeting could move in there. Chief DiGiorgio asked for clarification that the Board felt that the meetings could be held in the Commissioners Room but that the room needed to be cleaned up first. The Board agreed. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will work on getting the room cleaned out for the next meeting otherwise the meeting can be held in the ambulance bays.

Commissioner O'Hare asked if there was any other old business. There was none.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

REMINDERS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 7:00 P.M at the firehouse.

The Fire District Annual Election will be held on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 2 P.M. until 9 P.M. at the Cedar Knolls Fire Station.

The Board's Reorganization Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 14, 2022 at the Whippany Firehouse at 6:30 P.M.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

RESOLUTIONS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Dugan Sr. asked for a sidebar with Commissioner O'Hare and Chief DiGiorgio before deciding whether an Executive Session was needed. Commissioners O'Hare, Commissioner Dugan Sr. and Chief DiGiorgio left the room. When they returned Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that an Executive session was not needed.

Chief DiGiorgio asked that the sidebar discussion be put on record.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that it was brought to his attention that there were concerns about whether Chief DiGiorgio had been medically cleared after his surgery to come back to work and he wanted to make sure that he was.

Commissioner O'Hare reported that Chief DiGiorgio was cleared by his surgeon and by Dr. Gluckman and have received direction as to what he can and cannot do. Chief DiGiorgio agreed that it was written out from both Dr. Gluckman and his surgeon on what his restrictions are to return to transitional duty.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that right now Chief DiGiorgio is considered on transitional duty. Commissioner Cornine asked if there was a procedural issue with transitional duty. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the one party said that the Board has to approve transitional duties so anyone who has any type of injury or comes back from a surgery has the medical director let them come back so they do not have to be completely off but tell them what they can do such as records work. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that these have always been brought to the Board's attention by the Chief. Chief DiGiorgio

reported that the Policies and Procedures Manual states that the transitional duty policy is that the first 30 days is approved by the Chief and beyond that it goes to the Board. Chief DiGiorgio noted that if it was a Worker Comp injury this did not apply because a Workers Comp automatically allows you to come back with restrictions so there are no transitional duty issues. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the first approval of transitional duty if himself and anything beyond that has been a discussion and the Board has historically approved additional time for anyone that needs it. Chief DiGiorgio reported that obviously in this scenario he could not approve his own transitional duty so he sent it to the Chairman with his medical clearances to return to transitional duty. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he brought it up because it was questioned as to whether it was cleared and he wanted to make sure he was.

Commissioner Cornine reported that he came to the firehouse to meet with Administrator Schultz and when he came in he wanted to recognize that guys were painting and the pride of ownership was really appreciated. Commissioner Cornine thought that the District hired for everything and when he saw guys with paintbrushes in their hands he was impressed and happy to see it. Commissioner Cornine commended the guys who were doing that and said it was really appreciated. Commissioner O'Hare noted that this was part of the survey and feedback from the survey.

Chief DiGiorgio asked when the survey results would be discussed. Commissioner O'Hare reported that at the last meeting it was decided that the results would be discussed at the February 17 meeting when all Board members would be present and there would be a robust discussion. Commissioner O'Hare gave kudos to the members that have taken some initiative on the painting which has already been started and the kitchen both of which has been investigated.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Steven Cornine, Secretary