

**November 16, 2023 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 November 16, 2023 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., Gary Keyser, and Shawn Waldron were present.

Administrator Schultz, Deputy Administrator Hark Jr., Asst. Chief Martin, Lt. Sulpy, FF Colin, FF Martin, EMT Perrone, and EMT Villane were also in attendance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Board received a thank you letters from kindergarten students at Mountview Road School thanking the firefighters for visiting the class on October 29.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

**The minutes from the October 10, 2023 Executive Session were reviewed.**

**Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.**

**Commissioner Waldron made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2023 Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Cornine. All were in favor.**

**The minutes from the October 19, 2023 Executive Session were reviewed.**

**Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.**

**Commissioner Waldron made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2023 Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Cornine. All were in favor.**

**The minutes from the November 2, 2023 Regular Meeting were reviewed.**

**Amendments to Previous Minutes: None.**

**Commissioner Waldron made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2, 2023 Regular Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cornine. All were in favor. Commissioner Dugan Jr. abstained.**

**REPORT OF THE TREASURER:** Commissioner Waldron reported that the District has received the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax payment but that the District still has to keep an eye on spending.

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

**CHIEF'S REPORT:** Asst. Chief Martin submitted his Bi-Monthly report on November 15, 2023.

Commissioner Keyser asked if the SCBA cylinder quote was going against the 2024 budget. Administrator Schultz confirmed that it will go against the 2024 budget.

Commissioner Keyser asked for an update on the hose. Administrator Schultz reported that quotes were solicited for the hoses and Commissioner Waldron has the 2 lowest quotes for the hoses. Administrator Schultz reported that as long as Commissioner Waldron approves he will initiate the purchases. Commissioner Waldron asked if the quotes came in below the grant received for the purchase and if so what could the excess grant money be utilized for. Administrator Schultz reported that the purchase will cost less than the grant and the excess can usually be used for fire prevention costs.

Commissioner Keyser asked if the Hazardous Materials Technician training is going to be held at the fire station. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the training will be held at Picatinny Arsenal but no date has been set for the training. Commissioner Keyser asked for confirmation that the District would only respond to hazmat situations within our District. Asst. Chief Martin reported that our hazmat is limited to our jurisdiction.

Asst. Chief Martin reported that 2 of our career firefighters attend and successfully pass Firefighter 2, FF Ujfalussy and FF Yen. Asst. Chief Martin congratulated both firefighters.

Lt. Sulpy will discuss the ambulance update under Old Business. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he is waiting to receive truck pricing on vehicles that have already been built but that the departments that ordered them have since backed out. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he will forward the pricing to the Board when he receives it.

Commissioner Keyser asked that Asst. Chief Martin, Lt. Belott, and FF Ujfalussy hold off on updating and creating new policies in Power DMS since the District may be utilizing different software in the near future. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the updates are getting rid of items that do not need to be there and he is

aware that changes to policies has been put on hold. Asst. Chief Martin reported that the Board needs to consider migrating to Lexipol as Lt. Sulpy proposed at the last meeting because he felt it would be very beneficial to the District.

Commissioner Cornine asked if the District would utilize Lexipol to write policy or guide the District on policy. Asst. Chief Martin reported that those applications are available but that the District would not be utilizing them with the possible exception of updating federal and state mandated regulations. Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Board needs to discuss the initial implementation costs to see if they can be absorbed by the 2024 budget. Commissioner Cornine felt that this is exactly the type of thing that could be shared with District 2. Asst. Chief Martin noted that the staff could work on CEUs during downtime on a shift with this software which would save on overtime costs and the cost of classes.

Commissioner Keyser asked if there were any more questions for Asst. Chief Martin. There were no more questions.

