

July 21, 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 July 21, 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 Mary Lou DeSimone, Michael Dugan Jr., Robert O'Hare, and Shawn Waldron were present. Commissioner Steven Cornine was absent.

Chief DiGiorgio, Fire Co. President James Hark Jr., Former Chief Davidson, Lt. Belott, FF Ujfalussy, FF Gilson, FF Martin, and Michael Dugan Sr. were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the June 16, 2022 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Waldron seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER:

Commissioner Waldron reported that the District is still operating within budget. Commissioner Waldron reported that he does want to spend some money but he will discuss it under New Business.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

CHIEF'S REPORT: Chief DiGiorgio distributed his Bi-Monthly report on July 13, 2022 Chief DiGiorgio reported that he submitted Lt. Belott's report and FF Sulpy's

EMS report as he received them. Chief DiGiorgio had the following additions to his report.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke with Commissioner Waldron regarding the uniform policy, specifically the wearing of shorts, and the issue has been addressed.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the 200 Club of Morris County is having a 1st Responder Day on September 25, 2022 at Whippany Park High School. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the 200 Club has asked the District to publicize the event which is open to all of Morris County 1st responders. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there will be a lot of festivities that day and the District should try to get as many people to attend as possible. Chief DiGiorgio felt that it would be a good opportunity for a recruitment drive.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District has two other recruitment opportunities coming up in the next month or so. Chief DiGiorgio felt that the District should have recruitment tables at the CKFD Finger Food Fundraiser at the end of August and Hanover Township Day in September. Chief DiGiorgio asked the Board to think about what kind of giveaways the District should get for the events and he would look to put together a recruitment team along with flyers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this would allow the Board to make a decision on how to handle the recruitment opportunities at the next meeting. Commissioner DeSimone felt that it does not give much time to prepare if the Board waited until the next meeting to make decisions. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Township has already asked for a donation from the District towards the trackless train at Hanover Township Day. Commissioner Waldron noted that the District has donated in the past and that tables will be provided to the District to hold giveaways and recruitment flyers. Commissioner DeSimone felt that the District should have a banner and order giveaways soon. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would look in the closet to see what was already on hand.

Chief DiGiorgio concluded his report. Commissioner DeSimone asked if anyone had questions for Chief DiGiorgio.

Commissioner Waldron asked Chief DiGiorgio to clarify the uniform replacement policy with his officers because some members have torn their uniforms on duty

and were told they could not be replaced. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would speak to the officers about the policy.

Commissioner Waldron reported that fire crews are responsible for Sunday coverage and there have been 6 missed calls on Sundays recently. Commissioner Waldron reported that the policy used to state that if a member cannot make his crew, the member is supposed to look for coverage and this is obviously not being done. Commissioner Waldron reported that on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday there is one FF/EMT on the overnight because there are crews on those nights. Commissioner Waldron felt that if the crews are not coming out maybe the District should not drop down to one FF/EMT on those nights.

Commissioner Waldron noted that several times the schedule has shown only one FF/EMT on Thursday, Friday and Saturday night and he thought the district agreed not to do that. Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board needs to discuss this and see if there is a way to put 2 FF/EMTs on every overnight because the volunteers are not coming out. Chief DiGiorgio asked for clarification that the concern is volunteer members obtaining coverage and maintaining 2 FF/EMTs on the overnights. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will push out the message to the volunteers about getting coverage at next week's Officers Meeting. Chief DiGiorgio asked the Board about starting the process to hire another FF/EMT as discussed in the Spring. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he will have something for the first meeting in August so that the recruiting process can be started. Chief DiGiorgio felt that the reason that the overnights go down is because of vacations this time of year. Commissioner Waldron reported that the vacant Lieutenant position, the MOA, and the hiring of a new FF/EMT need to be discussed together because they tie into each other.

EMS: Nothing to report.

BUDGET: Nothing to report.

PERSONNEL: Nothing to report.

