

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Montgomery Township Fire District No. 2
PO Box 264
Blawenburg, New Jersey 08504**

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 14, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board was called to order by Commissioner Martin at 7:00 pm, following proof of publication under the Open Public Meetings Law. (Annual Meeting Notice published in the official newspaper of the district and provided to two other newspapers, filed with the municipal clerk, posted at the Montgomery Township Municipal Building, Board offices and fire district web site, and provided to any person requesting same prior to the meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners P. Martin, L. Laughlin, M. Ruppert, A. Sartorio and J. Sudol. Absent: None. Also present: Chief Gurzo (arrived late), Brian Bonder for Engineer Kabis, W. Newberry and Attorney Griswold.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting were presented for approval.

Motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2018 board meeting as presented.

Motion by Laughlin. 2nd by Ruppert. Motion passed without objection.

Due to a fire call the standard agenda was addressed out of order.

COMMAND VEHICLE

RESOLUTION 2019-16 – Ratifying Payment to First Priority Emergency Vehicles, Inc.

The Chief Financial Officer having certified at the time of payment that there were sufficient funds encumbered from the 2018 budget and designated for this project, ratification of payment upon inspection and delivery of the vehicle to the contract vendor First Priority Emergency Vehicles, Inc. in the amount of \$93,535.00 for the purchase and upfitting of the 2018 Chevrolet Tahoe Command Vehicle purchased through the H-GAC purchasing cooperative contract AM10-16, representing the purchase price of the apparatus (\$93,105.00) and one approved change order (\$430.00), charged to the 2018 Capital Command Vehicle appropriation.

Resolution Ayes: Martin, Laughlin, Ruppert, Sartorio, Sudol. Nays: None. Absent: None.

Chief Gurzo arrived.

TREASURER'S REPORT

BILLS

A copy of the Treasurer's Report was made available to each commissioner with a list and description of the bills to be paid. FDIC registration, air fare, etc. costs exceeding the 2018 encumbrance will be charged to the 2019 Training appropriation (\$963.98); 2018 LOSAP contribution adjusted for the CPI increase is \$49,449.60. Payment of monthly workers' comp. insurance installments are due between monthly meetings; they will be paid a month ahead beginning with this month's remittance.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, to approve payment of the bills as presented, supplemented and amended, to deliver payments to Fire & Safety Services (\$11,520.30) held from last month, and to pay 2 months workers' comp insurance installments this month.

Motion made by Martin. 2nd by Ruppert. Passed without objection.

RESOLUTION 2019-17 - Payment of Bills.

The Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient encumbered funds from the 2018 capital and operating budgets and unencumbered funds in the 2019 temporary budget to pay the bills as presented, supplemented and amended, and having designated the accounts to which each should be charged, approval of and authorization to pay bills in the total amount of \$214,443.92 (\$96,500.25 from the encumbered '18 operating budget (including \$49,449.60 LOSAP payment)); \$93,535.00 from the '18 encumbered capital budget (Command vehicle); and \$24,408.67 from the '19 temporary budget (including \$963.98 FDIC expenses and two workers' comp. insurance monthly installments)).

Resolution Ayes: Martin, Laughlin, Ruppert, Sartorio, Sudol. Nays: None. Absent: None.

Motion to clear the following encumbrance balances on the updated December 31, 2018 Encumbrance List: Office - \$152.55 (Griswold balance); General Operating - \$316.00 (Access Health), \$10,880.00 (Rawhide Fire Hose); LOSAP - \$5,550.40.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Sudol. Passed without objection.

Motion to transfer \$300,000.00.00 designated as Reserve for Future Capital Outlay in the encumbered 2018 budget from the General Fund to the Reserved Capital Fund.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Sudol. Passed without objection.

Commissioner Sudol will inquire into to the noticeable interest rate differential between banks at which capital funds are on deposit.

Bill Newberry and the treasurer will collect information to update credit information with Auto Parts Warehouse (formerly National Parts Supply).

