

April 7, 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 April 7, 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, Mary Lou DeSimone, Michael Dugan Jr., Robert O’Hare, and Shawn Waldron were present.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Fire Co. President James Hark Jr., FF Gilson, EMT Kruse, EMT Perrone, and Fire Co. Member Keyser were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: The Board received a letter from the Antique Fire Association of New Jersey announcing the establishment of a Mobile Canteen Unit to assist fire, police, and emergency medical services agencies in Morris, Sussex, and Warren counties. The Board decided to pass the letter along to the Fire Co. to see if they would like to donate.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the March 17, 2022 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Waldron made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner O’Hare seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER:

Commissioner Waldron reported that everything is going well percentage wise and the pension line looks high because the annual employer pension payment was made in March. Commissioner Waldron reported that the landscaping bid came in under budget for 2022.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio distributed his Bi-Monthly report on April 1, 2022. Chief DiGiorgio had following additions to his report.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the confined space joint training with Madison and Morristown finished up today and went very well.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he met last night with the Inspection Night work group and noted that Commissioner Waldron will elaborate on this later.

Chief DiGiorgio reminded the Board that the financial disclosures are due soon and asked them each not to forget to do that.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he sent a draft out with Commissioner Waldron's comments about capping the Volunteer Incentive Program (Pay per Call). Chief DiGiorgio reported that if the Board approves the draft, he will send it to Administrator Schultz to adjust the resolution to include the cap. Commissioner Waldron reported that he will be recusing himself from the vote and noted that the cap figure in the draft was just a number he thought was appropriate but felt the rest of the Board should discuss whether or not they want to cap VIP and if so what the cap should be. Commissioner Dugan Jr. noted that he should probably recuse himself from the vote because he is also a volunteer. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that since the 2022 VIP money was already budgeted for, any change to the program should not go into effect until next year. Commissioner Waldron noted that the question was more does the Board need to spend all the money that was budgeted. Commissioner O'Hare felt it was more a question of fiscal responsibility. Commissioner Waldron felt that if a volunteer comes down to the firehouse in answer to a call that \$25 per call seems reasonable but to come down and get \$44 seems high. Commissioner Cornine asked if the VIP program worked by the Board budgeting money that is divided among the volunteers based on the number of calls they make. Commissioner Waldron confirmed that this was the case. Commissioner Cornine noted that if only 1 volunteer responds to calls, they would get a \$20,000 check. Commissioner Waldron reported that in the past the whole budgeted amount gets spent each year and felt that paying \$40 plus per call just to get rid of the money did not seem right. Commissioner Waldron noted that he benefited last year from the way the program currently works but did not feel it was right. Commissioner Cornine felt that Pay per Call is an incentive and if the Board budgeted \$20,000

this year, that is what it should cost. Commissioner Cornine felt that the Board should review the program and make any changes effective next year. Administrator Schultz noted that Pay per Call is paid in December each year so the 2021 Pay per Call is done but the 2022 has yet to be spent. Commissioner Waldron reiterated that just because the Board has budgeted \$20,000 does not mean that the entire amount needs to be spent and paying someone \$44 to come down to the firehouse, sign a yellow sheet and leave seems excessive to him. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he thought about it, read the new draft, and agrees that \$25 per call is a reasonable number and he would be in favor of it. Commissioner DeSimone reported that she was also okay with having a cap because the program can currently allow an individual to receive a large check for coming out on a few calls. Commissioner O'Hare felt that the hard-core volunteers were not coming here for the Pay per Call. Commissioner O'Hare noted that the program is not incentivizing more volunteers to come out as can be seen by the lack of turnout on our calls. Commissioner Cornine asked what some of last years check amounts were. Commissioner Waldron reported that his check was over \$3000. Fire Co. President Hark Jr. reported that he was not against the cap and noted that volunteers do not know what the amount per call will be until the end of November and if more volunteers come out the per call rate could go down under \$25. Chief DiGiorgio reported that coming out to training drills is necessary to qualify for Pay per Call but the number of calls per volunteer determines the rate per call. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the 2021 rate per call was around \$47. Commissioner Waldron reported that a lot of volunteers do not qualify for the program because they do not make the 4 quarterly drills. Administrator Schultz gave the Board a list of the Pay per Call recipients and the amount they received in 2021. Commissioner Waldron reported that someone got \$4680, someone else got \$3200, and he got \$3100. Commissioner Waldron reported that 12 people were eligible for Pay per Call in 2021. Commissioner Cornine reported that he is neutral on the whole thing and if this is how the Board has been doing it and the money is budgeted for, he does not have an issue with it. Commissioner Cornine reported that he would like to poll the Board and if changes are to be made they should go into effect in 2023. Commissioner DeSimone asked the Board what they wanted to do. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he would make a motion to adopt the new policy. Administrator Schultz reported that since the original program was