NEGOTIATIONS: Commissioner Waldron reported that the Board had an item to discuss in closed session.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Commissioner Waldron reported that all was good with the volunteers.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Commissioner Waldron reported that the antenna was put back on the firehouse today. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the transmission is clearer and there are full bars on the scanner. Commissioner Waldron noted that the ladder truck was used to get the contractor to the chimney. Commissioner Waldron reported that he took some pictures of numerous cracks in the new cement chimney cap while he was up there. Commissioner Waldron reported that he has been in touch with the contractor to see what can be done about it. Commissioner O'Hare noted that the good news was that there have been no leaks so far with all the heavy rain that we have had so once the chimney cap gets sealed the District should be able to proceed with fixing up the kitchen.

Commissioner Waldron reported that the ladder bay drains were cleaned with the help of the DPW and Supt. Foran.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke with Morris Township Fire Chief Nunn about being invited to a meeting about attempting a shared service agreement. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Commissioner Waldron and Lt. Belott will be attending the meeting on Monday in Morris Township. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the goal was to have a maintenance division and/or a vendor where all parties in the agreement could utilize maintenance services at one location.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that the decals have been put on Car 37 but they are different from the old ones. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the new decals match what are on the new ambulance. Commissioner DeSimone felt that the vehicles should have Cedar Knolls Fire Department on them. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would talk to Chief DiGiorgio about the design of the CKFD decals. Commissioner Waldron asked Chief DiGiorgio to find out if the cars needed to have reflective trim since they went on the highway.

INSURANCE: Commissioner O'Hare reported that he and Administrator Schultz have working on securing another Workmen's Comp carrier through the assigned risk pool. Commissioner O'Hare reported that there seemed to be a snag with paying by check. The bookkeeper reported that a check has been cut for signature tonight because the check needs to be deposited by July 25 to ensure coverage by July 31. The bookkeeper noted that the District has not yet been

assigned a Workers Comp carrier. Commissioner O'Hare reported that Administrator Schultz worked diligently with the Treasurer and himself to trim the roster for Workers Comp insurance so while the premium is going up it is not going up as much as initially thought. Commissioner Waldron felt that Administrator Schultz saved the District about \$17,000.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Up to date.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the Consolidation Committee would be meeting with Mr. Braslow at the next scheduled committee meeting. Commissioner Dugan Jr. noted that there needs to be a motion for a special meeting for both Boards to meet. Commissioner Waldron asked if both Boards would be meeting with Mr. Braslow. Commissioner Dugan Jr. thought that Mr. Braslow was only meeting with the Consolidation Committee. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the request was for Mr. Braslow to meet at a Joint Board meeting on August 8. Commissioner Waldron asked if this would be an open meeting. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed that technically it would be an open meeting and he thought it would start at 8 pm but would check on the time. Commissioner O'Hare asked for clarification that the meeting would be a Joint Board meeting that was open to the public. Commissioner Dugan Jr. confirmed this. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this was a recommendation from Mr. Braslow so that he could educate both Boards on where we are, what the thought process is, and answer any questions that the Boards may have. Commissioner O'Hare made a motion to hold a Special Joint Meeting on August 8, seconded by commissioner Waldron. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent.

Commissioner Waldron read the following statement. Commissioner Waldron, Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, President Hark Jr., former Chief Davison, Lt. Belott, and Mr. Dugan Sr. met on July 19, 2022 to discuss the Districts intent with the current building moving forward. After reviewing the structural engineers report and again some lengthy conversations the consensus of all in attendance was that we reach out to some architectural firms, with the Boards approval, and get their opinion on what they feel is the best option. That being do we try to make this building structurally safe to add on to or refurbish; do we

