

**Board of Fire Commissioners  
Fire District No. 1  
P.O. Box 6903  
Freehold, NJ 07728**

**Regular Meeting**

**October 24, 2017**

Board Chairman Joseph Colón called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners to order at 7:31pm, the notice was read and Chief Wayne Prochnow led the flag salute. Roll call was taken: Andrew Story, John Toutouchi, Shyamal Joshi, Thomas Caruso and Joseph Colón were all present. Board Attorney-Jonathan F. Cohen and Board Secretary-Rachel Davis were also present.

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to approve the minutes from the September 5, 2017 executive session.**

Second: Mr. Story

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

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to approve the minutes from the September 26, 2017 regular meeting, as edited.**

Second: Mr. Story

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to approve the minutes from the September 26, 2017 executive session.**

Second: Mr. Story

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2017 special workshop meeting, as edited.**

Second: Mr. Story

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

**Motion made by Mr. Story to approve the minutes from the October 10, 2017 executive session, as edited.**

Second: Mr. Joshi

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

**Correspondence:**

- Co-op paperwork approved to be executed
- Text message from Mr. Cook at the Township Committee thanking us for the food stock help

**Treasurer's Report (attached):**

Read into record by Mr. Joshi.

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to pay monthly bills for October 2017 in the amount of \$52,266.19.**

Second: Mr. Story

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

**Insurance:**

16-1-76 claim submitted; waiting for a quote.

**Buildings:**

- 16-1-90's bay door was fixed
- Georgia Road—another camera installed
- Georgia Road—need lights checked out, timer not working properly
- Generators are all up to date on all three houses

**Purchasing:**

Still on moratorium; status quo. Every purchase and order must go through the District.

**Officer Reports:**

Chief Wayne Prochnow read his report into record (attached). Open House was a success; good turnout from membership, but not from public. Officers had a preliminary meeting on updating the box alarms. Tank assignments letter will go to the county. Had another preliminary meeting on the new tanker; by next meeting they will let Board know what they want.

2<sup>nd</sup> Asst. Chief Ken Lucas' read his report into record (attached). The new radios are working well, as opposed to the old radios, which were losing reception at 15 yards. Being able to communicate so clearly has mitigated the life safety issues.

Captain Craig Haas reported that everything was status quo, still working on gear cleaning. Most every active member has gear. Gear that is taken back has been used as surplus to hand out to new members. Board offered to assist in any way, if Captain Haas needed it.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Dan Petersen read his maintenance report into record.

**President's Report:**

Secretary Brian Budd represented the fire company and had nothing to report.

**Legal:**

Jonathan Cohen introduced himself, sitting in for Mr. Youssef on legal and had nothing to discuss at this time.

**Old Business:**

Nothing to report.

**New Business:**

Mr. Joshi shared a proposal from Dafeldecker Associates for post-accident drug and alcohol screening, where they come directly to the firehouse and administer a Breathalyzer and drug test immediately on sight. The quote was for \$125 to come to the firehouse along with \$95 for the Breathalyzer and urinalysis.

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to switch from CentraState to Dafeldecker Associates in Toms River per the proposal submitted for post-accident drug and alcohol screens, if they will do it immediately.**

Second: Mr. Story

Board Attorney, Mr. Cohen, stated that the Indemnify and Hold Harmless paragraph is a broad statement, and he suggested clarification. Mr. Cohen will rewrite and it will be brought up next month. Mr. Joshi then tabled the motion until next month, so Mr. Cohen can rewrite the paragraph.

**Audience:**

Karen Spicuzza, 227 Monmouth Road, Freehold, NJ. First, she thanked all the volunteers for their service. She had heard that the tanker is no longer at Smithburg and was concerned about fire safety in that area. She wanted to know the protocol if there were a fire in her neighborhood.

Chairman Colón stated that fire protection is always the Board's number one concern in making sure the entire town is adequately covered, with mutual aid in place. It is true that the tanker is no longer at Smithburg, and the Board and Operations Department jointly made that decision so that measures could be taken to ensure that we were still maintaining the same level of fire protection that we had in the past. This protection was done through mutual agreement as well as updating our box alarm system, and in the event there is a fire on that side of town, we have the proper man power coming in, from not only our district, but all mutual districts. That is typical practice amongst districts.

Mr. Story clarified to Ms. Spicuzza that there was a 6,000 gallon tanker at the Smithburg firehouse, but only three active members, who could drive the tanker—Chief Prochnow and two others, who were less than 20% guys, so they were never around. Someone made an offer on the truck. The Board saw that truck was never getting out on a call, so the Board took the offer and sold the truck. Ms. Spicuzza then asked why the Board doesn't train more people to drive it. Mr. Story reminded Ms. Spicuzza that this is a volunteer fire company, and we cannot force people to get their CDL. Instead, we actually quickened the response time by setting up paid fire companies in other towns in the area to automatically respond to that area. The tanker was also unsafe and needed the tires replaced.

Mr. Caruso added that the matter was a major concern to the Board and further explained that there are no regular responders from that firehouse. Ms. Spicuzza remarked that we need to recruit people from that area, and the Board agreed, but volunteers are scarce. Mr. Caruso further explained that other districts would get to the scene faster than our district through mutual aid. He also explained the background on the tanker, in that originally, the fire company wanted the drivers to have a CDL license in order to drive it. The Board's Attorney said that it was not necessary for the drivers to have a CDL license to drive the tanker. The problem was that no one wanted the liability to train the drivers; therefore, we couldn't get anyone to drive it. So the truck sat there. The truck is also from 1985, and at this point needs more repairs than it's worth.

Chairman Colón further stated that we have already worked it out with the county to have all the right manpower out there, if ever there is an incident, and added that we are also looking at a new fire truck, with a lot more water capability to help mitigate the issue as well. Chairman Colón assured Ms. Spicuzza that he feels confident with the plan the Chief has enacted and put in place with his officers, with their experience in dealing with fires out there for a numbers of years, as well as the neighboring fire districts.

Mr. Joshi also commented that during his operational time in the district, there has never been an issue with water in that response area. The chief has updated the box alarms to automatically dispatch tankers and other resources when additional water and manpower would be needed. The truck and trailer were from 1985 and needed repairs and replacements in order to ensure the

safety of the fire company personnel. The district still has a 3000 gallon tanker that is in service and used regularly.

The Board thanked Ms. Spicuzza for coming out and addressing this concern with them, rather than listening to rumors. They appreciate any concerns being brought before the Board. Ms. Spicuzza said that she felt better about coming and hearing this directly from the Board. It sounds like a well thought-out plan, and she will let her neighbors know. The Board encouraged Ms. Spicuzza along with any of her neighbors to contact them at any time with questions, and they will make themselves available.

**Motion made by Mr. Joshi to go into executive session at 8:14pm for the purpose of discussing lawyer/client-privileged material.**

Second: Mr. Toutouchi

Roll call vote: 5-0 all in favor

(back from executive at 9:01pm)

**Being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Joshi to adjourn the meeting at 9:01pm.**

Second: Mr. Toutouchi

5-0 all in favor

Respectfully submitted,

John Toutouchi, Secretary  
/rd