adopted by resolution, the new policy would need to be adopted by resolution and that would happen at the first meeting in May. Commissioner O'Hare made a motion to draft a resolution for the amendment to the Pay per Call program. Administrator Schultz reported that he would get a draft of the resolution out to everyone and noted that there would not be enough Commissioners present at the next meeting to vote on the resolution since two Board members would be absent and one was abstaining.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he reviewed and updated the FF/EMT job description and sent a draft to the Board for review. Chief DiGiorgio noted that this was the first of many that the Board asked to have reviewed and was the oldest job description not having been revisited since 1998. Chief DiGiorgio reported that anything in red on the draft is a modification that he suggests making. Chief DiGiorgio noted that if the Board accepts the modifications, they would need to be adopted by resolution. Commissioner DeSimone asked for clarification that if the Board were to hire a career FF/EMT they would only need to have FF1 certification. Commissioner DeSimone noted that the last FF/EMT hire was required to have FF2 certification. Chief DiGiorgio thanked Commissioner DeSimone for catching the discrepancy. Commissioner DeSimone asked which certification the Board was going to go with. Commissioner Cornine felt that the bar should be set lower and then the Board should pick the best candidate. Commissioner Cornine felt that if the bar was set too high you eliminate all of your options. Commissioner Cornine noted that just because the job description says FF1 does not mean that someone with FF2 can't be taken but it will give you a better candidate pool. Commissioner Cornine felt that the interview process will allow the board to choose the best candidate. Commissioner Dugan Jr. agreed and felt that if FF1 is good enough to be a volunteer firefighter, it should be good enough to be a career member. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that if the Board was going to raise the standard, it should be raised for both volunteer and career. Commissioner Cornine felt that whichever way the Board wants to go, it needs to be put on paper because the Board cannot change it on a whim. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he thought that he had copied that certification requirement from the last job announcement and that the Board knows his feelings on the requirement. Chief DiGiorgio felt that while he understood Commissioner Cornine's reasoning for increasing the candidate pool, he reported that the question in the federal grant process was

how are we going to work to get the department up to the FF2 standard. Chief DiGiorgio felt that since there is not much depth in the department it would be difficult to send people out to be trained once they are here and if the standard is not there why would they want to go to the training. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the District would also lose the person for 3 weeks during the day or more than 10 weeks at night and there was the possibility that they would need to be paid overtime while training. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this is his opinion on bringing people in at FF2 and we did have candidates with this requirement. Chief DiGiorgio addressed Commissioner Dugan Jr.'s remark about raising the standard for volunteers by noting that the District is already facing the fact that it is challenging to get volunteers through the door. Commissioner DeSimone clarified that the discussion was about a career FF/EMT. Commissioner Waldron reported that Commissioner Dugan Jr.'s comment was that if the Board is requiring FF2 for career firefighters, it should also be a requirement for volunteers. Commissioner Waldron agreed with Commissioner Cornine about coming in at a lower level with less requirements and felt that the incentive for a FF/EMT to continue training would be to get promoted. Commissioner Waldron reported that he did not care either way but felt that there would be a larger pool of candidates if the standard was FF1. Commissioner Waldron reiterated that their incentive to get FF2 would be future promotions. Commissioner Cornine suggested making FF2 a requirement for officers and asked if it was a current requirement for volunteer officers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that in order to be an officer, one needs fire officer certification and FF2 is a prerequisite for the fire officer certification. Commissioner O'Hare reported that on the EMT side there is no stipulation that the candidate have any experience so the Board could theoretically hire someone with FF1 and EMT certifications who has never ridden on an ambulance. Commissioner Cornine noted that the Board would hire that person if they were the best candidate which means that the candidate pool was pretty terrible. Chief DiGiorgio reminded the Board that this is not a job announcement, it is a job description. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the standards of time and experience can be outlined in the job announcement. Commissioner DeSimone did not want to see the Board flip flopping on the standards. Commissioner Cornine asked for clarification that this was a career FF job description. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it was a career FF/EMT job description. Commissioner Cornine asked if the Board could increase the

