

**The Monthly Work Session of the Board of Fire Commissioners
District #3, in the Township of Hanover
County of Morris, Cedar Knolls, New Jersey
April 15, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on April 15, 2010 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231.

Attendees: Commissioners Thomas Harrington, Gary Keyser, Paul Pilipie, Thomas Quirk

Absent: Commissioner Joseph Martin

Chief James Davidson was also present. Assistant Chief Bob O'Hare and Captain MaryLou DeSimone were present from the public as was George Manis, MD, the department's Medical Director.

The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Harrington asked if anyone had received a copy of the Insurance Certificate and Business Registration Certificate from Giovanni Landscaping. No one had received the copies and, apparently, no letter requesting these certificates were sent to the landscaping firm. Chairman Harrington said he would look into getting the certificates.

Commissioner Keyser reported that he had spoken with G.M. Masonry who was scheduled to do the driveway. The mason said he was a little behind in his schedule, but he would do the concrete apron sometime in May.

Chairman Harrington indicated that the professional services have been advertised in the **Daily Record**, but the Board's meeting dates and the Fire Prevention Bureau meeting dates had not been advertised as of yet, but they were sent to the **Daily Record** today and will be advertised soon.

Chairman Harrington updated the Board on what has been happening between District #2 and District #3 representatives who met recently. They met with the Planning Board and are trying to get Chief Davidson and Chief Cortright on the "Spec Committee" which sits down and gives their views on any new buildings that are proposed. Chief Davidson said that this involves anything done in town that does not go before the Planning Board or the Board of Adjustment. Right now, the departments are not involved in anything. The Chief elaborated that the departments currently do Planning Board and Board of Adjustment reviews, but builders could take out the inside of the building and change the entire use and fire departments would know nothing about it. Chairman Harrington indicated during a meeting with Bill Byrne, Planning Board

Chairman, that places such as Sunrise, Care One and Lester Senior housing should have departmental input on some of the public safety burden that is being put on both districts with EMS and Fire. Mr. Byrne thought this was a great idea. They all agreed to meet in another month or so. The committee is also getting some numbers together for the Planning Board on Lester Senior housing which is talking about a very large expansion in the future.

Chief Davidson reported that he had spoken with Jim Schultz who indicated that he had spoken with Pam Brown of VIS regarding total membership involvement in Worker's Comp and he also spoke with Travelers.

Chairman Harrington said he had invited the Financial Advisor from Morristown to come to this evening's Board meeting, but he was tied up because this is tax season. Chairman Harrington suggested to the Board that Commissioners Harrington and Keyser will meet with him. There are two others to call from Parsippany and the two Commissioners will try to meet with them to tell them what the Board's needs are and to find out what their cost factors are.

There was no other old business to discuss. The Chairman addressed the officers present to ask if they had anything to discuss with the Board. Assistant Chief O'Hare spoke to the Board telling them, when the new ambulance comes, it has been decided to keep the old ambulance for use as a firefighter rehab ambulance and possibly for mass casualties. The Assistant Chief asked if the Board would continue to cover the insurance on it as they have in the past. There shouldn't be a lot of maintenance costs since there wouldn't be a lot of wear and tear on it. This would eliminate any loading and unloading every time it would be needed for firefighter rehab, etc. Chairman Harrington had looked into the current insurance and it was lower (approximately \$816.00/6 months) than he thought it would be. There was discussion where to keep this ambulance so that it was not left out in bad weather. The Town garage was suggested and also the old Allied building. The Assistant Chief said access would be important and it should be fairly close, but does not have to be on the property. Commissioner Keyser suggested checking with the Fire Inspectors who would know what is available. Captain DeSimone said she and Assistant Chief O'Hare would speak with Chad and Robert about local buildings which might be available to store the ambulance. The Board agreed that picking up the insurance would not be a problem.

George Manis, M.D., the Department's Medical Director, was present to speak to the Board about the criteria needed for physicals for the volunteers. Dr. Manis had prepared a booklet for each Commissioner which included two published epidemiology articles from 2007 and 2008 which goes into what the reasons are for firefighter fatalities. The booklet also includes how to prevent heart attacks which is the biggest reason (39%) for firefighter fatalities, mostly during firefighter suppression. Dr. Manis explained the major topics in the booklet including why physicals should be done annually and also after major illnesses and risk factors including stress during fire calls. He also made recommendations (cardiac screening proposal) which are summarized in the booklet including:

- Medical examinations should be performed by a physician who is knowledgeable in firefighter activities
- Physicals should be done annually and after major illnesses.
- A physician should be looking for how that person looks from a health perspective and can they take the physical stress that a fire puts on that person.
- SCBA use and turn-out gear – Firefighters have to have their SCBAs on at all fires. There needs to be an SOP regarding SCBA use.
- Rehabilitation – This is one of the most important things in preventing stress to the heart causing a heart attack. Dr. Manis had previously written a rehab SOP for the department. Getting an ambulance to the scene stocked with what is needed for firefighter rehab is imperative.
- Wellness Program – Workouts at the YMCA. They also have dieticians and trainers who can help firefighters get in shape. Dr. Manis said he could put a smoking cessation course together for the firefighters which is part of the recommendations in the articles included in the booklets prepared for the Commissioners.

Dr. Manis stressed that this is a cultural change. He recommended the following:

- Institute appropriate medical screening to be required at induction, annually and after an illness or injury
- Keep a record of member's vital signs through a screening with a quick history and physical, list of medications and baseline vital signs. He would also want the phone number of the primary care physician.
- After the screening, high risk members would go on to a thorough medical screening.
- Possible physical activity requirements for FAST team especially. Should a required physical fitness activity be part of getting a black helmet? If not, perhaps a blue helmet for those who are most physically fit to go inside on a FAST call.
- Newer PPE which is more fire resistant and lighter.

Chief Davidson felt that Dr. Manis should do the inhouse screening with high risk personnel going on to a more thorough physical at a cardiologist who can do EKGs, blood work, x-rays, etc. It was noted that the Township could be contacted for a public health nurse to be present for female members' initial physicals with Dr. Manis.

Commissioner Keyser asked if Dr. Manis and the Chief could put a protocol together with each step prior to the next meeting so the Board could look it over and vote on it at a regular meeting. Dr. Manis said he could probably have it written up for the May 20th monthly work session. He also felt a disclaimer should be signed by each person receiving the department physical. Personnel files would only be accessed by Dr. Manis who would have a key. The Board thanked Dr. Manis for his presentation.

Commissioner Keyser made a motion to go into closed session for Personnel at 8:00 PM, seconded by Commissioner Quirk, all in favor.

There was no other business to discuss. **A motion to adjourn at 8:20 PM was made by Commissioner Keyser, seconded by Commissioner Quirk, all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Paul Pilipie, Secretary