

## **August 4, 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 August 4, 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., and Shawn Waldron were present. Commissioner Robert O'Hare was absent.

Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz, Fire Co. President James Hark Jr., Asst. Chief Martin, Lt. Belott, FF Sulpy, FF Colin, and EMT Perrone were also in attendance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Board has received a letter from Cpt. Barisciano regarding his suspension for not fulfilling the Board requirement to get the Department physical. Commissioner DeSimone reported that Cpt. Barisciano had the Buscio Physical which is not currently accepted by the Board and the Medical Director. Commissioner DeSimone noted that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> member who is suspended due to not getting the Board physical. Commissioner Waldron reported that he would like to discuss this in New Business.

Commissioner Cornine reported that the Board has received 2 online service satisfaction survey submissions. Commissioner Cornine reported that one was submitted on 7/29/22 for an EMS call that Lt. Belott, FF Sulpy, FF Colin, EMT Makar, and EMT Perrone responded to. Commissioner Cornine reported that the 911 call was answered promptly and the call was given an excellent rating for knowledgeable personnel, professional manner, courtesy, and the over service. Commissioner Cornine noted that the comments stated that the EMS crew was excellent and the District should not lose them. Commissioner Cornine reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> submission was from an 8/1/22 Police and EMS call and again everything was rated excellent. Commissioner Cornine reported that FF Sulpy and EMT Harrington responded to the call and the respondent commented that they

were very impressed with how fast the ambulance arrived at my father's house and they really appreciated all the hard work everyone did. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the County shared these submissions with him and he shared them with the Board and with the individuals mentioned in the submissions. Administrator Schultz felt that the County should be cautioned about asking questions about medical calls to avoid HIPA violations. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would contact the County. Commissioner Cornine felt that regardless the members deserved the recognition for a good job and thanked them for their service.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**The minutes from the July 21, 2022 Regular Meeting were reviewed.**

**Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.**

**Commissioner Waldron made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2022 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Dugan Jr. seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner Steven Cornine abstained. Commissioner O'Hare was absent.**

### **REPORT OF THE TREASURER:**

Commissioner Waldron reported that he met with Chief DiGiorgio, Administrator Schultz and President Hark Jr. to discuss how the District is going to fund the anticipated overtime necessary to get through the end of the year along with any future promotion and anticipated hiring. Commissioner Waldron felt that the meeting was successful in finding the necessary money but it means we now need to be very careful with spending for the remainder of the year. Commissioner Waldron noted that the district is operating within budget and we just need to be cognizant of our spending.

Administrator Schultz reported that the Board has received the final audit and there are no changes from the draft audit that was distributed to the Board previously. Administrator Schultz reported that he highlighted the areas of concern within the audit. Administrator Schultz reported that there are 3 primary areas of concern one of which is recurring. Administrator Schultz reported that the auditor acknowledged that the District is not large enough to have enough accounting personnel to have the recommended divisions of duties.

Administrator Schultz reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> item was budget transfers between statutory lines without a resolution which is submitted to the State for approval.

Administrator Schultz reported that the remedy for this is that there will be a biweekly meeting to review the statutory lines so that we will know if the transfers are needed in a timely manner. Administrator Schultz reported that the 3<sup>rd</sup> item of concern is that the District should have a purchase order system and he will work with Chief DiGiorgio, Commissioner Waldron and the bookkeeper on getting a PO system in place for the beginning of 2023. Administrator Schultz reported that this evening the Board has the option of rereading the audit or if the board is comfortable with the remedies that for the concerns in the audit they can approve the audit tonight and send it to the State. Administrator Schultz reported that the recommended remedies were sent to the auditor and there were no negative comments on them. Commissioner DeSimone noted that the PO system could be electronic and at least validates that the purchase was preapproved by someone and is a good system to have in place. The Board was fine with the recommendations and indicated they would act on the resolution.

