

June 26, 2023

FLORENCE TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MEETING JUNE 26, 2023

Meeting ID: 892 7544 0764

Passcode: 935724

Board Chairman Jason Ryan called the workshop meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Florence Township Fire District No. 1 to order at 7:00 pm. After saluting the flag, the following statement of compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was read by the chairman:

“This meeting is being held in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting has been placed on the department’s website, Facebook account, the Township calendar, and the Township website. Furthermore, it has been published in the Burlington County Times and the Trenton Times.”

ROLL CALL: Present – John Fratinardo, Andrew Popso, Jason Ryan, Robert Schoen, Scott Arnold

Absent:

Also in attendance: Administrator Tharp, EMS Division Chief Chris Parks, Firefighter W. Blackwell, EMT A. Earls

MINUTES:

Minutes of the previous meeting June 12, 2023, regular meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Arnold and seconded by Commissioner Fratinardo to approve the minutes of the previous meeting June 12, 2023, regular meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF BILLS:

A motion was made by Commissioner Fratinardo and seconded by Commissioner Schoen to pay all the bills as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS:

1. EMS Division per diem EMT applicant James Otis background phase.
2. EMS Division per diem EMT applicant Jillian VanDoren scheduled for orientation.

FIRE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – Robert Tharp

1. Reported the Fire Division responded to 47 fire assignments since the last meeting, which brings the total to 426 for the year so far.
2. We have had 91 EMS assignments since the last meeting, which brings the total to 1070 for the year.
3. Members of the Fire Department are being awarded a unit citation by the Burlington County Chiefs Association for the Ready Pack Facility incident in February of 2022. The presentation is this Thursday night, the 29th, at 1900 at the Fire Academy.

4. We currently have apparatus that are out for repair. 4012 and 4011 are at Bristol Cummings by Chief Schoen to investigate possible turbo issues. They've diagnosed it as an actuator issue on the turbo on 4011 and they're repairing that now. We've discovered an electrical issue on Engine 4012. We have a call into Fire Apparatus Repair and we're hoping to get that into them this week. Right now, 4015 is riding first due in our area and the mutual aid grids have been notified.
5. We have improved some of the things on 4081, just another issue with the air conditioning. Chief Parks is doing a great job of keeping up with that. The EMS Division scheduling and scheduling procedures are going well.
6. We're sending 4 members to Firefighter 1 this year. We have some new members that have been acclimating themselves with the crews on training nights with the other members. We're currently working on assigning those new members to a shift captain as a mentor program.
7. The sprinkler demo training was well attended.
8. We've scheduled our EMT candidates for physical testing and skill competencies for the 29th and 30th of June.
9. Chief Parks and Tharp met with the billing company for the EMS and went over the new billing criteria that we instituted over the last year. They gave us some pointers on the information needed from patients, but as far as our billing and receivables we are on the right course.
10. The County Chiefs Association throughout Burlington County has put together a Resource Typing Committee. There's a criteria for Resource Typing in the county, that will be voted on at the next County Chiefs meeting. However, if you look at where we fall with our resources, we still will be classified as a Rescue Engine, Ladder, Tower. Most of the changing is with the resource typing for heavy rescue unit and squad designations.
11. I attended the Statewide Fire Threat Task Force meeting and there were some interesting briefs that are affecting our regions from different.
 - a. The Border Patrol did a brief, what they're seeing is an increase in busloads of immigrants coming through the region along the Turnpike, going up north through New Jersey. They're seeing an increase in swatting and doxing events against retired law enforcement and uniformed personnel, so people see someone in uniform, they're calling in a swatting incident, or doxing them on the Internet.
 - b. On the Office of Homeland Security Preparedness side in Vineland, Law Enforcement was issuing a search warrant and they discovered bomb-making materials and bomb-making devices and discovered a copy of the Anarchist Cookbook. In Manchester there was a fire as a weapon- a gentleman that was anti-Semitic was writing graffiti all over Manchester and then set his house on fire. We're also seeing an increase in chemical transportation through the region where you're seeing a lot of storage facilities. They're using their tanks to store them and buying low and trying to sell high. They store the chemicals in the storage unit and then ship them off.
12. Attended the Township Staff Meeting, Project Freedom is in preconstruction and construction is going to be starting up on Hornberger Ave.
13. Patriotic Day is scheduled for July 8th. The Fire Department, Code Enforcement, and EMS will participate.
14. Our candidates for the Civil Service Physical Performance test were tested on the 21st. We're just waiting now for the notification from Civil Service to see who passed.
15. Our district audit has started today.

