

**The Monthly Work Session of the Board of Fire Commissioners
District #3, in the Township of Hanover,
County of Morris, Cedar Knolls, New Jersey
January 20, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM on January 20, 2011 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act of 1975, Chapter 231.

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

Peter DeNegrìs was present from the public.

The Board stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Harrington noted that the extra cameras for the security system have been installed.

The Chairman indicated that the Board had not heard anything to date about putting Chiefs Davidson and Cortright on the Spec Committee. The Chairman said that they will wait until the next meeting and, if the Board did not hear anything, they would write a letter from the Fire Prevention Bureau to the Planning Board with a copy to Joseph Giorgio, Township Administrator, and Mayor Sheridan asking that the Chiefs be included on the Spec Committee.

The Chairman reported that he spoke with Commissioner Hansch who said that everything has been approved for the \$35,000.00 that District #2 is giving to District #3. Commissioner Hansch said that all they need are vouchers signed by Chairman Harrington for payment in the first and second quarters of 2011.

Commissioner Keyser said that he did not get the sanitizers for the downstairs bathroom yet, but he will get them.

Chairman Harrington reported that Craig Vagell had accepted the position of Fire Captain.

The Chairman updated the Board on the Communications meeting that he and Commissioner Quirk attended regarding radios at the County. Mayor Sheridan wanted to get Fire and EMS on the County system, but the Police Department was not ready to go to that system yet and the County made it clear that they did not want Fire and EMS to go separately from the Police Department. The Chairman said that Chief Davidson had a lot of good questions regarding going to the County system, i.e., can we get a few more handsets because our mutual aid companies are up here, narrowbanding, etc. Chairman Harrington told Freeholder Cabana that the Fire District is under the 2% cap and there is

no way that the district could go to the County system and pay \$80,000.00. The Chairman asked how would this look going to the County system and paying \$80,000.00 of taxpayers' money when we currently get dispatch at no cost. The only way to go to the County communications system that is feasible is if the whole town goes there. Police Chief Gallagher is against going to the County system because he feels the police department should be manned 24 hours/day including at night and that the communication should be through his department. He put together a report on why he felt this way. The feeling from the Chairman is that it's all or none will go to the County. The meeting was exploratory. Commissioner Quirk felt that Chief Davidson did an excellent job of telling them why the Fire Department would like to come up to County and gave the reasons. If the Police Department waits until 2013, then the Fire district has to either lay out money for the radio equipment to go to narrowbanding or go to the County. There was further discussion on outlaying money to the County over a period of time, simulcasting (going out on the new County frequency, but regenerated to the old pagers temporarily), backup systems, PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point), PSDP (Public Safety Dispatch Point), etc. and other questions. The Chairman said the Board cannot wait until 2013 to make decisions, but, right now, there are mixed signals on what is happening.

The Chairman indicated a representative from Pierce Manufacturing gave a rough estimate on the cost of a pumper. The rough cost was somewhere from \$340,000.00 to \$364,000.00. On a five year lease purchase, the financing would be \$76,000.00/year or \$57,000.00/year for a seven year purchase lease. The Board is still looking into other manufacturers' pricing and other information so that it can be put on a referendum on February 19, 2011.

Commissioner Keyser commented that 18 members of the department had their physicals on Monday, January 17th, and everything went well. There will be two more nights for members' physicals. Commissioner Keyser also reported that he had spoken with Lynn from Access Health about other districts which do this and also make the physicals mandatory for Interior firefighters including Howell Township, Franklin Township and Montgomery Township fire districts.

Commissioner Keyser reported that the election petition deadline is January 21st at 5:00 PM for petitions to be returned. There will be a paragraph for voter approval at the election for the budget for lease purchase of a new fire truck for the ballot.

Commissioner Pilipie questioned whether Truck #30 has been locked at the end of the 6:00 PM shift. No one knew, but Commissioner Keyser said they could look after the meeting to check.