#### **Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:**

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

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he met with Commissioner Waldron and finalized the Uniform Policy which was sent out to all the staff. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there is one item that they are waiting to get a complete answer on and that is whether shorts are allowed on medical calls.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he met with Commissioner Waldron to discuss the staffing policy in response to the discussion at last meeting to increase the minimum staff on apparatus. Chief DiGiorgio reported that each Board member has a copy of the current staffing policy to review. Chief DiGiorgio noted that the policy has to be changed if the Board goes in the direction discussed at the last meeting. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it was his understanding that based on the meeting mentioned earlier about the dollars and cents for staffing that the new staffing plan is already in motion. Commissioner Waldron confirmed that it was. Commissioner Waldron reported that at first the discussion was to ensure that there were 2 firefighters on the overnight on Thursday, Friday and Saturday when there are no volunteer crews scheduled but expanded to include using compensated firefighters on the other nights of the week if the volunteers are not coming out. Commissioner Waldron noted that with the suspension discussed tonight and the resignation from last meeting the volunteer crew on one night is

down to one member who cannot drive. Commissioner Waldron reported that finding the money to cover the Thursday, Friday and Saturday overnights for the rest of the year was difficult and the District will not have enough money if it has to cover the other four nights as well. Commissioner Cornine asked if there are enough volunteers other crews could be moved to the nights that are short on volunteers. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there are currently Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday night crews that rotate on Sundays. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would work with Asst. Chief Martin to see if some volunteers could be moved around to even out the crews. Commissioner Waldron asked Chief DiGiorgio about the staffing policy from August 2020. Commissioner Waldron noted that the shifts in the policy do not indicate if they are 24 hour or the old 16 hour shifts and the policy also references the Asst. EMS Chief and the Asst. Fire Chief will manage personnel to ensure adequate staffing levels. Commissioner Waldron noted both these positions are volunteer and one is currently not filled and wondered if this policy dates back to when compensated staff filled in where there were no volunteers. Chief DiGiorgio did not think the policy went back too far and that the policy was the one the Board agreed to in 2020 for him to follow. Commissioner Waldron reported that the policy needs to be updated to reflect the current staffing levels.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he has shown the current year call volume in comparison with comparison to 2019 which was the District's highest call volume year. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he did this because the July 2022 numbers were not final yet. Commissioner Desimone felt that this was nice but still wanted to see the comparison with the previous year. Chief DiGiorgio reported that those figures would be in his next report.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he and Lt. McGuinness worked on a plan review which was sent in from the Planning Board for 29 – 41 Ridgedale Ave. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the plans are to construct a 160-bed memory care / assisted living facility. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he and Lt. McGuinness gave their comments on the plan to the Planning Board for their August 10 meeting on this plan.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that he granted a leave of absence to a volunteer firefighter and notification has been sent to Asst. Chief Martin and Cpt. Costello.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the Board has a copy of a flyer from Atlantic Health which gives a snapshot on where we are in EMS. Chief DiGiorgio reported that

Atlantic Health is looking to hire fulltime EMTs without certification and they will be working in the field and the classroom to obtain their certification. Chief DiGiorgio reported that once they receive their certification they will continue their employment with Atlantic Health. Chief DiGiorgio reported that it went from Atlantic Health requiring 3 years' experience, to Atlantic Health offering people jobs as they got their EMT certification, to offering signing bonuses, to now bringing people on who do not have training or certification.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that when the exit interview program was put in place he was under the impression that if a person resigns from the District if that person is compensated or volunteer in operations that the exit interview is sent to Administrator Schultz and if the individual is a volunteer the exit interview is sent to President Hark Jr. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he would like to make a policy on this and asked the Board to clarify who the exit interviews are to be sent to. Commissioner Waldron felt that the minutes from the meeting where this was discussed should be reviewed. Commissioner DeSimone felt that the Board should see all exit interviews. President Hark Jr. reported that he has always forwarded any exit interview to the Administrator. The Board decided that all exit interviews will be returned to Administrator Schultz with copies sent to the Board. Commissioner DeSimone reported that pertinent exit interviews would be shared with President Hark Jr.

