

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT NO.9
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August 13, 2024

The combined monthly Meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioner of District 9, 1222 Green Street, Iselin, New Jersey, was called to order at 6:59 p.m. by the Chairman under Chapter 231 of the Laws of 1975 with notices posted in the Home News Tribune, on the bulletin board at Fire Company #1 and #2, and at Town Hall as prescribed by law. A salute to the flag was led by the Fire Commissioner followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call of Commissioners: M. Rudy, D. Thaker, E.A. Mullen, K. Williams, S. Burrows.

Also in attendance were E.R. Mullen, W. Kenney, M. Rivera, A. Harland, Attorney A. Rainone Esq. and Deputy Director Nisky,

A motion was made by S. Burrows and seconded by K. Williams with everyone in favor (M. Rudy, E.A. Mullen, D. Thaker) to pay all bills for July 2024 in the total of \$336,339.93.

Reports of Committees:

Woodbridge Police Department:

Deputy Director Nisky from the Woodbridge Police Department came by with some remarks: As a result of deficiencies in the delivery of emergency and medical services the township EMS manager has been overseeing EMS. The purpose remains to provide prompt, affective and unimpeded emergency medical services to all residents and visitors of Woodbridge Township. All available resources are used in the pursuit of the highest quality basic life support. We encourage collaboration and coordination between the four 1st aid squads, Avenel, Colonia, Port Reading and Woodbridge Township to insure the most immediate response to life threatening incidents. With an average of 1100 calls for service each month, required standbys at township and school events and being the primary mutual aid for Carteret and South Amboy we must staff and have available for dispatch no less than five ambulances each day. Concern that one of their 1st aid squad has been either unwilling or unable to provide coverage. So that we can create a safety net for the remaining 1st aid squads we deemed it necessary for the Woodbridge Police Department to become a New Jersey State licensed medical services provider. Our immediate intentions are to staff and have available one ambulance dispatching from Fords Fire Department on or about October 1st and to reevaluate at the end of the year. Our position would be to staff a second ambulance

only if it was necessary. Would the board be interested in a shared service agreement to provide space at House 2 in Menlo Park Terrace? Space is currently being provided at Colonia, Avenel and Port Reading fire departments. Unable to say now, whether another ambulance would be needed at the end of this year or beginning of the next. They will need to be prepared if it's needed.

Mr. Mullen asked to clarify and the deputy director advised it was more of a probably going to happen and there are things that would need to be prepared. The building would need to be looked at to see what upgrades would be necessary and enter into a shared services agreement, have it in place in case we need to move on it. Mr. E.A. Mullen asked if there was a time span on needing the space. There is no plan for the township to turn over delivery of EMS to anyone else. The hospital based EMS have challenges in response time. The Mayor is unwilling to go in that direction. This is why they invested in two ambulances, 10 EMT's will be hired by October 1st and another 10 by January 1st. Mr. Rudy asked more details about staffing and what would be needed. The staff would be there 24/7 and would need housing as well as the ambulance needing to be indoors. For the department where an ambulance is housed, the fire department did not need to pay for renovations if they were needed to accommodate the ambulance and staff. The length of the ambulance is unknown. Twenty-one feet is currently available. Logistics can be hammered out. Mr. Burrows advised that it goes to the safety of the community and he supports housing the ambulance. The deputy director advised Fords in particular benefited from hosting an ambulance because they wound up with an additional bay. There may need to be facilities upgrades, showers, lockers, etc.

A poll was taken of those in favor, each commissioner answered in the affirmative in hosting an ambulance, E.A. Mullen, S. Burrows, M. Rudy, K. Williams and D. Thaker. The topic will be revisited after someone from township engineering can determine what, if anything would need to be done and the shared service agreement can be written.

Business Administration Report:

Equipment & Apparatus:

9-2 is down at ES. They needed to complete the PM work. There were two issues that had to be addressed, the brake, which were at less than 30% and the pump packing was corroded. They were waiting for parts, brakes are done, currently putting the pump backing in and there is now a drive shaft issue. That part is five weeks out. The vehicle will be brought back after current work is completed and taken back when the part arrives. There are things to address budget wise with 9-2 toward the end of the year. The air conditioner and compressor are new but there is leaking, the engine should be back by Friday.

There is a price for 9-2-4 rear damage, \$639.56. It's under the deductible so no claim will be made. The o-ring issue has been fixed at House 2, but a new switch is needed due to a leak. 9-3-2 equipment and radio have all been removed. The insurance company is ready to take vehicle and the paperwork needs to be signed. Sometime next week it will be picked up. After the vehicle is picked up, payment will be made and the insurance

company will go after the other party for the deductible. Waiting for East Coast Lighting to give an estimate for the amount of removal of equipment and lettering so that can be reimbursed. Pump testing September 6th, hose testing August 23rd. There is a bill package for regular gas maintenance and ESI for hydraulic rescue tools.

Hydrants:

Water company dinner tentative for October 10th however, is it effects the relief and exempt meeting for that month.