standard in the job announcement every time and asked if everyone that we have right now will meet the standard in the job description. Chief DiGiorgio asked Commissioner Cornine to rephrase the question. Commissioner Cornine asked if everyone currently hired as an employee meets this standard. Chief DiGiorgio reported that our FF/EMTs currently meet that standard. Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board did not get the whole story with the answer to that question. Commissioner Cornine asked if all the FF/EMTs had FF2. Commissioner Waldron confirmed that all FF/EMTs had FF2 but at the level above that it might not be true. Commissioner Cornine asked if you could be above that level without that qualification. Commissioner Waldron confirmed that at that time it happened you could. Commissioner Cornine felt that a lot more discussion needs to be had and admitted that he does not understand some of it. Commissioner Cornine reported that he doesn't have any problems with it and if the Board wants to set the bar high it should set the bar high. Commissioner DeSimone asked for clarification that making FF2 the standard would look better when applying for grants. Commissioner Cornine reported that when you fill out a grant for there is a question on about what your department is doing to get everyone to the level of FF2 so being able to answer that the minimum standard is FF2 sounds good but hiring 1 or 2 people every 10-15 years is not going to turn your department into a FF2 department. Commissioner Cornine felt that the grant question included volunteers as well. Commissioner Cornine felt that if you are going to qualify for the grant they want to be sure that the department is working hard. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the Board wanted to go with the FF1 requirement. Commissioner Cornine reported that he yields to the Chief's discretion to have the force he needs with the skills that he wants and he is in support of that. Commissioner DeSimone reiterated that she does not want to see the Board flip flopping. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he felt that the job description should be amended to require FF2 as the standard. Commissioner Waldron noted that there was a problem with the numbering sequence within the job description. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would ask Administrator Schutz to ensure that the numbering sequence is correct after the Board approved the job description. The Board and Chief discussed the requirements for entry level 1st responders, incident management certification, and fire officer certification. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that all those in these positions have the needed certifications. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the Board was okay with

the modifications that Chief DiGiorgio is proposing for the FF/EMT job description including the FF2 requirement. The Board was good with the job description. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will forward the job description to Administrator Schultz so he can clean up the numbering system and prepare a resolution.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has 2 resume packets for the open lieutenant position. Commissioner DeSimone asked for clarification on when the application window closes. Administrator Schultz reported that the application window closes on April 18. Commissioner Waldron indicated that there will be more discussion under the Personnel Committee report or Old Business on this.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if anyone had any questions for Chief DiGiorgio. Commissioner Waldron asked if the 3 hours of overtime listed in his report for the last payroll was for him personally or all personnel. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the 3 hours was for all personnel and noted that he is not eligible for overtime. Commissioner Waldron commended Lt. Belott on a great job.

Commissioner DeSimone noted that the painting is moving along and they are doing a good job. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that it is moving along and they are doing a great job. Chief DiGiorgio reported that FF Martin and FF Gilson were trying to paint today but had multiple back to back calls.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if anyone had any other questions for Chief DiGiorgio. There were no questions.

EMS: Commissioner O'Hare reported that he has seen the Narcan protocols and that Narcan is now on the ambulances. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he would like to follow up on getting protocols for aspirin, albuterol, and CPAP by the end of the year. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that this was the direction he was taking with competencies and medical director approval. Commissioner O'Hare felt that if the District targets one a quarter, all will be in place by the end of the year. Chief DiGiorgio felt that at least 2 are reachable items and he would talk offline about the need to value regarding CPAP. Commissioner Cornine asked if there was something out there where Narcan needs to be left behind. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it has not been officially pushed down to the BLS level but there is some conversation that it needs to be done with PD and there is a whole bunch of different parameters. Chief DiGiorgio noted that commissioner Cornine was referring to was if Narcan is administered on the scene and the patient

refuses medical attention and transport, that a second Narcan must be left behind in case the person relapses. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this would cause the District to maintain an additional supply. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the question of who this relates to, police or EMS, is being looked into. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the Narcan has been used since it has been on the ambulances. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it has not been used. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the police have it too and the reason that we pushed to have it on the ambulances was for the few times that the police were not on scene or had limited supply. Commissioner Waldron noted that it was also in case a person relapsed during transport.

Chief DiGiorgio felt that another Revenue Guard Zoom session would be a good idea to ensure that the positive trend in EMS revenue continues. Commissioner O'Hare agreed and asked Administrator Schultz to send out an email to set up a meeting.

BUDGET: Nothing to report.

PERSONNEL: Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board has received 7 applications for the Per Diem position plus an 8th this evening. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board will have to decide when to do interviews unless the Board wanted to review all the applications first. Commissioner DeSimone thought Administrator Schultz vets the applications. Administrator Schultz reported that 3 applicants were questionable and he reached out to them for clarification. Administrator Schultz reported that 7 of the applicants meet minimum requirements and there is a question on residency for the 8th. Commissioner DeSimone asked if any of the applicants had applied before. Administrator Schultz reported that 1 individual had applied before but was not interviewed. Administrator Schultz reported that the application window closes on April 11. Commissioner DeSimone reported that Chief DiGiorgio will decide who is on the interview panel and then Administrator Schultz can schedule the interviews over a couple nights.

Commissioner Waldron asked if the Board wanted to go over a FLMA that a member is requesting. Administrator Schultz reported that a member is requesting NJ Leave and he and Commissioner DeSimone are getting everything together for this because as a governmental agency we are required to provide

leave. Administrator Schultz reported that there are a lot of ins and outs on this but the information has been gathered and the applications are ready.

Administrator Schultz reported that the Board is notified of the request for a leave and there are consecutive leaves and sporadic leaves requiring 15 days' notice to the District. Administrator Schultz reported that leave is without pay but there is insurance through the State of New Jersey. Administrator Schultz reported that he will work with the individual to get the paperwork submitted.

