

**The Monthly Work Session of the Board of Fire Commissioners
District #3, in the Township of Hanover
County of Morris, Cedar Knolls, New Jersey
August 19, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM on August 19, 2010 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231.

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

Chief James Davidson was also present.

The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The first order of business was discussion of the by-laws. The Commissioners reviewed each page of the by-laws and there were very few changes. Commissioner Quirk asked the Chairman if the by-laws can now be sent to Anthony Bucco, Jr., Esq., the Board's attorney, since the Board is in agreement on the changes and when he has reviewed it, the Board can vote on accepting the by-laws as changed? Commissioner Pilipie said that he thought that the Board should be abiding by Roberts Rules of Order in which there were supposed to be three meetings regarding modifying the by-laws. It was pointed out by Chairman Harrington that the Board will be abiding by Roberts Rules because the Board initially met regarding the by-laws four months ago, tonight's meeting would be the 2nd meeting and the meeting in which the Board will vote on accepting the by-laws will be the 3rd meeting. After discussion on changes to the by-laws, Chairman Harrington said he would send it to Mr. Bucco for review.

Regarding the Regional grant, Chief Davidson said he would have the resolution ready for the next meeting if no one has any problems with the MOU. He was told to go ahead with the resolution.

Chairman Harrington asked Commissioner Pilipie if he had an update on the keychains and was told there was no update.

The Chairman asked about SOG's for the pre-application for the physicals/drug screening which was discussed previously. He asked the Chief if it has now been put in writing for the career staff and volunteers and the Chief's response was that the Board had not decided what to do if someone did not pass the physical – i.e., give a time frame to be compliant, put that person on EMS duty, etc. He was asked what other fire departments do and Chief Davidson responded that most departments don't have mandatory physicals. Commissioner Keyser suggested that the career men have PTO time which they would have to use. It was agreed that, if a firefighter doesn't pass his physical, he should have a chance within a specific time period in which to get in shape

to be able to do his job again. There is nothing in the current job description which addresses this. Commissioner Keyser suggested that the Board should think about it. Chairman Harrington suggested that they should call Mr. Knapp, the Board's attorney, to see what other departments do. The Chief said other departments have had to deal with health problems that were not detected as part of a physical, i.e., heart attack, high blood pressure, etc. so Fred Knapp, Esq., the Board's labor attorney, should have information on what other departments do in those cases.

Chairman Harrington asked if any of the Board members had heard from Mr. Calise regarding the firehouse renovation and Commissioner Keyser said he had not heard from him regarding the renovation and that he was hoping for a report in September.

Commissioner Keyser reported that Giovanni Landscaping has been paid and that everything is up to date regarding payments.

Chairman Harrington questioned Chief Davidson about speaking with his officers regarding filling in at the Board's regular monthly meetings in the Chief's absence and was told that they were spoken to on the subject.

There was discussion regarding the Rehab Ambulance. The Board had questioned where the ambulance would be kept because they did not want it parked in the fire department's parking lot. The Chairman said that they had indicated they would find a place to house the ambulance. The Board had agreed to pay the insurance. The Chairman told Commissioner Keyser that the EMS officers had said they would find a place to house the ambulance and he is leaving it to them to handle that. If no place is found by the time the new ambulance comes, then the Board can speak with them. Commissioner Martin felt that this rehab ambulance will be beneficial to the department and to the County so he felt that the Board should be patient and let them find a place to house it. The Chief reported that he thought Assistant Chief O'Hare had gotten a commitment from the DPW Superintendent to house the Rehab Ambulance there over the winter. The DPW will most likely house it in a secure area and will supply a key to get access to the ambulance. The Chief said that the details were not complete yet, but it is in the works. Right now, the Morris Minutemen, Morristown Ambulance and Cedar Knolls are all working jointly on rehab. Commissioner Pilipie commented that it is fortunate that Cedar Knolls has not needed a rehab much in the past. The Chairman said that it is taken on fast calls to other towns so that we can rehab our own firefighters in addition to anyone else needing rehab. Chief Davidson said that New Jersey Administrative code and division of fire safety mandates that fire departments have a rehab program. Commissioner Quirk asked the Chief if this was also going to be a back-up ambulance and the Chief said yes – if one ambulance is down for repairs or whatever, the stretcher will go back in and they will still have two ambulances available.

Chairman Harrington addressed the suggestion brought up at the August 5, 2010 regular monthly meeting regarding charging District #2 for each time Truck #33 goes to District #2 or cutting back on usage to District #2 because of wear and tear and cost of

fuel, etc. The Chairman said it is an expensive piece of equipment to retain, but he was adamant about not billing District #2 for the usage of Truck #33. The Chairman felt *very* strongly that the Boards are trying to work to get the two districts together. In addition, District #2 shares with this District any extra equipment that is needed. He said it would be a minimal amount of money saved especially when you consider that we're trying to work together about becoming one fire department and then talk about billing them for a firetruck sent on mutual aid. Commissioner Martin said that would be just like District #2 saying to us, "Since we have a dual dispatch every time we send an engine company to Cedar Knolls, we're going to charge you for maintenance and wear and tear on our engines." Commissioner Pilipie asked if Truck #33 has to go on something like a carbon dioxide call. The Chairman said that falls under Operations and the Board should let the Chief do his job. Commissioner Martin asked for the Chief's opinion on this and was told that the apparatus should be sent because you never know what you have until you get there. Before the meeting, he had given the each Commissioner a detailed report on why it is important to send #33. The Chief said that, "This is one of the things that we do very, very well. We are one of the most focused truck companies in Morris County because of our training and approach to things because of utilizing this truck as much as we do." In the report, the Chief outlined "what we do, what piece we take and what the membership knows. The benefit of taking #33 is that it has multiple fans on it. It's about \$6.25/mile to run the truck which is expensive when the aerial ladder goes up. We're a truck company – it's what we do and we do it very well." Asked by Commissioner Martin if the Chief felt that the benefits far exceed the cost of running it, the Chief answered an unequivocal yes.