knock this building down and rebuild on its footprint; or do we seek another piece of property somewhere and rebuild. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Planning Committee is looking for some professional help in deciding which way to go with the building. Commissioner Waldron felt that no one on the committee has enough knowledge to make the decision. Commissioner O'Hare noted that the structural engineers report said that the building was not structurally sound for expanding up. Commissioner Waldron clarified that the report stated that we could not put anything on top of this section of the building or the truck bay. Commissioner Waldron felt there were too many options and the committee needs help identifying the best ones. Commissioner Waldron asked President Hark Jr. if the committee is asking for a specific dollar amount in the motion to approve hiring an architectural firm. President Hark Jr. reported that no specific amount is needed because Administrator Schultz confirmed that there is still money in the Professional Services budget. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to authorize the Planning Committee to spend funds on an architectural firm to start the process of getting a professional opinion on the building options. Commissioner O'Hare seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Commissioner O'Hare reported that there has been incremental progress made but that the auditor, Ms. Lee, still cannot see our documents on the State site to sign off on the destruction.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner DeSimone noted that she saw that there was a deadline of August 4 to complete the EEO Training and asked how many members still have to complete it. Chief DiGiorgio reported that 5-6 people still have to complete the training.

Commissioner DeSimone asked whether the new hires have been given a 6-month performance review. Chief DiGiorgio reported that 6-month reviews were not normally done, only the probationary review at one year. Commissioner DeSimone thought that there was a 6-month review done recently. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it was an employer review. Commissioner Waldron reported that he discussed having an employer review with the new hires on their

6-month anniversary to ensure that no corrective action is needed. Chief DiGiorgio reported that this could be done if the Board wanted to start this process. Commissioner Waldron felt that this is what he had discussed with Chief DiGiorgio. Chief DiGiorgio asked to discuss this in closed session because it would be a change in what is currently done and a change in what our policies say.

Commissioner O'Hare reported that the Board received the draft Professional Standards Policy and Procedures document from Mr. Trimboli right before the last meeting and asked if everyone had read it and was willing to adopt it or if there were comments. Commissioner DeSimone reported that she had read it initially and recommended that the attorney review it because it would change how the District handles investigations or complaints. Commissioner DeSimone reported that her only concern was that the document said that the district had to have someone who is certified doing the investigations and she believed the District only had 2 certified investigators. Commissioner DeSimone felt that the Board should make sure that the 2 individuals are willing to perform investigations. Commissioner Waldron asked if his emailed questions had been answered. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he will have to go back to the email to see how they were answered. Commissioner Waldron wondered if there were different types of investigations for career staff versus volunteers. Commissioner Waldron noted that there may be 2 different types of investigations because the career staff have a collective bargaining agreement and the volunteers do not. Commissioner Waldron reported that in the police force investigation there are AG guidelines that prohibit the employer or employee from hiring outside investigators and wondered if this holds true for firefighters. Former Chief Davidson reported that historically there are no AG guidelines that apply to fire service. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the career staff CBA does have specific order on how grievances and discipline are determined while the policies and procedures manual has a different one for non-collective bargaining personnel. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the policies and procedures manual states that an appeal to a Board decision goes to the Chief who can uphold or overturn the Board decision and there is no appeal beyond that. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the desire to implement a Professional Standards Policy and Procedures was to ensure that all investigations are handled the same way. Commissioner DeSimone asked if Commissioner Cornine had provided any feedback. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he had not received any.

Commissioner DeSimone felt that the 2 certified investigators should be asked if they are comfortable performing the investigations. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he would follow up with commissioner Cornine and the 2 investigators. Former Chief Davidson recommended talking with the insurance company to make sure the investigators are covered in case they get sued based on an investigation. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the draft document says the investigators will be appointed by the Board.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the committee for the replacement of the ladder truck was put on hold because of planning committee discussions on bonding for the firehouse and consolidation discussions and asked at what point the Board is going to make the determination of whether the truck will be replaced.