Administrator Schultz reported that he has asked the payroll company about LTD insurance to ensure everyone is covered for that. Commissioner DeSimone reported that LTD is usually an extra benefit that the employee would pay if they wanted coverage. Administrator Schultz reported that the Board would have to decide on whether to offer the benefit. Chief DiGiorgio asked the time frame for short term disability versus long term disability. Commissioner DeSimone reported that short term disability runs for 6 months or 26 weeks while long term disability would kick in after 6 months if the person had the benefit.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that LTD continues until age 65, a person gets better, or a person dies. Commissioner DeSimone suggested asking Mr. Siino for some information. Chief DiGiorgio felt that LTD would be non-work related because otherwise it would be covered under workers compensation insurance and VFIS. Administrator Schultz reported that a long-term illness would qualify and felt that some research should be done on it.

Commissioner Waldron reported that the other 2 things under Personnel will be heard under Old Business.

NEGOTIATIONS: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Commissioner DeSimone reported that there will be a meeting on Monday, April 11 at the firehouse.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Commissioner O'Hare reported that the Board has received a contract from the landscaper which will be signed tonight and start in about a week. Administrator Schultz asked for a motion on the contract. Commissioner O'Hare made a motion to accept the landscaper contract, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner O'Hare reported that the hallways are being painted and the kitchen will be worked on after the hallway painting is complete. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the kitchen ceiling is leaking again. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it only leaks during heavy rain and he is looking into how to fix it.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that E34 was involved in a fender bender on Rt. 24 that removed the rear bumper but it has been fixed.

Commissioner O'Hare asked if all 3 ambulances were up and running now. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that they were and the rotations will start on Monday.

INSURANCE: Commissioner O'Hare reported that the District is still looking for a new Workers Comp provider.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

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

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that he will defer to Commissioner Cornine since he was not at the last meeting. Commissioner Cornine reported that the consolidation Committee met this week and there are some actionable items that the Chiefs have been working on that are still in progress. Commissioner Cornine reported that the Chiefs are working on budgets, identifying the differences between the two Districts, what we pay versus what they pay, what we offer versus what they offer, how each District handles certain things, etc. Commissioner Cornine reported that an operational plan and financial plan are being worked on. Commissioner Cornine reported that former Chief Davidson plans to meet with the stakeholders this month. Commissioner Cornine reported that there is a lot of research being done right now and then the committee will have to review it and discuss the findings.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that as far District 3 Planning goes, the structural engineer report should be ready by mid-April but we do know that we cannot put a second floor over the truck bay or the section of the building where the Commissioners Room is located. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the committee is therefore looking at plans to expand the building.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Commissioner O'Hare reported that the District has a bunch of boxes ready to go and he will talk to Administrator Schultz to see if we can get them out of here.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner Cornine asked if The 200 Club Award Dinner seats had been purchased. Commissioner Waldron reported that the board purchased 10 and filled 6. The bookkeeper reported that the check was included in those being signed tonight and that the invoice was only for the 6 seats that the board was able to fill.

Chief DiGiorgio asked if the rental check for the Exempts had been cut. The bookkeeper confirmed that it had.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that the only old business notes that she had was to discuss the EMS salary guideline that is a resolution before the board tonight.

Commissioner Waldron reported that in reference to the lieutenant promotion, Chief DiGiorgio was going to put out the job/test notice with FF1 requirement and it was picked up that it should be FF2. Commissioner Waldron reported that the correction was made and the notice was put out but Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board acted in haste. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board made this change right before the notice was put out and he felt that to put a change out 24 hours before a notice is posted is unfair. Commissioner Waldron felt that if the Board knew in advance that they were going to make a promotion, the requirements should have been posted 6-8 months prior. Commissioner Waldron reported that not all the members are now qualified and he feels that the Board did not give the members enough notice to allow them to meet the requirements. Commissioner Waldron reported that there are a couple of areas where members are deficient in certifications or they have the class but do not have the certifications to prove it. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would like to see the Board adhere to past practice and allow all those who want the test and have enough years to take the test. Commissioner Waldron felt that if one of these individuals becomes the successful candidate, the Board should give them 1 year to receive their certification. Commissioner Waldron noted that it has been done 3-4 times in the past. Commissioner Waldron felt that in the