Commissioner Waldron felt that the designs for striping of the cars was overboard for what is being asked right now but pertinent for any new purchase.

Commissioner Waldron reported he spoke with Commissioner DeSimone and they got a ballpark proposed figure of \$1500 to get the 2 cars done the way we wanted. Commissioner Waldron recommended that the District hold off on the striping until next year and it might be smarter to pay people to be here to cover calls. The Board agreed to hold off on this because the vehicles will need to be replaced soon.

Commissioner Waldron noticed that the window air conditioner for the kitchen has been purchased and installed. Commissioner Waldron asked the bookkeeper how much it cost. The Bookkeeper reported that she had not received the invoice yet. Lt. Belott reported that it was under \$200.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that Chief DiGiorgio attached a flyer to his report about training for \$4100 and asked if Chief DiGiorgio was considering for himself or someone else. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he put that in his report

as an FYI and is for the certified public manager course. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he completed the course in 2016 and it would be something that anyone looking to move forward might consider. Commissioner Desimone asked if it was required for any current positions. Chief DiGiorgio confirmed it was not. Commissioner DeSimone felt that the Board would need to look at the training budget and it might be something for next year.

Chief DiGiorgio reported that the information about the operational suspensions has been put out for not complying with either the EEO training or the physical requirements. Chief DiGiorgio reported that one member who is on vacation has not completed the EEO training. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Cpt. Barisciano and one interior firefighter and one exterior firefighter have not completed their physicals. Chief DiGiorgio reported that he is waiting confirmation from Dr. Gluckman that one of the physicals has been completed.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if there were any other question for Chief DiGiorgio. There were no questions.

**EMS:** Nothing to report.

**BUDGET:** Nothing to report.

**PERSONNEL:** Nothing to report.

**NEGOTIATIONS:** Nothing to report.

**LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS:** President Hark Jr. reported that the Company meeting has been moved from Monday, 8/8 to Tuesday, 8/9 so it does not conflict with the Special Meeting of the Joint Board.

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:** Nothing to report.

**APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE:** Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked if the air horn on Ambulance 32 was fixed. Lt. Belott reported that it will be addressed on Tuesday, 8/16 when A 32 goes down to First Priority Group to have the body work done from the last incident.

Commissioner DeSimone asked if there was an update on the bay doors. Lt. Belott reported that he spoke with Allmark doors last week because the estimated delivery date has been pushed back possibly another 16 weeks. Lt. Belott reported that after talking with Chief DiGiorgio and Administrator Schultz he contacted Allmark who sent out a salesperson who felt it might be more

beneficial to replace the door using a different manufacturer whose parts are more readily available. Lt. Belott reported that Administrator Schultz contacted the insurance company who agreed to cover the cost of a new door. Lt. Belott reported that he is just waiting for an estimate from Allmark so Administrator Schultz can pass it on to the insurance company. Lt. Belott reported that Allmark will install the door as soon as possible. Commissioner Waldron asked if going with a full door replacement versus replacing panels changes the deductible. Administrator Schultz reported that the deductible has already been met on this claim. Administrator Schultz reported that we need to make sure that the District did not pay for the replacement panel on the bay door.

Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked why the ladder truck was recently out of service. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the air brake slack adjusters needed to be adjusted. Lt. Belott reported that a repairman will be here next Tuesday to replace them.