Commissioner DeSimone did not feel that the Board should wait to make the decision. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that he had something pertaining to this to discuss in New Business.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that he did some asking around and thought of a different idea instead of replacing the ladder truck. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that the Board should purchase a rescue truck and another ambulance. Mr. Dugan Sr. asked if the ambulance would replace one of the current ambulances or add to the fleet. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the ambulance would be an addition. Chief DiGiorgio asked what the basis was for having a rescue truck as opposed to a ladder truck to serve the population of our District. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that with Whippany buying a ladder truck and the availability to get a ladder through mutual aid there would not be a need to have a ladder truck as much. Chief DiGiorgio asked if the individuals that Commissioner Dugan Jr. had asked were aware of the District ISO requirements and things like that. Chief DiGiorgio asked what purpose the rescue truck would serve. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the rescue truck would be used for rescues. Chief DiGiorgio acknowledged that it was a Board decision but felt that the District would be better served with a ladder truck. Chief DiGiorgio felt that the ladder truck could be outfitted to carry whatever rescue equipment was needed. Commissioner O'Hare reported that Whippany is getting a new ladder truck but the Township is growing and it would not be a bad idea to have 2 ladder trucks. Commissioner O'Hare reported that he would be in favor of refurbishing the existing truck as opposed to purchasing a whole new ladder. Commissioner

DeSimone agreed with Commissioner O'Hare. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that there would need to be a complete electrical restoration of the ladder truck in order to fix it properly. Former Chief Davidson felt that the District would take the ladder off the existing truck and put it on a new chassis. Former Chief Davidson reported that the Board would do a cost analysis of spending \$1 million to refurbish versus spending \$1.7 million to buy it brand new. Former Chief Davidson reported that Whippany is getting a straight stick ladder and felt that Hanover Township needs a bucket ladder to give you the most diverse response to a fire. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the District had gotten any quotes on refurbishing the ladder. Chief DiGiorgio reported that no refurbishment quotes were obtained. Chief DiGiorgio reported that based on the comments he will reach out to the committee to see if they are ready to reconvene and get the Board side by side comparisons of the costs of refurbishing versus buying new. President Hark Jr. felt that the committee should start meeting sooner rather than later because the Planning Committee was going to include the cost in the bonding proposal.

Commissioner Waldron reported that the 3rd floor kitchen needs a window air conditioner and asked the Board to put FF Gilson in charge of getting one that suits the room size. FF Gilson reported that he would get some quotes. Chief DiGiorgio recommended going to Lowes since we have a card.

Commissioner Waldron reported that there is a plaque in the hallway listing deceased members and the plaque states Fire Department and First Aid. Commissioner Waldron reported that originally all EMS members had to be volunteer firefighters but that changed back in the late 1970s or early 1980s. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would like to see the plaque updated to include all the names of the EMS only members who are deceased. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would speak to President Hark Jr. about going through records to get a chronological list of deceased members. President Hark Jr. noted that the other plaques in the hallway with Firefighter of the Year and EMT of the Year have not been updated since 2019. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would follow up on those.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Training Coordinator is doing a very good job of getting training scheduled ongoing and she would like to see the competency training brought back to Cedar Knolls versus going over to Par Troy.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the District Medical Director approved Par Troy to be the trainers and Par Troy invited us to participate with their competencies. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Dr. Gluckman approved the Par Troy training policies and he signs off on the competencies as well as the Chief of EMS in Parsippany. Commissioner DeSimone asked if there was any reason why someone here could not be signed off on because Lt. Belott is going to have difficulty scheduling to ensure coverage while staff is training at Par Troy. Chief DiGiorgio did not feel that it was that much of an inconvenience and it gives us multiple opportunities to participate with Par Troy. Chief DiGiorgio believes that it worked out very well last year. Commissioner DeSimone acknowledged that it went well last year but felt it would be good to have something in house working with our own people. Commissioner DeSimone noted that we respond to more EMS calls with Whippany than with Par Troy and it would be more convenient for our members to have it here. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Par Troy training program is established and we would need to build a program and get it approved in order to do it in house. Commissioner DeSimone felt that it should be looked into for next year, especially with the increase in staffing here. Commissioner DeSimone asked when Dr. Gluckman was going to do Narcan, CPAP, and albuterol training. Commissioner Waldron noted that the Narcan training is done. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he spoke to Dr. Gluckman and the aspirin and albuterol training will be incorporated in this year's competencies. Once everyone shows proficiency Dr. Gluckman will issue the prescriptions for both. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Par Troy competency training is being provided at no cost and the only thing we need to do is work out a schedule. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the Whippany EMTs are not under any medical direction nor are they under our direction so whatever they decide to do is up to them. Commissioner DeSimone asked for clarification that we allow them to go on EMS calls with no medical direction. Chief DiGiorgio reported that we do not allow them anything but District 2 allows them to go on medical calls as first responders. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the change in administrative code requires the Whippany EMTs to do patient care reports, which they do. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the report went to the State. Commissioner Waldron reported that Whippany does a patient care report covering the time they arrive on scene until the time the patient is handed over to us and they send that report to the State. Chief DiGiorgio reported that they do not use the same platform as we do but they do fill