future if the board knows that a promotion will be offered in the future it should give 6-8 months' notice about it and the requirements for it. Commissioner Waldron asked if Chief DiGiorgio had any comments on this. Chief DiGiorgio reported that his comments were addressed to the Personnel Committee and he has nothing further to say. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has received and vetted 2 successful at this juncture and the Board the ultimate decision to make. Commissioner DeSimone felt that anyone can apply for a position even if they do not have all the requirements so people should not hesitate to apply if they are interested. Commissioner Waldron noted that timeframe that has been given as a hire date, the applicants would not have enough time to get the qualifications. Commissioner DeSimone asked for clarification that this is where past practices would come in to allow them time to meet the qualifications. Commissioner Waldron noted that in the past even new hires were brought on with the understanding that if they did not get the qualifications within a certain timeframe they would be out of a job. Commissioner O'Hare felt that if an individual is looking to get promoted in any agency or organization they need to have themselves in line for the promotion by making sure they meet the qualifications. Commissioner Waldron reported that the individual was in line to be promoted but the night before the notice was posted the Board changed the qualifications to FF2. Commissioner O'Hare felt that since no one knew that the position was going to be posted, the members would not have known what the qualifications were going to be so they should not be surprised that there were higher qualifications for a promotion. Commissioner Cornine reported that if he were an employee he would look at what the qualifications were for the last person that was promoted and if there was nothing to tell me otherwise, those are the qualifications I would look to have. Commissioner Cornine reported that if he had the qualifications changed the day before the job notice was posted he would probably look to file a lawsuit. Commissioner Cornine felt it would be hard to argue that the action was not discriminatory. Commissioner O'Hare felt that it was not like the Board said tomorrow we will post notice and let's change the requirements tonight. Commissioner Cornine reported that the Board had very good knowledge that we would be pushing for a lieutenant in the near future. Commissioner O'Hare felt that if the notice is posted as requiring certain credentials and someone applies without those credentials, they should not be eligible. Commissioner O'Hare felt that the applicants that do meet the criteria

would look at the applicants that do not meet the criteria and feel it is not fair that they made it into the pool without having the criteria. Commissioner Waldron reported that up until 24 hours before the notice was posted this individual met the criteria and the Board changed the game. Commissioner Waldron felt that if the Board announced 6 months ago that sometime in 2022 the board will fill the lieutenant position and this is what will be required it gives the person time to get the requirements. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board has now told the person that FF2 is now required and this position will be filled before the next FF2 class has even started. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board could decide they do not like a specific person and change the requirements so they are not eligible. Commissioner Waldron noted that is why Commissioner Cornine stated it could open the District up for lawsuits. Commissioner Cornine reported that he did not know if the Board is there in being negligent but it is bad practice. Commissioner Cornine reiterated what he said about setting the bar lower to attract a larger pool of applicants and felt that if certain applicants come in with more stuff, they are more likely to get the job. Commissioner Cornine felt that the Board should go with the minimum State requirements are needed and then there are desirables that should be required within a year. Commissioner Cornine noted that the Board could say that candidates need to have everything but should not say it the night before a posting. Commissioner Cornine felt that if the change exempted 40 people it might be acceptable to limit the pool but if the change only exempts 1 or 2 it might have been discriminatory. Commissioner Waldron noted that perception is everything. Commissioner Cornine felt that the change was not made to be discriminatory but could be viewed that way. Commissioner Cornine felt that it makes sense to have FF2 to get in and that good job descriptions and policies would have fixed this. Commissioner Cornine felt that the board should not be changing anything attached to job descriptions and policies on the fly, it should be done, adopted by resolution, and sealed forever. Commissioner Waldron made a motion that the Board go through with the requirements as stated but must be met within the 1st year if that person is a successful candidate. Commissioner Cornine asked if the District was required to pay for all training. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the district pays for all required training so if this is a requirement then the District would pay. Chief DiGiorgio noted that in this case the District would be paying for the class and since scheduling is his prerogative, he would

place the person on a training shift and work Monday through Friday if they were attending FF2 class during the weekdays. Chief DiGiorgio reported that if the person was attending class 3 nights a week for 20 weeks then the district would have to pay overtime if it is outside the shift schedule. Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked for clarification that we do not have a staffing problem now that would make that an issue. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the district would have a staffing problem every time that person is going out to train. Commissioner DeSimone felt that this goes back to performance appraisals and discussing their developmental goals. Commissioner DeSimone felt that even though the ownership is on the employee, the supervisor should encourage the employee to get training to progress to the next level. Commissioner Desimone reported that setting goals for a developmental plan is what performance appraisals are all about. Commissioner Cornine felt that it seems like what is being said is that if you become a career firefighter here it is extremely difficult to get trained and you cannot take FF2 once you get hired because it is hard to schedule for anyone that came on as a new hire or anyone who is promoted because overtime would need to be paid. Commissioner Cornine asked how anyone who got on the job before able to do it. Chief DiGiorgio reported that one of the last individuals who took FF2 did it on his own time and just asked that he could use his PTO to take time off when class was held during his shift. Commissioner Desimone felt that training is part of your job and the District should be paying for the training since it gets them skills that they bring back to their job. Commissioner DeSimone could see not paying for training for something that has nothing to do with EMS or fire, they could take it on their own time. Commissioner Cornine reported that FF2 is one thing but there are multiple levels to this because there are so many classes out there and was certain that the District is paying for the class but it is a matter of whether the District is paying your salary while you take the class and allow you to take it on work time. Commissioner Cornine reported that this should be a contractual thing but could not recall it specifically said when he reviewed the contract. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he uses a training request form so that the person knows what to expect before signing up for a class. Chief DiGiorgio noted that there are certain classes that the Board has been adamant about not paying for, such as fire inspector class, because the District does not need any more inspectors. Chief DiGiorgio noted that some people have gone to the classes on their own time. Commissioner Desimone felt that this was

