

HOPEWELL BOROUGH BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

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AGENDA

June 13, 2012

Call to order:

Flag Salute

Notification of meeting (Sunshine Law)

Roll call

Public Comment

Minutes: (May 9 & 23, 2012)

Bid Opening:

Public Comment:

Treasurer's Report:

Fire Department Administration:

Ladies' Auxiliary

EMU Chief Report:

Fire Chief Report:

Fire Official Report: On file

Committee Reports:

Attorney Report:

Other Business:

**MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
HOPEWELL BOROUGH DISTRICT NO. 1
May 9, 2012**

PRESENT: Cmsr. Anderson
Cmsr. Bovenizer
Cmsr. Evans
Chair Morehouse
Cmsr. Reichman

Public Comment:

Ray Disch, a real estate broker and the owner of property at the corner of Rt. 518 and Princeton Avenue appeared with a client, Tom Weiss, who purchased a home at 89 Model Avenue in the borough in January. Mr. Weiss and his wife, although they knew of its existence, are disturbed by the sound intensity of the fire siren, particularly in the middle of the night. Mr. Disch stated the siren repeatedly is an issue in showing property in town. He questioned why modern telecommunications can't dispatch emergency calls without the need for the siren? Cmsr. Morehouse explained there are radio improvements in the works that may help rectify the situation, but that they will not solve the problem in the immediate future. Chief Novak stated technology and topography are the major obstacles to doing away with the sirens. Pager communication is not fully effective because the tower at Mt. Rose goes down frequently and topographically our area has a number of 'dead spots' where even the tower communications are ineffective. The number of fire and first aid calls is up appreciably and the siren is a necessity to inform our volunteers of emergency calls. It may be possible to set up nighttime 'duty crew tones' for EMS which might reduce the number of audible sirens for their calls. However, dispatching is not locally controlled and the board cannot dictate the number of times alarms sound for any given call. Any changes to the dispatching system would have to be established by and through regional authorities. Cmsr. Morehouse stated the decibel level of the sirens has been adjusted downward in the past and the calibration will be checked again. To change the technology of the sirens to more subtle tones is estimated to cost upwards of \$16,000-20,000, and if better technology is coming that will require less dependence on the sirens he does not believe committing this much money toward an interim fix is economically wise. He stated the board is very aware of residents' sensitivity regarding the sirens, however the board must defer to the volunteers who provide their services to the community – when they say the sirens are no longer needed the board will act to do away with them. He suggested these concerns be brought before Borough Council, which has established focus groups in the past to explore alternatives. The board and emergency services volunteers would be willing to participate and to host informational meetings for concerned citizens

Minutes: (April 11, 2012)

On a motion made by Cmsr. Anderson and seconded by Cmsr. Bovenizer, the minutes of `April 11, 2012, were approved with the following three corrections: Under Bid Opening, the bid by Sutphen Corporation was \$319,922.12, not \$319,992.12 as written; under the Fire Chief Report, #11 should read FEMA Regional AFG Grant, not ATF Grant as written; and under the EMU Report it is Princeton Healthcare providing the traffic control sensors for the squad, not the Princeton 1st Aid and Rescue as written. Cmsr. Reichman was absent at that meeting and did not vote on the approval.

Treasurer's Report:

A copy of the treasurer's report was made available to each commissioner with a list and description of the bills to be paid. The Chief Financial Officer certified that there were sufficient unencumbered funds to pay the bills and designated the account to which each would be charged.

1. April bills were submitted in the amount of \$14,235.03. Roughly \$4500 was FDIC expenses and \$3700 was periodic maintenance on the trucks. On a motion made by Cmsr. Bovenizer and seconded by Cmsr. Reichman, the treasurer's report was accepted and the bills proposed for payment. Payment of the bills passed unanimously on a roll call vote.
2. Hopewell Family Practice returned a \$296.00 payment billed in error for a fireman's physical.
3. Cmsr. Morehouse recommended that each year the board should issue an invitation to bid for the provision of services like truck maintenance and repairs. He asked the chiefs to enumerate items that should be included in specifications for discussion over the next few months.