**EMS:** Commissioner Cornine reported that a contamination exposure has been taken care of.

**BUDGET:** Commissioner Waldron reported that the 2024 budget will be introduced at the December 7, 2023 meeting and there will be a public commentary on the budget on January 5, 2024. Commissioner Keyser asked if the Board would receive copies of the budget and the tax increase figures prior to the next meeting. Administrator Schultz reported that the Board would get copies after the accountant has reviewed everything. Administrator Schultz reported that the public vote for approval to purchase an ambulance will be postponed until the budget vote in February 2024 on advice of legal counsel. Commissioner Waldron noted that Lt. Sulpy needs to have this information since it is pertinent to the ambulances that he is looking into.

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

**NEGOTIATIONS:** Commissioner Keyser reported that he and Commissioner DeSimone hope to meet with Lt. Ujfalussy the FMBA on November 28.

**LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS:** Commissioner DeSimone reported that she was not able to attend the last meeting so she does not know if any issues or concerns were brought up. Commissioner Waldron reported that he was at the meeting and there were no issues or concerns. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he will be giving an end of year report to the Fire Co. at their last meeting.

Commissioner DeSimone reported that the second floor looks amazing since the clean up and the purchase of new chairs.

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:** Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the AC in the dayroom was serviced yesterday. Commissioner Keyser asked if the leaky toilet on the second floor had been fixed. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that it was taken care of a couple of weeks ago.

**APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE:** Commissioner Cornine reported that everything was outlined in Asst. Chief Martin's report.

Commissioner Keyser reported that the Board will discuss and vote on whether to proceed with purchasing a ladder truck in Old Business. Asst. Chief Martin reported that there is a Seagrave Aerial Scope with a pump available and a Toyne Aerial available due to departments backing out of orders. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he is waiting on prices for them. Asst. Chief Martin asked for a couple minutes in Executive Session for some questions concerning the ambulance purchase.

**INSURANCE:** Commissioner Keyser asked for a status on the Workmen's Comp premium increase. Administrator Schultz reported that he has been working for Mr. Siino's office and Liberty Mutual and reported that certain aspects of the premium have been reduced by shifting most of the career staff to fire as opposed to EMS which has a higher premium. Administrator Schultz reported that keeping overtime low would also help reduce the premium.

Commissioner Keyser reported that the District met with Mr. Siino last Tuesday regarding health benefits and there will be about a 5.4% increase.

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

**WEBSITE:** Up to date.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE:** Nothing to report.

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

**RECORDS RETENTION:** Nothing to report.

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

**OLD BUSINESS:** Commissioner Keyser asked for an update on Ambulance 32. Asst. Chief Martin reported that First Priority would like to take receipt of the ambulance the week after Thanksgiving which means that the District needs a

rental before then. Commissioner Keyser asked if Nielsen Ford knows that they are covering the cost of the rental ambulance. Administrator Schultz reported that it was part of the certified letter set to Nielsen Ford. Asst. Chief Martin reminded the Board that the rental ambulance needs to be inspected, licensed and set up with the State so the district needs to receive it with enough lead time to get everything accomplished. Lt. Sulpy reported that he would contact First Priority and VCI to see which vendor would have an available ambulance. Commissioner Cornine asked why the District auto insurance would not pick up the cost of the ambulance repair and loaner rental. Commissioner Keyser reported that Nielsen Ford did not file a police report when the damage occurred and said that they would take care of the repair but later backed out of handling the repair.