Commissioner DeSimone asked about reconvening the workgroup to look into replacing Ladder 33. Asst. Chief Martin reported that Lt. Belott contacted him after it was decided at the last meeting to look into a refurbish and a remount. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he feels that refurbishing the ladder truck would be a total waste of money. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he contacted a representative from Fire & Safety and he and Lt. Belott sat down with him yesterday. Asst. Chief Martin reported that after speaking with the representative he would not even consider refurbishing the ladder truck. Asst. Chief Martin reported that with a remount the ladder and bucket would be taken off and refurbished then the box would be taken off. Asst. Chief Martin explained that a new chassis, electronics, hydraulics, and pump. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the remount would require the truck to be out of service for about 6 months. Asst. Chief Martin reported that when the workgroup first met last year the cost of a new truck was between \$1.3 and \$1.4 million. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the cost has gone up \$300,000 since last year and if the District was to purchase a prebuild truck from this manufacturer tonight it would cost \$1.725 million and they are 30 months out in production. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the cost will increase another \$85,000 on November 1 which would make the cost over \$1.8 million. Asst. Chief Martin felt that the Board had two choices; going with a remount for about \$1.5 million or buy new for \$1.8 million. Asst. Chief Martin recommended going for a \$2 million bond and replace the ladder and both cars. Asst. Chief Martin suggested purchasing a demo ladder truck because the wait would be much less and there is no need for customization.

Asst. Chief Martin reported that the committee will reconvene, look into both options and bring the information to the Board. Commissioner Waldron asked if any customization could be done on a demo. Asst. Chief Martin reported that there are limited customization options on a demo if made before production and noted that the only customization the workgroup is looking at is a bumper box. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the workgroup could have the recommendation to the Board in 4 weeks. Commissioner Waldron did not feel that the District could get the bond by the end of the year. Administrator Schultz felt that the bond could be done this by the beginning of next year after his discussions with Mr. Braslow. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to have the Ladder Replacement Workgroup reconvene and look into the options for replacing the ladder truck. Commissioner Dugan Jr. seconded the motion. All were in favor. Commissioner O'Hare was absent.

**INSURANCE:** Commissioner DeSimone asked for the status of the workers comp insurance policy. Administrator Schultz reported that the District has been assigned Liberty Mutual for workers comp.

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

**WEBSITE:** Up to date. President Hark Jr. reported that the District is looking into getting share file software to handle OPRA and medical records requests. President Hark Jr. reported that the software is HIPPA compliant and would cost \$1100 a year if the District agreed to a 3-year subscription. Administrator Schultz reported that there are other applications for this software on the website. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to enter into a 3-year agreement for Citrix, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor. Commissioner O'Hare was absent.

President Hark Jr. reported that the recruitment / retention workgroup met and will be meeting again after Lt. Belott comes back from vacation. President Hark Jr. reported that the workgroup will present a couple different plans to the Board at the next meeting.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Commissioner Waldron reported that the committee met about a week ago and quickly realized that the members do not have the resources to make certain decisions on how to start the process of planning what to do about the firehouse. Commissioner Waldron reported that the committee decided to seek assistance from people who do this for a living. Commissioner



Waldron reported that 3 companies were reached out to but only one got back to us. Commissioner Waldron reported that earlier today the committee met with representatives of the company who were previously given the structural engineers report. Commissioner Waldron reported that the company will give the committee various options for the building and the cost of each option. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the company will also help with grant opportunities. Commissioner Waldron reported that the company will also help educate the public through public meetings to explain why the District is doing whichever option is chosen. Commissioner DeSimone asked when the company was going to start. Administrator Schultz reported that the company will provide the District with a proposal of the scope of the work and what their fees are and the District has to look what it can afford this year.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Special Meeting on Consolidation of the Fire Districts is on Monday, 8/8, at 8 p.m. at the Whippany firehouse. Administrator Schultz reported that Mr. Braslow will be attending via Zoom. Administrator Schultz asked that the meeting be recorded.

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

**RECORDS RETENTION:** Administrator Schultz reported that the State has not gotten back to our auditor regarding he access to sign off on the records destruction.

**LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE:** Nothing to report.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Commissioner Waldron reported that Dr. Gluckman will accept what Buscio does for annual physicals with the understanding that there are a few additional things that he is going to require such as the biannual chest x-ray and the drug screening. Administrator Schultz reported that the District and Dr. Gluckman are still talking about how this is going to work and will have to meet to iron the process out. Commissioner Waldron noted that the Board should be ready to move on this next meeting. Commissioner Waldron reported that his main concern is that after the Board appointing Dr. Gluckman as the health and safety officer the Board may have legal exposure if it accepts other physicians' physicals. Commissioner Cornine felt that people have an issue with Dr. Gluckman himself. Chief DiGiorgio reported that Cpt. Barisciano did not have and issue with Dr. Gluckman but with the redundancies of having 2 physicals. Administrator Schultz reported that the issue is finding a doctor that is willing to

sign off for fitness of duty which Buscio will not do. Administrator Schultz asked to discuss something about this in executive session.

