

December 19, 2024 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 December 19, 2024 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., Michael Dugan Sr. and Gary Keyser were present.

Administrator Schultz, Deputy Administrator Hark Jr., Asst. Chief Costello, Lt. Sulpy, FF Gilson, EMT Harrington, EMT Waldron, and members of the public were also in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

The minutes from the December 5, 2024 Regular Meeting were reviewed.

Amendments to the Previous Minutes: None.

Commissioner Keyser made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024 Regular Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

The minutes from the November 21, 2024 Executive Session could not be reviewed because they have not been sent out to the Board yet.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER: Commissioner Dugan Sr. distributed the interim December financials which indicate that the District has exceeded the budget by \$131,000 this year and there is another payroll which is anticipated to be as high as \$70,000. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that this would put the District over budget by close to the amount of the referendum which failed.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he appreciates the work that the last Budget Committee did because it seems like they were right on the mark.

Commissioner Keyser asked how the District pays for the budget overage.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District used savings to cover the overage.

Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that he provided the Board with a projected calendar of expenditures through March 2025 which total about \$270,000 at the last meeting. Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District now has \$306,000 in the bank so the first quarter 2025 is going to be tough.

Report of Fire Commissioner Board Committees and Chief of Department:

MONTHLY REPORTS: Asst. Chief Costello reported that the annual Volunteer Operations Meeting took place last night and everyone was updated on the status of the volunteers and Fire Co. Asst. Chief Costello reported that the volunteers are looking forward to next year and the initiatives that have been talked about.

Asst. Chief Costello reported that he is in the process of working with the County on updating the District Run Cards to make them more efficient. Asst. Chief Costello reported that the District is also looking ahead to a couple of changes including the Whippany ladder truck coming into play. Asst. Chief Costello reported that he is also talking to the County about incorporating the manpower tone that the District has been talking about as a way to assist the volunteers in knowing when a higher manpower required priority call is occurring. Asst. Chief Costello noted that this would also pick up a joint RIC Team arrangement with Whippany Fire Co. due to our current staffing levels. Asst. Chief Costello reported that the County is reviewing them and has given the District some feedback.

Asst. Chief Costello reported that he is working with the Fire Co. on purchasing some tools and equipment. Asst. Chief Costello reported that the Fire Co. was gracious enough to assist the District in purchasing new wood cribbing which was in dire need of replacement. Asst. Chief Costello reported that new rescue struts are also being considered as well as updating the hydraulic rescue tools over a period of time. Asst. Chief Costello reported that the Fire Co. has expressed a strong interest in working with the Board on these types of purchases.

Asst. Chief Costello noted that the Fire Co. feels it is very important that the Board acknowledge the Fire Co. as a designated firefighting force as opposed to a social organization. Asst. Chief Costello felt that this acknowledgement would go a long way towards creating the right kind of working environment moving forward and asked the Board to consider it.

Asst. Chief Costello thanked the Board for supporting him the past year and reported that he looks forward to working with the Board this year.

EMS: Commissioner Keyser reported that the end of the Power Truck 90-day trial is coming up so the Board should receive a report on it soon. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the 90 days have past and that he and Lt. Sulpy are almost done analyzing the data from the trial. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the data is showing that the Power Truck is productive and profitable. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that he and Lt. Sulpy broke down how many calls the Power Truck ran, how many of those calls were billable calls, and then how much the District brought in from the billable calls. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that there is about a 2-month lag between billing and receiving payment but September was profitable. Commissioner DeSimone asked if the data will show how many of the Mutual Aid calls had to go out of Town along with the volume and timeframe of calls. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. acknowledged that all this data should be available for September, October, and most of November by one of the January meetings.

BUDGET: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the 2025 Budget has been submitted to the DCA and the Public Hearing on the budget will be held on January 16, 2025.

PERSONNEL: Commissioner DeSimone reported that the Board would need an Executive Session tonight.

NEGOTIATIONS: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO THE VOLUNTEERS: Nothing to report.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: Nothing to report.

APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE: Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that the repair work on Ambulance 32 has begun.

INSURANCE: Commissioner Dugan Sr. reported that the District has paid \$60 - \$70 k in insurance premiums this month.

BY-LAWS: Nothing to report.

WEBSITE: Up to date. Commissioner Keyser asked if there would be a website page dedicated to the 2025 Budget on the website. Commissioner Dugan Jr. reported that there would be a dedicated page.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Nothing to report.

LIASON TO EXEMPTS: Nothing to report.

RECORDS RETENTION: Nothing to report.

LIAISON TO HANOVER TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE: Commissioner Keyser reported that the Township has passed the new Fire Ordinance.

OLD BUSINESS: Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that approved the ERS replacement program at their last meeting and asked if this Board had made a decision on it. Commissioner Keyser asked what the program would cost the District and when the money would need to be sent out. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that the cost would be \$5000, which is the same as ERS, and the bill would come in January or February. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. reported that there would also be a slight implementation fee which would be split with District 2. Commissioner Cornine asked for confirmation that there will be no hidden costs. Deputy Administrator Hark Jr. confirmed there would be no hidden costs. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to move forward with the purchase, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Keyser reported that the District responds to calls on Rt. 24 quite often, especially the intersection coming off onto Whippany Rd., and asked if our District along with Morris Plains could send a letter to the DOT or State Police to see if anything could be done about it. Asst. Chief Costello reported that he would take a look at it but felt it might carry more weight if any letter came from the Township of Hanover. Administrator Schultz reported that a lot of times communities will send a letter supporting a traffic study so if the Boards of the affected Districts each pass a resolution they could then jointly send a letter accompanied by the resolutions asking them to look at it. Asst. Chief Costello reported that we can follow up on it.

Commissioner Keyser asked when the petitions for Commissioner will be available for pickup. Administrator Schultz reported that the petitions for the 2 three-year positions would be available Monday.

Commissioner Cornine asked if there was any other New Business. There was none.

REMINDERS

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners will be held on Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

A Public Hearing on the 2025 Budget will be held on January 16, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at the District 3 Firehouse.

A Special Joint Fire Prevention Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. at the District 3 Firehouse.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.

RESOLUTIONS:

Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-139 authorizing 2024 Budget line transfers. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-140 adopting Deputy Chief job description. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner DeSimone. All were in favor.

Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-141 appointing Tim Costello as Deputy Chief. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-142 adopting the Volunteer Engineer Position. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-143 adopting the Volunteer Assistant Engineer position. Commissioner Keyser made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Dugan Jr. All were in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Commissioner DeSimone read Resolution 24-12-19-144 to enter into executive session. Commissioner Dugan Sr. made a motion to introduce the resolution, seconded by Commissioner DeSimone. All were in favor.

The Board went into closed session at 7:24 p.m.

Personnel matters were discussed, and action will be taken.

The Board came out of closed session at 8:20 p.m.

Commissioner Cornine reported that it has come to the Board's attention that a news article was posted on behalf of an employee and it is incumbent on the Board to put it on public record that no Board member nor representative there of took the liberty to post anything in the paper and if we are going to acknowledge our employees/staff the District will do it in the appropriate form on

the floor and /or add the Board member's name with appropriate information so there is no confusion.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary Lou DeSimone, Secretary