reasonable since it is not required for their job to be a fire inspector and she could see them going on their own time. Commissioner O'Hare felt this was an example of someone bettering themselves and putting themselves in position for a promotion when one comes along. Commissioner O'Hare gives them credit for that even though they may not benefit from the training now it shows self-initiative looking to enhance their education. Commissioner Desimone felt that it was also the supervisor's responsibility to encourage the individual to better themselves. Commissioner Waldron reported that he lost his EMT certification one time because the County would not pay him to go to class. Commissioner Waldron reported that he got a new Chief to agree that if he was working, he went to class on their time, and if he was not working, he went on his time. Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked if the Board would be enacting FF2 for just officers or all firefighters. Commissioner Desimone believed it was just for fire officers. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board made the change that you needed to be FF2 to become an officer because the Board is requiring new firefighters to have FF2 so the officers should have FF2 as a minimum requirement. Commissioner Waldron reported that the change was made the night before the job notice was posted and that is why this time he would like to see the Board go with past practice. Commissioner Waldron noted that the person would have a 33% chance of being the successful candidate. Commissioner Waldron reported that it may mean nothing but if they are successful they would have 1 year to fulfill that 1 requirement which has been done in the past. Commissioner Cornine asked if the contract spoke to training. Commissioner Waldron reported that all it said was that if a person went over their allotted time due to training, they would get time and a half. Commissioner Waldron noted that there is an educational section in the contract that he did not get to yet. Commissioner Cornine noted that it would take 3 40-hour weeks to take the FF2 class. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the district would need to ask the Academy to allow someone to take just FF2 during the day since it is usually tied to FF1. Commissioner Desimone noted that there would be a void in the schedule 40 hours a week for 3 weeks during the training. Commissioner Cornine reported that if they went at night there would be a void for 4 hours twice a week for many more weeks. Chief DiGiorgio noted that there would not be a void if they were not working that night and reported that they would not be working both days so there would be 4 hours overtime on one of the days. Commissioner DeSimone

agreed with Commissioner Waldron to allow the individual to apply and if the person is a successful candidate they will a year to obtain whatever certification they are lacking. Commissioner Cornine asked how the change to FF2 was enacted since he was absent from the meeting. Administrator Schultz reported that it was a discussion and a motion to post. Commissioner Cornine felt the Boars should just make a motion to amend it and move on. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to go with past practice and allow all candidates to take the test and if the successful candidate does not have one of the requirements they have 1 year to get it. Commissioner O'Hare pointed out that there is no test, just interviews. Commissioner Waldron felt that if someone is being asked questions on how to handle certain fire or EMS situations, it could be considered a test. Commissioner Waldron reported that in addition to the interviews there is a practical component. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that there are 2 practical components. Commissioner Cornine seconded the motion. Chief DiGiorgio asked for clarification that it would be 1 year from the date of appointment that they would need to obtain certification. Commissioner Waldron confirmed this. Chief DiGiorgio asked if this would be true for any of the required requisites. Commissioner Cornine felt it should only be for the requisites that the Board recently changed. Commissioner Waldron confirmed that it would only be for the FF2 requirement that the Board changed the night before posting the job notice. Chief DiGiorgio asked if the Board would keep the same closing date for applications or if the job would be announced again. The Board said that he closing date would still be April 18. Commissioner DeSimone asked who were in favor of the motion. Commissioners Cornine, DeSimone, Dugan Jr., and Waldron were in favor. Commissioner O'Hare was opposed.

Commissioner Waldron reported that there will be a money saving by not promoting a Captain that had been budgeted for half a year and the District may look at hiring 1 or 2 more FF/EMTs. Commissioner Waldron reported that hiring 2 FF/EMTs there would be a float that would help cover Sundays. Commissioner Waldron asked Administrator Schultz to explain the financial end of this. Administrator Schultz reported that depending on who is promoted it would cost an additional \$8000 to \$19000 to fund an additional FF/EMT for the year that gets offset by the savings from promoting a lieutenant instead of a captain. Administrator Schultz reported that the net cost if the District brought someone on in October would be about \$9000. Administrator Schultz reported that the job