Facilities:

The phone company came in to House 2 to repair line. Town coming in for printers and putting fiber optics in. In the process of doing that, they have already put feeds downstairs in radio room to put computer monitor and possible future phone lines.

Communications & Equipment:

Portables came in.

Mr. E.R. Mullen advised there is an inquiry from the insurance company asking for an update as to if project is complete. The engineer is on vacation, however supplied information for another person. Photos are on file and his assertion is the project is 60% complete. The estimated completion date is the end of November. The current contract amount is the same. There is only one option for a progress bill and that was when compressor came in. Based on photos it looks like another three solid months to finish up. He will keep the board posted.

A motion was made by K. Williams and seconded by M. Rudy with everyone in favor (E.A. Mullen, S. Burrows and D. Thaker) to accept the business administration report.

Legal & Insurance:

Insurance and title switched and all claims taken care of. Auditor is coming in next week.

Fire Official Report:

The fire official was unable to attend the meeting, however the report was provided to the board in advance.

A motion was made by K. Williams and seconded by M. Rudy with everyone in favor (E.A. Mullen, S. Burrows and D. Thaker) to accept the business administration report.

Fire Chief Report:

No driver qualifications. There is one pending application. Some equipment was received, fire gloves, turnout pants, suspenders and safety glasses. One request to attend training at Union County Fire Company.

A motion was made to by M. Rudy and seconded by D. Thaker with all in favor (E.A. Mullen, S. Burrows and K. Williams) to accept the chief's report as written.

Fire Company:

The eight recliners that were previously approved have been ordered. One will go to House 2, the remaining will be here. They convert into a cot.

Topics of Discussion:

In regard to the HVAC system at House 2, it was perceived to be a bigger project than it was. Things are still trying to figure things out. The newest information provided advised the amount was not to exceed \$15,500. This is on top of previous amounts discussed.

It was recommended to split the system, one part on the roof and one part inside as to not have to go into structural work. A resolution will be presented as soon as possible.

Tank removal project is complete. Mr. Williams as he understands it, something was not filed in a timely manner and it will cost an additional \$1900 extra a year. Things will be followed up with a phone call. Avenel asphalt Paving touched it up as it was needed to get it finished to close out permits.

In regards to the employee handbook, feedback was taken from the fire official. Were there any additional questions? Mr. Burrows advised it now provides a great framework for current gaps

It is currently a work in progress. In the next month there will be another draft, then it will be adopted.

Legal:

Before resolutions are discussed, the attorney advised DEP has assessed a fine of \$45,000, it was negotiated down to \$22,500. Mr. Rainone doesn't see a way to negotiate it further down without accruing additional legal fees. His recommendation is to pay it. Once accepted, you have 15 days.

Communications:

Received an open request through the township clerks office to list all property addresses that list three criteria: fire damage, vacant lots and code violations. It was sent to all 9 districts. The only thing the department had to follow up on was fire damage within the previous 90 days and there was only one. Under OPRA the list has to be more specific, it may have been an overly broad response. The OPRA law is changing and we are now seeing more overly broad asks. There will probably be more requests, until Labor Day weekend treat it under the old law. If needed send it over and ask for extension. Response to insurance concerning 9-3-4 status. There is a copy of the financial report from the business administrator. There is also a copy of the chief's report.

A motion was made by D. Thaker and seconded by S. Burrows with everyone in favor (E.A. Mullen, M. Rudy, and K. Williams) to accept the communications.

Additionally there is an update on .gov. The CISA (Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency) has assigned a case agent who is pro fire department. He will get thing moving and S. Burrows has meeting with him on Friday.

Resolutions:

1st Resolution authorizing a settlement with New Jersey DEP penalty in the amount of \$22,500 for closing case.

2nd Resolution authorizing a professional services contract with Eric M. Bernstein & Associates, LLC for general legal services for the period of August 13, 2024 through August 12, 2025.

3rd Resolution authorizes participation in national and local cooperative for the procurement of goods and services.

4th Resolution authorizing the designating the Qualified Purchasing Agent as the Purchasing Agent Compliance Officer.

5th Resolution authorizes the Purchasing Agent to issue a request for proposal in accordance with the competitive contracting provisions of the New Jersey local public contracts law for IT services.

6th Resolution of the board authorizing a contract with CME & Associates for professional engineering services not to exceed \$15,500 for the HVAC in the back room of House 1.

Roll call was made for each person to vote on all 6 resolutions as a whole: E.A. Mullen -Yes, S. Burrows -Yes, M. Rudy -Yes, K. Williams -Yes, D. Thaker -Yes.

Public Discussion: None at this time.

At 7:45p.m., a motion was made by K. Williams and seconded by S. Burrows with everyone in favor (M. Rudy, D. Thaker and E.A. Mullens) to adjourn the meeting.

Secretary
Board of Fire Commissioners, District #9

Minutes taken by:

(Mrs.) Rashawnda Jimenez