Commissioner Keyser asked for the ambulance replacement update. Lt. Sulpy reported that he reached out to the ambulance manufacturers to get ballpark costs on some of the available ambulances. Lt. Sulpy reported that First Priority has a demo ambulance that is just about what the District is looking for in Maryland and the District could take delivery of it at any time. Lt. Sulpy reported that the load system from Ambulance 39 will be able to be retrofitted to any of the new ambulances that the District is looking at. Lt. Sulpy reported that the combined cost of the retrofit and the First Priority demo would come in within budget. Lt. Sulpy noted that the cost of the demo including lettering and delivery is \$289,000 and the retrofit would cost an additional \$33,000. Commissioner Waldron asked for clarification that the ambulance was 2-door and 4-wheel drive. Lt. Sulpy confirmed it was a 2-door, 4-wheel drive with a Dodge chassis. Commissioner Desimone asked if there was a window into the back compartment and Lt. Sulpy confirmed that there was. Commissioner Waldron asked if there was a front to back camera system. Lt. Sulpy reported that it did not but could be added. Commissioner Waldron noted that there was no camera system in Ambulance 32. Commissioner Keyser asked the Board what they wanted to do. Commissioner Waldron asked if the District was required to go out to bid. Administrator Schultz reported that as long as it was an HGAC body the District did not have to go out to bid. Lt. Sulpy confirmed that it was HGAC. Administrator Schultz noted that the District was asking \$350,000 for an ambulance and this would come in at around \$322,000. Administrator Schultz reported that procedurally the District would speak with the vendor and as long as the vendor is willing to accept a signature contingent on the approval of the budget the purchase could move forward. Commissioner Dugan Jr. asked if the

demo was gas or diesel. Lt. Sulpy reported that the ambulance is diesel. Asst. Chief Martin noted that the new ambulance will probably go in Ambulance 38's bay so the exhaust would be on the correct side in this case. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he no longer needed to go into Executive Session because his question about the ambulance had been answered. Administrator Schultz noted that the Board cannot pass a resolution but can certainly make a motion to continue with this purchase contingent on budget approval. Commissioner Waldron made a motion to move forward with securing the ambulance so that the District can purchase it in February if the voters approve. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner Keyser reported that there has been talk that District 2 has discussed utilizing Atlantic for EMS. Commissioner Keyser reported that he met with District 2 Commissioner Gethins to discuss this and he will talk to the Board about it in Executive Session.

Commissioner Keyser reported that he has been keeping an eye out for trash or garbage that has been coming over from the strip mall and he hasn't really seen any. Asst. Chief Martin reported that it blows over on windy days. Commissioner Waldron reported that the place was covered with garbage last Saturday when the lights were being put on the tree. Administrator Schultz recommended putting chicken wire at the bottom of the stockade fence.

Commissioner Keyser reported that the Board needed to decide if the District was going to move forward with looking for a new ladder truck and if so what was going to be done with the current ladder truck. Commissioner Keyser reported that the Truck is out of service and that the brakes need to be fixed.

Commissioner Keyser reported that if the Board decides to move forward Asst. Chief Martin has prices for a replacement ladder truck. Commissioner Keyser reported that the Board needs to decide if the District really needs a ladder truck knowing that District 2 is getting a new ladder truck. Commissioner Keyser distributed a list of the District's Mutual Aid Companies that have a ladder truck along with their response times. Commissioner Keyser reported that the District has had a ladder truck since the mid-1970's and wondered how often it was used in our District. Commissioner Keyser opened the floor for discussion on the ladder truck. Commissioner Waldron reported that 2 of the closer Mutual Aid companies that have ladders are volunteer companies and their ladders are currently out of service. Commissioner Waldron reported that he understands and agrees that since 1973 he does not believe that the ladder has been used in a