An insurance audit will be done on March 25th.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

CHIEF'S REPORT

The fire company responded to 30 calls during January, 2019.

Committees –

- **Engine108 replacement** – Committee to reconvene later this month.
- **Rescue 46 refurb** – Pending outcome of the budget referendum, hope to be ready to put to bid in March.
- **Command vehicle** – Delivered and in service. The chief has a punch list of items to be addressed by the vendor; once completed the vehicle will be lettered.

Current Command Vehicle – Lengthy discussion of whether to keep the vehicle. The chief discussed the operational significance of having a second (deputy) command vehicle. Keeping this car provides an opportunity to determine whether this is the right system for the fire department with measurable benefits to the safety of the deputy chief and the provision of emergency services. Cmsr. Martin addressed the fiscal aspect of keeping the vehicle. If a 2nd command car is determined to be a strategic asset it will need to be integrated into the capital plan as an ongoing commitment. He personally can't justify adding another level of expense and commitment to the capital budget at this time. Cmsr. Laughlin acknowledged the safety concerns and noted that keeping the car will likely result in an ongoing commitment to replace it. Cmsr's Sudol, Ruppert and Sartorio all agreed that in terms of scene management there are operational benefits in having a second command vehicle and that it is becoming standard practice in the emergency services, but also noted the need to recognize budgetary constraints and to prioritize cost considerations throughout design and purchasing processes. Further discussion and/or decision tabled until the outcome of the 2019 budget referendum is known.

MEETINGS

Emergency Services: No meeting.

Fire Prevention: No meeting.

EOC Active Shooter Task Force – Kevin Schroeck will be coordinating the fire companies’ and EMS participation. A document laying out the operational end of the mission will be distributed to board members for review prior to the chief signing. The document will not require a commitment on any group’s part to participate. The board is still concerned about the insurance implications of accepting this responsibility as well as associated costs.

Truck Repairs -The chief was asked to work with the engineer and Bill Newberry to review repairs the engineer has identified as needed or desired for various trucks and to confirm the urgency and timetable for completing them.

ENGINEER’S REPORT

Report distributed and on file.

Tower 46 is at Fire & Safety Services for approved repairs. It will be out of service for about 2 weeks. Thereafter the ladder test will be done.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Safety Trailer – All paperwork completed by Jamesburg officials. The OEM representative will make arrangements with Commissioner Ruppert to remove the trailer.

Fitness Room and Fitness Stations/Initiative – Cmsr. Sudol is pursuing execution of waivers.

ISO Rating – No update.

First Responder Credentials – No change.

Records Retention – Document organization continues.

LOSAP - Historic review should be forthcoming.

SCESTA – No update. Four Station 46 members are beginning fire school in Middlesex County.

2019 Annual Election – Two petitions for the two 3-year seats on the board were submitted – those of incumbent Anthony Sartorio and of Brian Bonder. Commissioners Martin and Laughlin will open and Martin and Sudol will close the polls.

Motion to pay expenses associated with the upcoming election and budget referendum.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Laughlin. Passed without objection.

RESOLUTION 2019-18 –Authorizing Payments for Election Expenses.

The Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient unencumbered funds in the 2019 temporary budget, authorization for Commissioner Sudol to pay up to \$500.00 to Somerset County for the cost of the election poll book and associated ancillary costs, if any, chargeable to the 2019 Election appropriation.

Resolution Ayes: Martin, Laughlin, Ruppert, Sartorio, Sudol. Nays: None. Absent: None.

LOSAP - The certified list of volunteer members, identifying those eligible to receive LOSAP contributions and the amounts thereof for 2018, was posted for member review for at least thirty (30) days and any questions raised during that time were resolved. The cost of living increase was 0.49% for 2018. A total of 35 volunteers will receive contributions (22 of whom earned the maximum and 4 of whom were first year contributors) totaling \$49,449.60.