out a patient report which is sent to the State. Commissioner O'Hare asked for the status of getting the free Narcan to leave with a patient. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he ordered 4 cases of 12 doses from the Department of Human Services. Chief DiGiorgio reported that we are waiting for the supply to come in.

Commissioner Waldron reported that he received a request from the Recreation Department for a donation for the Trackless Train for Hanover Township Day. Commissioner Waldron reported that the Recreation Department would set up a table for recruitment next to the train. Commissioner Waldron reported that in 2019 we gave them \$500 for a bounce house and in 2017 we gave them \$750 for the Trackless Train. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to donate \$600 for the trackless Train, seconded by Commissioner O'Hare. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent. President Hark Jr. reported that the Fire co. would also donate \$600.

REMINDERS:

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, August 4, 2022 at 7:00 P.M at the firehouse.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Monday, September 12, 2022 at the Whippany Fire House at 6:30 P.M.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Mr. Dugan Sr. felt that the organization needs to develop a mentoring program for new members. Mr. Dugan Sr. felt that when new members come in they just disappear and the next thing you know you are reading a resolution accepting their resignation. Mr. Dugan Sr. felt that if the District is going to go through the recruitment process there needs to something put in place so that someone, probably a career person, oversees them so the new member has a direct line of who to go to with questions. FF Martin reported that there is a "probie" book and a mentoring program that was in place but he cannot say if the current officers are following it. Mr. Dugan Sr. felt that any mentoring program has to be handled by the career staff because the volunteer crews are only scheduled from 10 pm to 6 am and no one is going to come down at 10 pm to do some training. Commissioner DeSimone asked whether there was an active Recruitment / Retention work group. President Hark Jr. reported that he has a group. Lt. Belott asked if the Board had a Recruitment / Retention Committee or discussions under another committee such as Personnel.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that there have been some discussions from the Personnel committee. Lt. Belott reported that he is willing to meet with any Board members who want to start a work group to develop a recruitment / retention program. Mr. Dugan Sr. reported that in the past volunteer recruitment was seen as the Fire Co. responsibility but felt that the Board should be involved. Commissioner Dugan Jr. volunteered to meet with Lt. Belott and President Hark Jr. to work on some ideas. Former Chief Davidson felt that the Board has to appoint someone to recruit members and hold them accountable. Former Chief Davidson also felt that the Board needs to develop parameters of what makes a successful recruitment / retention member.

RESOLUTIONS: Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked if there were any objections to passing the resolutions by consent agenda. There were no objections.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-48 accepting the resignation of EMT Speck.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-49 accepting the resignation of EMT Lahiri.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-50 rescinding the COE to Gaccione.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-51 making permanent FF/EMT/Insp Sulpy.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-52 terminating volunteer EMT.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-53 accepting the resignation of FF Craig Vagell.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-54 appointing a Workers Compensation carrier.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner O'Hare. All were in favor. Commissioner Cornine was absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner Dugan Jr. read Resolution 22-07-21-55 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner O'Hare. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cornine was absent. The Board went into closed session at 8:15 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed, and action will be taken.

The Board came out of closed session at 9:27 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Steven Cornine, Secretary