

**MEETING MINUTES  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
HOPEWELL BOROUGH DISTRICT NO. 1**

**December 11, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Cmsr. Anderson  
Cmsr. Bovenizer (arrived late)  
Cmsr. Evans  
Cmsr. Morehouse  
Cmsr. Myers

**Call to Order:** The scheduled meeting of the board was called to order by Commissioner Morehouse at 8:00 pm. Proof of publication under the Open Public Meetings Law (Annual Meeting Notice published in the official newspapers of the district, posted at the Hopewell Borough Municipal Building and the board offices) was provided.

**Minutes :** (November 13, 2013)

On a motion by Cmsr. Anderson and seconded by Cmsr. Myers the minutes of the November 13, 2013 meeting were approved as presented.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Treasurers 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 previously certified that there were sufficient unencumbered funds in the 2013 budget to pay the bills and designated the account to which each would be charged.

Including payment to Hopewell Valley Community Bank in the amount of \$8,139.12 (\$2110.12 interest and \$6029.96 interest) for the SCBA loan, added to the list of bills being paid this evening, the total bills submitted for payment tonight are \$35,303.18. Significant expenses were for hose and ball valves to replace that damaged in September (to be reimbursed by the insurance company) and for fire department administration, which amount represents 3 months' expenses.

Payment when due from funds in the 2013 budget for the fire district's portion of career personnel expenses (up to \$35,000.00) and for the loan payment on the tanker (\$21,288.92) were also presented for approval.

On a motion by Cmsr. Anderson and seconded by Cmsr. Myers, the foregoing expenses were presented for payment. Payment was approved on a roll call vote.

Commissioner Bovenizer arrived.

### **2014 Budget :**

There was a consensus that to the best of its ability the board has minimized costs and that the board's proposed budget is a financially responsible representation of the costs associated with operating the fire district. On a motion by Cmsr. Anderson and seconded by Cmsr. Bovenizer, Resolution 2013-019 was proposed. The board adopted **Resolution 2013-019** approving its 2014 Fire District Budget with revenues of \$503,034.00, which includes an amount to be raised by taxation of \$175,109.00, and total appropriations of \$503,034.00, and setting the date for the public hearing on the budget as January 8, 2014.

### **Transfer of Funds Between Line Items in 2013 Budget:**

On a motion by Cmsr. Myers and seconded by Cmsr. Anderson, Resolution 2013-020 was proposed. The board approved **Resolution 2013-020** authorizing the transfer of funds between line items in the 2013 budget as authorized by law.

### **Fire Department Administration:**

1. The holiday tree lighting event was a success.
2. Work continues on the interior of the building.

### **Ladies' Auxiliary:**

1. Blanket sales are going well – over 130 have been sold to date.
2. The monthly meeting and holiday party was held on December 5<sup>th</sup>.
3. The auxiliary helped with refreshments at the holiday tree lighting on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **EMU Report:**

1. 25 calls in November: 16 Township, 8 Borough, 1 other. No scratch calls. There have been 297 calls thus far in 2013.
2. Chevron stripes have been installed on the ambulances.
3. Elections for 2014 were held: Heather Varrasse will remain as Chief and Luke Morehouse was elected Deputy Chief.

### **Fire Chief Report:**

1. 24 calls in November: 15 Township, 3 Borough, 2 Pennington Borough, 4 other. Of these were 3 motor vehicle incidents, 2 of which involved heavy entrapment.
2. The air leak on the Quint will be repaired by Four Lanes and the speedometer will require replacement (\$400-500).
3. A few outstanding items on the punch list for the tanker will be addressed by the manufacturer this week.
4. Elections for 2014 were held and the chief and line officers remain the same as in 2013.

**Fire Official Report:** On file

**Committee Reports:** None

**Attorney Report:** None

## **Other Business:**

1. **Election and Budget Referendum:** The annual election and budget referendum will be held February 15, 2014 between 2 and 9 pm. There are two 3-year terms open on the board, those presently held by Commissioners Anderson and Myers. Petitions to run for either seat are available from the board clerk or by calling (609) 575-4893. The closing date for filing completed petitions with the board clerk is January 17, 2013 at 5 p.m.

2. **Insurance** - Commissioner Myers solicited and presented the following quotes for 2014, including workers' comp estimated to cost \$42,531.00 annually:

a. Selective Insurance (existing carrier) - \$250/500 deductibles = \$24,225.00. Does not write its own workers' comp. = \$66,756.00 w/ comp.

b. VFIS – similar coverage as Selective but somewhat better - \$250/500 deductibles = \$24,874.00. Does not write its own workers' comp. = \$67,406.00 w/ comp.

c. VFIS alternative – increased deductibles to \$1000 per claim = \$22,877.00 or \$65,408.00 w/ comp.

d. First Responder – JIF (joint insurance fund w/ 31 members presently) – requires 3 year commitment. \$1M/\$3M/\$15M pooled aggregate limits. \$1000 deductibles (\$10,000 on management liability) = \$34,668.00. Provides workers' compensation = \$55,763.00 w/ comp. (has seen recent significant increases due to poor WC loss history).

Considering differences in deductibles, defense cost coverage, management liability provisions (inc'l. employee practices) and commitment, he suggested the VFIS policy with lower deductibles as the most beneficial to the fire district for the cost. On a motion by Cmsr. Morehouse, seconded by Cmsr. Bovenizer and passed, Cmsr. Myers was directed to contact Nottingham Insurance and have VFIS prepare a final proposal for board consideration.

## **Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the board, on a motion by Cmsr. Morehouse and seconded by Cmsr. Anderson, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the board will be held on January 8, 2014.