

**Board of Fire Commissioners
Fire District No. 1
330 Stillwells Corner Road
Freehold, NJ 07728**

Regular Meeting

September 12, 2023

Chairman John Toutouchi called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners to order at 6pm, and Lt. Michael Celano led the flag salute. Roll call was taken, and the Commissioners present at the meeting were John Toutouchi, Michael Fogarty, Phil Engel and Stephen Lengyel. Commissioner Andrew Story joined the meeting via teleconference. Board Secretary-Rachel Davis was also present at the meeting.

Chairman Toutouchi asked for a moment of silence for all who lost their lives in 9/11.

Motion was made by Mr. Lengyel to approve the August 21, 2023 regular and executive minutes.

Second: Mr. Engel

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Fogarty read the September 12, 2023 Treasurer's Report into record.

Motion was made by Mr. Fogarty to transfer \$145,000 from Ocean First Money Market to Ocean First checking and to pay the bills in the amount of \$138,368.35.

Second: Mr. Engel

Roll call vote: 4-0 all in favor (Mr. Story abstained.)

Fire Company: Lt. Michael Celano reported the following:

- There will be an additional purchase of gear, and he will be meeting with the gear vendor. The old gear that is expired he will keep for junior use.
- Mr. Fogarty noted that the airbags are still pending from last year's budget.
- The hose that he ordered will, most likely, have to be carried for next year because of the delay in receiving it.
- Scott air packs will need to be ordered within a year and a half.
- All gear had been tested, completed and repaired.
- Some gear failed testing because of a vapor-barrier problem with the liners, which is a manufacturer malfunction. He is in the process of holding the warranty accountable to repair them.

- Meetings are set up for Wildwood. Commissioner Story asked for the dates for the meetings.
- OSHA inspection went well. They made some recommendations, including ordering some work gear and keeping the fire extrication gear separate from the work-detail gear. The Board thanked Lt. Celano for taking his time to meet with the OSHA representative.
- Extinguisher testing has been completed.
- Pump/hose/ladder testing at the end of October.
- 2nd Asst. Chief Frank Santore wanted to thank the Board for letting them use the firehouse for the rescue drill.

Chief Haas shared his concerns about the Board's policies regarding the Chief's vehicles. He acknowledged that in the past the Chiefs were always the ones responsible for assigning vehicles, where they go and who was qualified to drive. He also questioned the policy regarding family members under 18 not allowed in the vehicles.

A lengthy discussion was held, and the following was made clear:

- The Board is responsible to the insurance company and also takes the advice of the Board Attorney.
- The Board stressed the importance of being informed of where the vehicles go.
- The Chief has the authority to make decisions on daily vehicle usage.
- Family members under the age of 18 are not allowed in the Chief's vehicles.

Chief Haas, Lt. Celano and Commissioner Story will work on the ID badges. Lt. Celano reminded Mr. Story that the current ID's will expire in January.

Commissioner Story had to leave the meeting at 6:38pm.

Mr. Toutouchi addressed the issue of Ex-Chief Spicuzza purchasing his helmet.

Motion was made by Mr. Lengyel to sell Ex-Chief Spicuzza's helmet to him for \$500.

Second: Mr. Fogarty

Roll call vote: 4-0 all in favor

It was determined by the Board that, moving forward, they will no longer be purchasing leather helmets for any officer or firefighter, because the helmets they have now are sufficient. Any officer who currently has a leather helmet and retires, they will have the same offer for their helmet, depending on the age and if it can still be put back into inventory. After 10 years they can have the helmet. Commissioner Toutouchi will advise Ex-Chief Dan Spicuzza.

Mr. Toutouchi is interested in moving forward with creating an employee portal giving access to all members in a read-only capacity so that they can view their documents. Mr. Toutouchi will work with Lt. Celano.

Mr. Toutouchi asked about the hay in the back and asked that it be removed.

Mr. Toutouchi asked who to talk to about painting lines in the parking lot.

The controlled access camera system is getting finalized. The contract will be signed by tomorrow and the cameras at Smithburg will be completed, hopefully, by October 1st.

Freehold Township Police Department has access to the buildings to use the bathrooms.

Mr. Fogarty finished reviewing the OSHA list. He also advised that the OSHA rep said that beards are one of the biggest violations.

Motion was made by Mr. Fogarty to go into executive session for the purposes of personnel matters at 6:51pm.

Second: Mr. Lengyel

4-0 all in favor

(back from executive at 7:25pm)

There being no further business, Mr. Lengyel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm.

Second: Mr. Engel

4-0 all in favor

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Engel, Secretary
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