Commissioner Waldron reported that a letter will go out tomorrow to the candidates about the continuation of the lieutenant's promotion process if the Board approves it tonight. Commissioner Waldron reported that once Commissioner DeSimone signs the letter the process will continue for those who are interested in continuing.

Commissioner Waldron reported that a new hire was discussed at the budget meeting as well and asked if that would go out tomorrow as well. Administrator Schultz reported that the new position will be announced this evening and then an announcement will go to the papers directing candidates to go to the website for the job description and the application process. Commissioner Waldron noted that the process is the same as what was used for the last 3 hires.

Commissioner Waldron reported that Chief DiGiorgio mentioned the update on the uniform policy allowing shorts but there is still a line in the policy that requires any EMT on a medical call in shorts have their Class B pants, a jumpsuit, or bunker pants to cover their legs. Commissioner Waldron reported that he has asked for regulations on this and finally found out that New Jersey OEMS does not have a policy on legs coverings but suggested we speak with PEOSH.

Commissioner Waldron reported that Lt. Belott reached out and got their workplace health and safety document which does not directly respond to what needs to be covered and what does not need to be covered. Commissioner Waldron reported that the PEOSH document requires the employer to identify hazards and provide protection to our employees for those hazards.

Commissioner Waldron felt everyone would agree that bodily fluids are hazards and the District has provided protection with eyewear, gloves, gowns, masks, and arm sleeves. Commissioner Waldron reported that the District could provide leg sleeves at a minimal cost. Commissioner Waldron asked if it was necessary to require EMTs to cover their legs as long as the District is providing protection for them. Commissioner Waldron noted that if the uniform pant gets soiled it will contaminate the pants and the EMT still has to wash their leg. Commissioner Cornine felt that as long as the employees acknowledge that the District is providing protection and it is their responsibility to utilize it if needed, he is okay with it. The Board agreed to remove the line in the uniform policy that requires long pants on medical calls and will provide leg protection.

Commissioner DeSimone asked for a status update on the EEO training. Chief DiGiorgio reported that there is one individual who is on vacation who has not completed the EEO training.

Commissioner DeSimone asked maintenance shared services item under old business is for. Chief DiGiorgio reported that the item is on hold until Chief Nunn gets back to us. Commissioner Cornine reported that he will abstain from any discussions on the maintenance shared services with municipalities he may be employed by. Administrator Schultz reported that he spoke with Chief Nunn about sharing a qualified purchasing agent which would lift the \$17,500 threshold to go out to bid up to \$42,500.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Commissioner DeSimone asked Chief DiGiorgio to remind the staff that the noise ordinance states that there should be no loud noises before 7 a.m. because she has heard saws being run prior to 7 am.

**REMINDERS:**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, August 18, 2022 at 7:00 P.M at the firehouse.

There will be a Special Meeting on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 8:00 P.M. at the District 2 firehouse.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 12, 2022 at the District 2 Fire House at 6:30 P.M.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**RESOLUTIONS:** Commissioner Cornine asked if anyone had objections to approving the resolutions by consent agenda. There were no objections.

**Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 22-08-04-56 appointing Per Diem EMT.**

**Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 22-08-04-57 accepting the 2021 audit.**

**Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 22-08-04-58 adopting corrective action plan.**

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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Commissioner Cornine read Resolution 22-08-04-59 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Waldron. All were in favor. Commissioner O'Hare was absent. The Board went into closed session at 9:00 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed, and action will not be taken.

**The Board came out of closed session at 10:05 p.m.**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

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Steven Cornine, Secretary