16. Well, I also met with the company that does our surveillance system and talked about the camera system and we're going to be upgrading our equipment. Our equipment is just too old to meet our needs.
17. On the IT end of it, the new website is in progress. We upgraded our security protection program, our defense programs, and things of that nature.
18. We had a very productive monthly Fire Officers meeting with Battalion Chief Schoen. Battalion Chief Miller sent in his report, and then the three Captains and FM Richardson were all there.
19. Our staff will be participating in the whole week of the Youth Services Academy and July 19th is the Fire Department day here at the station.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Closed Session from 6/12/23 discussed contracts executed with the fire district.
2. Closed Session from 6/12/23 discussed background vetting of candidates for employment with the district.
3. Closed Session from 6/12/23 discussed personnel policies.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. A motion made by Commissioner Arnold and seconded by Commissioner Fratinaro to approve \$ 53,497.53 payment to Florence Township for 3rd quarter 2023 health and dental benefits plans. Roll call vote: Commissioner Fratinaro – Yes; Commissioner Popso – Yes; Commissioner Ryan – Yes; Commissioner Schoen – Yes; Commissioner Arnold – Yes. The motion carried 5-0-0.
2. A motion made by Commissioner Fratinaro and seconded by Commissioner Schoen to approve the payment of \$ 4,557.02 to PSE&G for monthly utilities. Roll call vote: Commissioner Fratinaro – Yes; Commissioner Popso – Yes; Commissioner Ryan – Yes; Commissioner Schoen – Yes; Commissioner Arnold – Yes. The motion carried 5-0-0.
3. A motion made by Commissioner Schoen and seconded by Commissioner Fratinaro to approve Resolution 2023-24 Fire District Policy for Public Participation. Roll call vote: Commissioner Fratinaro – Yes; Commissioner Popso – Yes; Commissioner Ryan – Yes; Commissioner Schoen – Yes; Commissioner Arnold – Yes. The motion carried 5-0-0.
4. A motion made by Commissioner Fratinaro and seconded by Commissioner Schoen to approve Resolution 2023-25 Fire District Administrative Policy 789 Sick Leave procedure EMS Division. Roll call vote: Commissioner Fratinaro – Yes; Commissioner Popso – Yes; Commissioner Ryan – Yes; Commissioner Schoen – Yes; Commissioner Arnold – Yes. The motion carried 5-0-0.

GOOD OF THE BOARD:

Received Thank You letter from the Fountain of Life Church for the response and operations during the fire incident at their facility.

Received Thank you letter from Ms. Gail Michaud for the care and service she received from EMT's Kara Ekelburg and Mike Tomaszewski.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

A motion was made by Commissioner Arnold and seconded by Commissioner Fratinardo to open the meeting to the public. The motion carried unanimously.

W. Blackwell- “William Blackwell, XXX Riverbank Drive. Today one of my coworkers approached me and said she saw me yesterday with the fire crew at the Fountain of Life Church, she didn't know I was a member here and I didn't know she was a member over there. So she had, like, say something to you all tonight, she's working right now, but I made sure I wrote down my phone, so I got everything. She says, ‘Thank you all very much for providing protection for us while we attend our church services. God loves family and we bring our families to this house every Sunday, but we cannot achieve that without you. God loves fellowship, and we gather together every Sunday. We cannot do that without you. Thanks to you being there every Sunday since the fire, we have been able to attend our services with hearts full of appreciation and confidence. We are grateful and blessed to have you here in our community. Feel free to attend the service with us when you can’. And that is the end of it. That's pretty much all I have for you.”

A motion was made by Commissioner Arnold and seconded by Commissioner Fratinardo to close the meeting to the public. Motion carried unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION:

1. Adopt **RESOLUTION 2023-27 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM MEETING**

A motion was made by Commissioner Fratinardo and seconded by Commissioner Arnold to adopt **RESOLUTION 2023-27 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM MEETING** to discuss personnel, contract, and personnel administrative policies. The motion carried unanimously.

Note: Action may be taken after closed session.

7:13 pm Closed session began.

7:45 pm Closed session ended.

2. A motion was made by Commissioner Schoen and seconded by Commissioner Arnold to come out of closed session. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Arnold and seconded by Commissioner Fratinardo to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Tharp
Fire District Administrator