Motion made to authorize payment of the 2018 LOSAP contribution to the LOSAP provider.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Laughlin. Passed without objection.

RESOLUTION 2019-19 – Approval of Payment to LOSAP Provider.

The annual certified list of the volunteer members of Montgomery Township Volunteer Fire Company No. 2 identifying those active volunteers who have qualified for a contribution under the LOSAP for 2018 having been furnished to the Board as sponsoring agency of the LOSAP, and pursuant to NJSA 40A:14-192 the Board having reviewed and approved the list, and the certified list having been posted for member review for at least thirty (30) days, and the Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient encumbered funds from 2018 to make the payment; it is Resolved that payment to AIG Valic (Valic Financial Advisors, Inc.) shall be made in the amount of \$49,449.60 for the calendar year 2018 MTVFC#2 LOSAP contribution.

Resolution Ayes: Martin, Laughlin, Ruppert*, Sartorio*, Sudol*. Nays: None. Absent: None.*

Resolution Abstentions:

Martin abstained only insofar as to approving payment to his son's LOSAP account.

Ruppert abstained only insofar as to approving payment to his LOSAP account.

Sartorio abstained only insofar as to approving payment to his and his son's LOSAP accounts.

Sudol abstained only insofar as to approving payment to his LOSAP account.

Two people voluntarily surrendered the money in their LOSAP accounts due to their separation from the fire company prior to vesting in the program. Commissioner Sudol will coordinate with Gene Keller regarding notification to other inactive and unvested members who are in danger of forfeiting their accounts.

NEW BUSINESS –

Somerset County Softball League – Fire Company would like to join and participate this summer. It will require securing a Certificate of Insurance requested by the county and its Parks Commission. Brian Bonder will send information to the board and Commissioner Sartorio will contact the board's insurance broker to discuss.

Commissioner Appreciation - This is Cmsr. Martin's last meeting as a commissioner. Cmsr. Laughlin relayed the board's thanks to Commissioner Martin for his superb leadership as the board's chairman, noting his success in really turning things around and moving projects forward. The board will miss his leadership and input and asked that he keep in touch.

CLOSED SESSION -

Motion made to adjourn to closed session at 9:15 pm.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Laughlin. Passed without objection.

RESOLUTION 2019-20 – Authorizing Board to go into Closed Session.

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act (NJSA 10:4-12(b) et seq.) authorizes a public body to meet in closed session under certain limited circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is advisable to adjourn to closed session at this time to discuss personnel and employment matters.

IT IS RESOLVED that the Board will adjourn to closed session for purposes of discussing personnel and potential employment matters related to the position of board attorney, and that minutes of the closed session will be made public upon final resolution of the negotiations; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board will resume its regular meeting, open to the public, at the conclusion of the closed session.

Resolution Ayes: Martin, Laughlin, Ruppert, Sartorio, Sudol. Nays: None. Absent: None.

Return to open session at 9:25 pm.

Board Attorney

Motion to hire Eric Perkins, Esq. as Board Attorney, commencing April 1, 2019, upon the same terms and conditions as Attorney Griswold's contract with the board.

Motion by Sudol. 2nd by Martin. Passed without objection.

RESOLUTION 2019-21 – Appointing Board Attorney.

Eric M. Perkins, Esq., of Skillman, New Jersey, is retained as Board Attorney for the remainder of 2019 at an annual contract fee of \$17,100.00, plus expenses, and to prepare board meeting minutes at an annual contract fee of \$3,000.00, all fees to be paid pro-rata from the commencement date of April 1, 2019. Commissioner Sudol is authorized to execute a contract with Mr. Perkins, which is awarded as a professional service contract under the provisions of NJSA 40A:11-5(1)(a) and N.J. Pay to Play regulations. The contract will be on file and available for public inspection at the fire district offices.

ADJOURNMENT -

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on March 14, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Motion by Martin. 2nd by Laughlin. Passed without objection.