Fire Department Administration:

1. A vote passed authorizing the purchase of the building and necessary repairs. The company is looking for a lender and expects to close the transaction in the next month or so.

Ladies' Auxiliary: No report.

EMU Report:

1. 35 calls in April and 2 scratch calls.
2. A 'summer emergencies' drill was held during April. There will be a squad meeting this month in lieu of training.
3. Annual community education events will be held this month which are free to the public - May 10th 'Community CPR'; May 16th and 17th 'Full Professional CPR'; May 24th 'CPR Professional Refresher'; and May 31st '1st Aid'.

Fire Chief Report:

1. 106 calls in April - 81 of which were electrical in nature (including one fire) and occurred in one night as the result of a PSE&G power surge affecting Hopewell Hunt.
2. The cost of maintaining a static IP address turns out to be about \$60 per month so the fire company does not intend to pursue that undertaking.
3. Deputy Chief Mullen has offered to post the required information on a newly created fire district webpage linked to Hopewell Borough's website as well as on a link from the fire company's website. On a Motion by Cmsr. Bovenizer and seconded by Cmsr. Evans, he was authorized to do so.
4. Since the borough offices have moved there is no need for the cleaning services - fire company members will take on that obligation. On a motion by Cmsr. Evans and seconded by Cmsr. Reichman, Commissioner Bovenizer was authorized to cancel the cleaning contract with C&H Enterprises.

Fire Official Report: On file

Attorney Report: None.

Committee Reports: None

Other Business:

LOSAP: Once the township issues its check for LOSAP the full payment will go into Liberty Mutual at one time.

Tanker Purchase: Unless there is a legal reason to the contrary, the fire company recommends awarding the purchase to the lowest bidder, Sutphen Corporation, and including the following options: #2 - Zolatone paint applied to the interior of compartments \$875.00; #4 - Painted roll-up doors in lieu of satin finish \$1175.00; #7 - On-Spot chains for the rear wheels \$2071.00; #8 - Whelen LED arrowstick on rear of apparatus \$985.00. Including options, the cost of the apparatus would be \$326,603.12. The board will further evaluate the proposals, including financing alternatives. On a motion by Cmsr. Bovenizer and

seconded by Cmsr. Reichman, a request to bidders for a thirty-day extension to keep their bid prices in effect will be made.

SCBA Purchase: Cmsr. Evans will follow up with the Local Finance board to determine the status of the SCBA financing application. He will ask whether a new application must be made now that the purchase will be made by bid rather than on NJ State Contract as was stated in the initial application. Cmsr. Morehouse will contact Rob Inverso to discuss acceptable mechanisms for financing.

FEMA Radio Grant: There has been a suspension of some of the FCC narrow banding mandates, but it does not appear that they affect the frequencies Mercer County fire companies will be using. Deputy Chief Mullen was told by the host organization, Hamilton District 3, that because of a clause in this particular grant they do not believe purchases can be delayed until 2013 and that headsets for each riding position in the trucks must be included, even if not needed. Hamilton No. 3 has requested a time extension from FEMA, but has not heard anything yet. At this time it looks like our local share will be about \$31,500 to outfit four trucks (including headsets). If headsets can be waived our share would be about \$22,200. Deputy Chief Mullen will pursue further information and report back to the board.

Special Meeting of the Board: On a motion by Cmsr. Morehouse and seconded by Cmsr. Bovenizer, the board will re-advertise its scheduled work session as a special meeting at which formal action may be taken for the purposes of determining options for financing the tanker, the SCBA and the radio purchases, as well as awarding contracts for same should it be determined to do so. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 23, 2012, at 7:30 pm at the Hopewell Borough Fire Station, 4 Columbia Ave. in Hopewell, New Jersey, and/or at such other times as to which it may be adjourned.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the board, on a motion by Cmsr. Bovenizer and seconded by Cmsr. Anderson, the meeting adjourned at 9: 50 pm.