would be announced in July, the applications would be due in August, which would allow sufficient time for an October appointment. Commissioner Waldron reported that the District would save \$55000 half year captains salary, then you would need to pay up to \$19000 more to the lieutenant for half a year. Commissioner Waldron reported that there would be more savings by not paying the FF/EMT salary for the individual promoted to lieutenant. Administrator Schultz handed out a schedule of the proposed staffing amendments. Administrator Schultz outlined the staffing amendments on the schedule and reported that the impact on the budget this year will be nominal. Administrator Schultz reported that he is still working out what the impact will be on the budget next year and said that there are a lot of variables which need to be clarified to make sure that this would not put the District in financial trouble. Administrator Schultz noted that the District has staffed up already and seen the consequential effect of overtime going down. Administrator Schultz reported that the proposed hiring timeframe give the District enough time to really look at all the dynamics involved and to solidify the 2023 impact. Commissioner Waldron noted that the plan was to hire from within first and noted that the individual would only get a small raise initially but the District would get an extra 384 hours a year from them. Commissioner Waldron noted that this would cover the cost but if no candidates from within are successful and the District has to go outside, it would cost more. Administrator Schultz felt that once the upcoming promotion is made the District can get a better feel for the financial impact of this plan. Commissioner DeSimone asked if by the end of the plan is to hire 1 or 2 FF/EMTs. Commissioner Waldron felt it was up for discussion. Administrator Schultz reported that the decision has to wait until after the lieutenant promotion to make that decision and noted that this should also be looked at to see the impact on the potential consolidation. Commissioner DeSimone wondered if there was the possibility of staff reduction if there is a consolidation. Commissioner Cornine reported that the strategic fire plan for consolidation will address how to keep the service as good or better and how will it be funded. Commissioner Cornine reported that what staffing will look like in a single District will have to be worked out between the 2 Chiefs. Commissioner Waldron asked if there would be any guarantee that those currently employed will still have jobs. Commissioner Cornine reported that he did not have an answer to that but his inkling is that there would be no reduction in jobs. Commissioner Cornine reported that once

the plans are developed they will be given to both Boards to review but right now the plans are not completed. Chief DiGiorgio reported that making the plans will address is consolidation financially prudent for the taxpayers and will the services be equal to or better than what we currently have. Chief DiGiorgio reported that if the budgets balance out and the service continues to be at the current level or better with an improved tax rate cost to the taxpayer he sees the consolidation moving forward. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the goal was to offer coverage 24/7 including holidays so he did not see any staff reduction would occur.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that she and Commissioner O'Hare met with President Hark Jr. to go over the survey responses and they were forwarded to Chief DiGiorgio. President Hark Jr. clarified that he sent his responses at 2 A.M. today. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has not updated his master survey response file with President Hark Jr.'s responses yet but once he does he will send out the updated document.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that if the Board is raising the requirement for paid firefighters to FF2 then it should be raised for the volunteers also. Commissioner Cornine wondered if the Board was going to cap Pay per Call it could uncap it for anyone with FF2 certification and tie whatever your volunteer incentive to whatever skills you bring to the table. Commissioner Dugan Jr. noted that if the Board is going to budget less for Pay per Call in the future no one would really benefit from it. Commissioner Waldron asked for clarification that there would be 2 different pay scales, you get this much per call if you have FF1 and this much per call if you have FF2. Commissioner Cornine confirmed that this is what he was talking about and reported that he would much rather see that happen than to make FF2 mandatory. Commissioner Cornine reported that the whole FF2 discussion stems from the District trying to look good when applying for grants and felt that it would be better to incentivize the members rather than require higher certifications. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District has been successful in getting 2 grants recently. Chief DiGiorgio reported that going to the County Chiefs meetings over the last 7 years, they are trying every which way to reduce the qualifications that people need in the departments because no one can attract and retain their volunteers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the County Chiefs are trying to reduce the requirements in FF1 and felt that if the Board requires FF2 for volunteers it will be even harder to get volunteers.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that the same logic could be applied to paid members because the requirement would reduce the pool for paid members. Commissioner Waldron felt that a career individual would be willing to accept the requirement but that a volunteer would not. Commissioner Cornine felt that the jobs that the volunteer firemen perform do not require FF2 skills and that not every position on the fire ground needs a FF2 level firefighter. Commissioner Cornine reported that he is against raising the bar that high but would be 150% behind incentivizing members to get FF2. President Hark Jr. reported that the survey results provided a lot of feedback about transparency and asked the Board if they are considering capping Pay per Call they could come to a Fire Co. meeting to let the members know and maybe consider putting it into effect next year. Commissioner Cornine reported that he was behind any cap going into effect for 2023 and noted that members would be told and if they had an issue then the floor should be packed at the next Board meeting so it can be discussed. Commissioner O'Hare reported that the Liaisons to the Volunteers can bring it to the floor at the Fire Co. Meeting on Monday night. Chief DiGiorgio reported that if the Board is going to try and incentivize members to get FF2 certification perhaps the Board could set a stipend for members who get FF2 and the stipend would be taken off the top of the Pay per Call pot just like the Officers stipends. Commissioner Waldron wondered how anyone who gets FF2 and a stipend this year is incentivized next year. Commissioner Waldron asked if someone like him who already has FF2 would get the stipend. Commissioner Cornine felt that anyone with FF2 would get the stipend. Chief DiGiorgio clarified that he had intended the stipend to incentivize members to get FF2 and it would be a one-time stipend. Commissioner Cornine felt it should be an annual stipend and if FF2 is that desirous to the District it should be an easy sell. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the reason that he is bringing this up is that he does not see how you can hold your paid members to a different standard than your volunteers for essentially the same job. Commissioner Cornine reported that one could draw differences and they are not being treated unfairly. Commissioner Cornine reported that it is a small group of people so the Board could set the bar pretty high for the paid positions. Commissioner Cornine reported that career firefighters are exempt from the State requirements for being an officer but it is a requirement for a volunteer. President Hark Jr. felt that it was fine to incentivize volunteers to get FF2 but to require it to come in the door would be a mistake