single rescue and has had limited fire usage as a tower or a stick. Commissioner Waldron still felt that the District needs a truck and it should be a bucket. Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board should have decided well over 18 months ago and now the price has almost doubled and the wait time for delivery is 32-36 months. Commissioner Waldron noted that Asst. Chief Martin has recently found a couple of available trucks that are already built. Commissioner Waldron felt that this should have been done a long time ago and the Board needs to decide now and get it done with. Commissioner DeSimone reported that she voted to get a truck when it was discussed a few months ago. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that he thinks the district should have a ladder truck. Commissioner Keyser did not feel that having a ladder truck was warranted based on the District's call history. Commissioner Keyser felt that a ladder truck was a want instead of a need. Commissioner Cornine noted that it seems that 3 people have said that they are for a ladder truck so there would be 3 yes votes at a minimum. Commissioner Cornine reported that when he looks at trucks he looks at the job they do and noted that truck work requires truck people to work it. Commissioner Cornine felt that if the District buys a truck and cannot do anything with it, it is a waste of money. Commissioner Cornine felt there are other versatile trucks for less money that can be used on more versatile basis and he would support getting one of those. Commissioner Cornine did not feel that the District had enough people on an initial response to set up ladder truck functions. Commissioner Waldron noted that the District is trying to run with 3 people on a truck per tour and there have been times when members of another company have helped operate the truck. Commissioner Keyser felt that the decision on a truck should hinge on whether it can be manned by our personnel for responses within our District. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that if it was available to use it did not matter who was using it. Commissioner Keyser disagreed. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the new apartments would be a 5-story building. Asst. Chief Martin reported that he understood that the Town walked away from that project and signed over the land to District 6 in Parsippany. Asst. Chief Martin noted that this does not mean that our District would not be called to assist with a fire there. Asst. Chief Martin asked if not having a ladder would affect the District ISO rating. Administrator Schultz reported that having automatic aid has the same impact as having a truck on the ISO rating. Administrator Schultz noted that staffing is also looked at for an ISO rating. Commissioner Cornine asked what was necessary to move the truck forward if the Board votes to get a truck. Administrator Schultz reported that it

would go on the ballot in February 2024 for a maximum price allowance and if it is approved then the Board could contract to buy a truck. Administrator Schultz reported that the wait time for a truck is increasing but some of the smaller manufacturers have less wait time. Administrator Schultz reported that there is also the possibility to get something that was ordered but the department has backed out on. Commissioner Keyser noted that if the District orders a truck there is a clause that says that cost increases can be passed on to the District. Commissioner Keyser reported that the 2024 operating budget is already going to increase more than prior years and felt the voter will need a very good reason to approve an even higher fire tax. Administrator Schultz felt it was a difficult decision because while the statistics show that it has not been needed much, the District might regret not having a ladder the one time it is needed. Administrator Schultz felt that Mutual Aid could only be relied on if they are not volunteer companies. Asst. Chief Martin reported that while a ladder truck can be used to rescue people out of windows our current ladder is also designed for mass decon / gross decon with the shower under the bucket, and can be used as a high point for a confined space call. Asst. Chief Martin felt there were multiple advantages to having the tower and felt that the Board should put the question to the taxpayers to see what they think. Commissioner Keyser felt there were a lot of other trucks that could be used for confined space calls and the County cannot rely on this District for a ladder truck. Commissioner Waldron reported that ladder trucks have been utilized locally during trench rescue calls. Commissioner Keyser felt that there are more times when regular ladders can be used and did not support getting a ladder truck. Commissioner Keyser asked if anyone else had anything to say about a ladder truck purchase. Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion to take whatever steps were necessary to purchase a ladder truck. Commissioner Desimone felt that the question should be put before the residents to see what they say. Commissioner Waldron wanted clarification on the specifics of the ladder. Administrator Schultz reported that the technical term would be aerial apparatus. Commissioner Waldron thought that the Board was going to decide on the length of the ladder and whether to get a stick or platform. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt the District will get what the budget allows. Asst. Chief Martin reported that if the Board wanted a platform then the motion should specify aerial platform apparatus. Commissioner Dugan Jr. made a motion that the Board move forward in obtaining an aerial platform apparatus. Commissioner Waldron seconded the motion. Commissioners DeSimone, Dugan Jr. and Waldron were in favor. Commissioners Cornine and Keyser were opposed.