Commissioner Martin reported that he had done some research on the proposed mobile command vehicle which was discussed at the January 6, 2011 meeting. He and Robert Lake met with a salesman, Mike Denny, from Odyssey in Wharton. The vehicle would be use for staging as a secondary command post. The Incident Commander would be able to know exactly what his resources are. This vehicle would be a mobile

command post only and would not carry any equipment except for the turnout gear of the person bringing the vehicle to the scene and an SCBA. The salesman FAXed a detailed explanation of what the mobile command vehicle would be equipped with and the Commissioner gave a copy to each of the other Commissioners for review. Chief Davidson had discussed with Commissioner Martin that he would like to retire Car #31, taking the radios and siren out. The salesman said the price listed for the command vehicle could be less if it could be added to a bulk order from other fire departments and/or if the Commissioners went through the Morris County Co-Op. Nothing can be done until it's time to prepare next year's budget. Commissioner Martin asked the Board to look it over.

There was discussion on the insurance issue in which Commissioner Keyser had received a call from their insurance representative regarding medical insurance from Oxford Insurance. The agent said that they had not received payment for medical insurance coverage and told the Commissioner that the fire department, therefore, would not have coverage. Commissioner Keyser called the Chairman and then called Richard Braslow, Esq., Special Counsel for the Board, who called the agent directly. Apparently, Oxford Insurance Company was in error, but the Board's insurance agent should have looked into it before telling Commissioner Keyser that the bill was not paid and that they had no medical coverage and wouldn't have coverage until the bill was paid. The Board was very unhappy with the fact that the agent didn't check into whether there was an error within Oxford Insurance Company.

Chairman Harrington mentioned that the Rehab Unit (#36) is in the Township Garage. The Chairman said that two pumpers used to be parked on the Mountain Avenue side, one in front of the other, and suggested that the Board could do the same with #36 which could be parked in back of #35. All that would have to be done is to move a washing machine and ice machine to a different wall and store miscellaneous items in other closets. However, Commissioner Keyser indicated that Parsippany will have an entire trailer set up for Rehab in 3 months and the department won't need the Rehab Unit after that. There was further discussion on other options and the Chairman suggested that the Board think about this option for the Rehab Unit.

Commissioner Pilipie asked Commissioner Keyser if he had spoken to the insurance company about the boilers and was told that he had not as of yet.

The Chairman indicated that there are a lot of problems popping up with #34 with the pump leaking and other things and suggested that they make #35 first due out with #34 second due out and FAST calls. Commissioner Martin reminded the Board that #35 has all of the extrication equipment on it so #35 would be going on *all* calls including accidents, first alarms, CO, etc. Commissioner Keyser said that the meters and the fast track, etc. is not plugged into #35 and there are no cameras. The Chairman said he had spoken with Chief Davidson who said there are repairs and other options that can be done to the truck without costing money – the Chairman said he would discuss those options with the Chief. Commissioner Keyser said that it is not mutual aid, but is an automatic dispatch -- under ISO ratings they count Whippany in with the count on equipment. The

Chairman said he would get in touch with the contact from the company that they might be using to get the truck regarding when they should order it, when delivery can be taken and when the first payment would be due all, of course, if the voters approve the referendum.

Commissioner Pilipie reminded the Board that, according to the bylaws, Chief Davidson is supposed to be at every meeting or send an officer in his place. The Chairman said that the Chief was planning to be at the meeting, but something must have come up. He said he would remind the Chief to get someone to replace him when he can't make it.

Commissioner Keyser said that Chief Davidson should be setting up a chain of command now that he has more officers so that the company knows that the Chief cannot handle everything and that the officers are the company's contacts for questions or problems. The Chief should be giving his officers their assignments so that the company knows who to contact regarding equipment, training, etc. If there are problems, they need to go up the chain of command.

Commissioner Keyser distributed the final year end budget on how much money had been spent for 2010. He said that the Board had done very well and there was \$164,580.00 which had been allocated, but not spent. Under fringe benefits, the Board was over by \$52,000.00. Commissioner Keyser listed the breakdown on where that overage went.

There was no other business to discuss. **Commissioner Quirk made a motion to adjourn at 8:19 PM, seconded by Commissioner Pilipie, all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Paul Pilipie, Secretary