given that we are already limited on volunteers and to require FF2 would make it very hard to recruit. Commissioner DeSimone agreed that coming in as a volunteer firefighter having FF1 would be sufficient and that there could be stipend and Pay per Call incentives to come out on calls and to get FF2. Chief DiGiorgio noted that this is the same as the volunteer fire officers needing additional training and are getting an officer stipend as an incentive to move up the ranks. Commissioner Waldron liked the idea of a stipend to get FF2 but felt that Pay per Call should also have a scaled per call rate for FF1 and FF2. Commissioner Cornine felt he wanted to do some homework on how Pay per Call works before discussing this further. Commissioner Waldron thought the Board should think about it and discuss further at the next meeting.

REMINDERS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 7:00 P.M at the firehouse.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Monday, June 2, 2022 at the Cedar Knolls Fire House at 6:30 P.M.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: President Hark Jr. reported that Chief DiGiorgio and Asst. Chief Martin informed him that the Morris County EMS Alliance is doing a recruitment and retention seminar at the Denville Fire Department on a Saturday in June. President Hark Jr. reported that it is \$150 per person and he was wondering if someone from the Board would be interested in attending. Commissioner Waldron asked for the date. President Hark Jr. reported that the seminar was on June 4. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the event is being hosted by Denville Fire Department and they are bringing an outside vendor in to do the all-day seminar. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Morris County EMS Alliance pushed out the notice. Commissioner Cornine asked Chief DiGiorgio if he was aware of anyone scheduled to attend. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he plans on attending and it was pushed out which was how Asst. Chief Martin knew about it. President Hark Jr. indicated that he would also be attending. Commissioner Cornine asked if the training budget pays for members to attend. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that it would.

Commissioner Waldron reported that Chief DiGiorgio, Fire Co. Member Keyser, President Hark Jr., and he met last night to discuss Inspection Night.

Commissioner Waldron reported that a fair amount of money is spent on a night that does not seem to draw a big interest from the members. Commissioner Waldron reported that as the group discussed the event they started to feel that maybe this is something that should not be done anymore. Commissioner Waldron reported that the awards can be done at the Dinner Dance which may help bring more people to the Dinner Dance. Commissioner Waldron reported that a big part of Inspection Night was to perform an annual equipment maintenance and apparatus cleaning but found that for the last couple years it has been the career staff doing it because the volunteers are not coming down to help out. Commissioner Waldron felt that Chief DiGiorgio could just as easily tell the career staff that during this one- or two-week period we need to cleaning done. Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board is paying for a company to come down and throw a barbecue that is not drawing people. Commissioner Waldron reported that President Hark Jr. is going to bring it up at the Fire Co. meeting on Monday. President Hark Jr. reported that he plans is to bring it up on Monday as an option but also suggest that the awards can be done at the Dinner Dance and see if there is something that the members would like to do in place of Inspection Night. President Hark Jr. felt it would be better to ask the membership what they are interested in as opposed planning an Inspection Night which only draws 10 people. Commissioner Cornine felt it was important to get input from the membership for an event that would sponsor camaraderie. Commissioner Cornine reported that he has seen attendance for a particular event at a department taper off after a few years and then increase again when the event was changed to a different thing. Commissioner Cornine felt that changing things is not necessarily a bad thing. Commissioner O'Hare agreed that an alternate function may be the way to go.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if there was any other Public Participation. There was none.

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 22-04-07-33 adopting the amended EMS Salary Guideline. Administrator Schultz reported that this represents our commitment to the EMTs that the District presented at the end of last year for the 2022 budget with the realignment of scheduling and staffing. Administrator Schultz reported that the rates of pay for Part-Time and Per Diem EMTs were

calculated to be a little more commensurate with the duties they perform and in line with what other agencies are paying. Administrator Schultz reported that the fulltime EMT pay schedule expired this year so they are also being adjusted for this year through 2024. Administrator Schultz noted that this resolution will also move all current EMT employee's anniversary date to January 1 since this is retroactive to January 1. Commissioner Cornine made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor. Commissioner Waldron abstained.

Commissioner DeSimone felt it was important to do performance reviews for every employee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Board will need to approve a shortened performance review form.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Commissioner O'Hare, seconded by Commissioner Waldron, to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Steven Cornine, Secretary