Administrator Schultz reported that there are some very important initiatives going on the ballot; an ambulance, and aerial platform apparatus, and a firehouse. Commissioner Keyser felt that the firehouse was not going on the ballot because the Board has not seen enough information on the project. Administrator Schultz clarified that there are prospective important initiatives going on the ballot and the District needs to get public information out there as to why the District is doing all these things. Administrator Schultz felt that the District needs to start marketing what and why the District is putting the initiatives before the voters. Commissioner Keyser felt that before the firehouse goes on the ballot, the outside consultants need to come address the Board. Administrator Schultz asked if the Board would like to have them come in on December 7. Commissioner Keyser felt that it is too late to have the firehouse on the February ballot because there is not enough time for the Board to become informed and approve the firehouse plans. Commissioner Cornine felt that the Board has been kept informed about the progress of the new firehouse plans. Administrator Schultz felt that the committee that has been working on it has done more than its due diligence in making sure that every square foot in the building is necessary and can be utilized. Administrator Schultz felt that an adequate report made to the Board by H2M and the members of the committee should suffice to keep this moving in its current direction. Commissioner Keyser thought that there should be a Special Meeting so the voters can come in and hear about the new firehouse. Commissioner Waldron felt that the Board should hear what H2M has to say first and since the beginning the plan was for H2M to market the plan to the taxpayers through special meetings with them. Administrator Schultz felt that the District should get the word out about the special meeting once a date is set and it should be held in a venue which would accommodate more people. Administrator Schultz reported that the committee has met with Mr. Giorgio and Committeeman Cahill about available potential properties for a new firehouse so the Town should be aware that it is coming down the road. Administrator Schultz reported that this is the culmination of over a year of work and recommended that the Board hear a presentation by either H2M and the committee or just the committee at the December 7 meeting and that a Special Meeting be set up at Town Hall for the taxpayers to see the presentation. Commissioner DeSimone reported that she only has the 8 ½ x 11-inch drawings and would like the larger ones. Commissioner Keyser felt that maybe the Board should look into consolidating with District 2 which would eliminate the need for a ladder truck and a new building. Commissioner Keyser

felt that it should be discussed at the next Joint Board meeting in December. Commissioner Dugan Jr. felt that more than a year was spent investigating it and nothing came of it. Commissioner Waldron felt that nothing has happened with it lately because the Boards decided to pause it and work on smaller shared service agreements. Commissioner Waldron conceded that there are no shared service agreements in place yet. Commissioner Waldron asked if the firehouse does not go on the ballot in February when the next time it could be put on again. Administrator Schultz reported that the firehouse could be put on the ballot in March however the Board would not be able to do anything until 2025. Commissioner Cornine asked what information each of the Board members needed to decide on a project this big because all he needs to know is the cost and whether it will fit on the property. Commissioner Cornine reported that he is certain that the department will make use of the new building and that it will be a nice functional building that will last at least as long as this one. The Board looked at the larger drawings of the proposed building and discussed various aspects of it. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. asked Commissioner Keyser if he wanted him to pursue having H2M address the Board on December 7. Commissioner Keyser confirmed that Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. should see if H2M is available on December 7. Commissioner Keyser asked if the Board wanted to wait until December 7 to vote on the firehouse or vote tonight. Commissioner DeSimone made a motion to put the new firehouse on the ballot in February, seconded by Commissioner Cornine. All were in favor. Administrator Schultz asked for clarification that H2M should still be invited to address the Board on December 7. Commissioner Keyser asked that H2M still be invited to address the Board.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**REMINDERS:**

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

A Special Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 from 2 P.M. until 9 P.M. for the purpose of voting on Capital Expenditures.

The Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at the District 3 Fire House at 6:30 P.M.

The Annual Tree Lighting will be held on Saturday, November 25, 2023 at 6 P.M. at the Cedar Knolls Fire Station.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

**RESOLUTIONS:** None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 23-11-16-129 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Cornine made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

**The Board went into closed session at 8:23 p.m.**

Personnel matters were discussed, and action will be taken.

**The Board came out of closed session at 9:40 p.m.**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

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Mary Lou DeSimone, Secretary