

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

January 10, 2024

PRESENT: Cmsr. Morehouse
Cmsr. Myers
Cmsr. Evans
Cmsr. Davies
Cmsr. Blasi

Call to Order: The scheduled meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order at 7:13 pm by Chairman Morehouse following proof of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was given through the Annual Meeting Notice and was filed with the municipal clerk, posted at the municipal building, the board's office, the fire district website, and advertised in the official newspapers of the district as required by law.

Minutes:

Commissioners reviewed November minutes and with a motion by Commissioner Blasi and 2nd by Commissioner Evans the motion passes 5-0 with all in favor.

Commissioners reviewed December minutes and with a motion by Commissioner Blasi and 2nd by Commissioner Davies the motion passes 5-0 with all in favor.

Public Comment: Opened hearing for Budget review and adoption of 2024 budget in the amount of \$840,488.00. Motion to close public comment, motion by Commissioner Blasi, 2nd by Commissioner Evans. Roll call 5-0 motion passes.

Resolution 2024-01 Adopting the budget. Motion by Commissioner Davies and 2nd by Commissioner Blasi. Roll call 5-0 motion passes.

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 funds in the encumbered 2023 budget and the temporary 2024 budget to pay the bills and designated the account to which each would be charged.

Bills were submitted to be paid from the 2023 budget in the amount of \$20,246.09 and \$28,476.35 from 2024 budget for a total of \$48,722.44. Motioned by Commissioner Davies and seconded by

Commissioner Evans to pay the bills as submitted with a roll call vote all in the affirmative passing via majority. Resolution 2024-02 passed 5-0.

Fire Department Administration: none

Ladies Aux: No report

EMU Report:

Chief Read advised 528 calls for 2023. 57 calls for December no scratches. 35% increase from 2022 due to Pennington EMS closing. 32 new members of which 12 are EMTs. Currently 7 people are in EMT class. According to NJFAC Hopewell EMS had the highest recruiting in the State for 2023. Squad 151 is dissolving completely and will be expending all assets next month. Had a squad gathering last month organized by an anonymous donor.

Fire Chief Report:

There were 317 calls for 2023. 42 calls for January, had a full house for the most recent storm. Waiting on an update from insurance company to fix the rescue. Marine 52 is in service, will be doing some training with it in the spring. One member has graduated from fire school. Worked with Hopewell Valley OEM to make sure all available resources were preplanned and will be sent to appropriate assignments.

Chairman Morehouse wants the group to think about where they see the Department in 5 years. Building expansion was discussed, with true bunk rooms, showers, and an ADA elevator. Past Chief Springer mention that phase 2 of the building expansion was to enclose the inner parking area which would make 3 more bays available (brush, utility, boat) and have the upstairs over the bays become the sleeping quarters. Chief Springer also noted that the Twp still has not finished the emergency services study. Chairman Morehouse stated he wants to know what type of equipment will be needed, and what kind of services are we going to provide. He states that we need to incentivize ourselves by billing to accrue funds to be able to afford personnel moving forward from the Township.

Short term goals – expect to start budgeting in March this year. Get the ambulances licensed. Chief Read spoke of equipment that maybe needed, and possibly looking into refurbishing the oldest ambulance. He also spoke of being contacted by the new Council members as they were interested in speaking about resources that may be needed.

Chief Galatro added he was working on a mutual aid agreement with Griggstown Fire for the Tanker Task Force. Also, would like to discuss extending the awarded yearly maintenance contract for the larger apparatus to a multi-year basis rather than a single year.

Fire Official Report: on file

Attorney Report: none

Committee Reports:

Resolution 2024-03 for Budget to be Read by Title – Motion by Commissioner Evans, 2nd by Commissioner Blasi. All in favor motion passes 5-0.

Resolutions 2024-04 Newspapers; 2024-05 Attorney; 2024-06 Auditor/Accountant; 2024-07 Clerk; 2024-08 Deposit of Funds; 2024-09 Insurance Agent; 2024-10 Custodian of Records; and 2024-11 Temporary Budget for 2024. Motion by Commissioner Evans, 2nd by Commissioner Myers. All in favor; all motions pass 5-0.

Public Comment (non-agenda): No public in attendance to comment.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the board, on a motion by Cmsr. Evans and seconded by Cmsr. Blasi unanimously approved the meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the board will be held on February 14, 2024.