Commissioner Keyser indicated that the Board had passed a motion at the August 5, 2010 regular monthly meeting that they would pay for the hotel for two days and \$50.00/day for expenses or meals when the Chief goes to the firemen's convention in Wildwood, but it was agreed to change it to 3 nights because the hotel requires a 3 night minimum during the convention. The Board will vote on it at the next regular meeting.

Chief Davidson said that the NIMS lettering has been put on the vehicles and he is trying something on the rear of his own vehicle to see how that works.

Chief Davidson said that the department needs a new dumpster because the one they have is in severe disrepair. The Board said they would replace the dumpster.

Commissioner Martin asked if there were any reports of the siren going off in town. The Commissioner said that there are problems with the Countrywood siren. Chief Davidson said he was not aware of that, but they have been having problems with the house siren also. The Countrywood siren could have been set off by any number of things, i.e., radio waves, storm, etc. It was decided to have Royal Communications come to look at it and let them determine if it is worth repairing and, if so, have them give a cost estimate to repair the sirens. The Chief said he would handle it.

Commissioner Keyser asked for direction by the next meeting on what to do with the \$70,000.00 in the budget that is earmarked for future capital purchases. It's been

going into the Board's future budgets which has approximately \$450,000.00 in that account which is the cash management account. Next year, the Board will be hit with a 2% cap. When the budget is done, the Board needs to look at what should be done with that \$70,000.00. Commissioner Martin asked if that money was earmarked for purchase of a new piece of apparatus. Commissioner Keyser said that the Board's financial advisor has said not to spend that money and that they should go to a lease purchase. The Chairman said they have to start moving on getting the new truck. The money that is in there for cash management should be used for the small addition to the firehouse that the Board has needed. The Chairman said that the Board needs to start looking about the big things and stop spending so much time on the small things. Commissioner Keyser said it doesn't make sense financially to have two firehouses and two sets of trucks. He reiterated that the Board needs to look at EMS billing again. Commissioner Martin said that, after reading the article on billing that was in the **Golden Cross**, billing will not be an easy task. There is a lot more involved than the Board realizes. There was discussion on pricing, reimbursement, etc. Chief Davidson said that he and Assistant Chief – EMS, Bob O'Hare, had attended a hearing this morning on Assembly bill 2095 and Senate bill 8180 which is the rewrite on EMS. This bill is really moving quickly – there was only one group opposed to this. The New Jersey League of Municipalities is in favor of this bill which was a shock. The impact will be that two EMTs will be needed on every call. They are looking to have the Governor sign this in November. The Chief also said that he will not be at the next Fire Prevention Bureau meeting which is August 26th, but the Boards will have to make a decision on narrowbanding. There was a lot of discussion on how it will affect this Board financially (i.e., \$200.00/each radio on the system), the infrastructure cost (\$115,000.00 for the initial upgrade of the department's hardware), replacement of pagers (\$400.00/pager) which cannot be reprogrammed. Nothing has been done because the two Chiefs are waiting for the two Boards to decide what they are going to do. Commissioner Pilipe had sent a letter to Mayor Sheridan and Mr. Giorgio after the last Fire Prevention Bureau meeting asking them to keep us up-to-date on what they Township will be doing. Chairman Harrington said he would follow up with the mayor to see which way they are leaning on this. Chief Davidson said the Board will have to hire someone to handle the narrow banding process. The Chairman indicated that both districts will have to put more money in the Fire Prevention Bureau's coffers. There was further discussion on this and how this will impact the department. Chief Davidson said that someone has to have a meeting with the Town Council to talk about this because decisions have to be made soon.

Chief Davidson said that he sent them a memo on the Safer Grant saying that the deadline for submitting the paperwork for the grant is September 17, 2010. The Chief said he needs to know by September 1, 2010 if the Board wants to apply for a Safer Grant.

Chief Davidson told the Board that Chief Goss in Morristown retired on Friday, August 13, 2010. An Acting Chief has not been appointed yet.

Chief Davidson indicated that he had been put in touch with a slate roof expert who looked at the roof on the firehouse and said the roof was a great roof, absolutely

repairable and did not have any major problems. Chairman Harrington asked the Chief to get an estimate for repairing since there were slates found on the ground which the Board felt was dangerous, but no one was sure what exactly needed repairing. The Chief said he would call him to set up an appointment to look at the roof.

There was no other business to discuss. **Commissioner Martin made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM, seconded by Commissioner Quirk, all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Paul Pilipie, Secretary