

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Montgomery Township Fire District 2
PO Box 264
Blawenburg, New Jersey 08504**

MINUTES OF JANUARY 12th, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board was called to order by Chairman Sartorio at 7:30 p.m. following proof of publication under the Open Public Meetings Law (Annual meeting notice published in the Courier News (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 Gerard Hogan, Stephen Morrison, Michael Ruppert, and Tony Sartorio. Commissioner Andy Mozumdar was absent.

Also present: Chief Adam Verducci, Deputy Chief Kyle Rendell, Engineer Justin Kabis, QPA Bill Newberry, LOSAP Administrator Gene Keller Jr. and Attorney Eric Perkins.

Approval of Minutes

On the motion of Chairman Sartorio , seconded by Commissioner Ruppert, the minutes of the meetings of December 8th and December 16th, 2022 were approved by a unanimous vote.

Public Comment – None

Meetings

Emergency Services – No meeting held.

Fire Prevention- No meeting held.

Rescue Task Force- No meeting held.

Chief's Report

Chief Verducci reported that there were 36 calls in the month of December and 354 during FY22. This is the highest call level in over four years and included 39 actual

fire assignments. Notable incidents in December included serving as a tanker fill station for a garage fire in Hillsborough and an incident on Blue Spring Road.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

T46- F&SS has provided a quote in the amount of \$2,275.00 for the repair of the following items which were determined to be defective in the annual PM: right-side cab scene light, inoperable #4 discharge gauge; torn steering tie rod boots; replace engine oil cap; cracked engine exhaust flange at the turbo. The replacement of the rear spotlights with LED spotlights has been delayed as the parts have not been delivered. Work remains incomplete due to parts availability.

E467- A light wire was found to be worn and was replaced. The back-up camera has failed and will need to be replaced. The estimated cost of replacement is \$1,000.00. the deck gun and light tower auto stow issues are unresolved due to parts availability.

B46- Flemington Ford has reported that the brush apparatus should be returned in the next two weeks.

E468- During the PM it was noted that the air dryer desiccant needs replacement. Awaiting air dryer by Four Lanes.

R46- Replacement of the auto charger and replacement of the front seat belts, lubrication of the rear axle and replacement of the cab tilt relay/safety switch await scheduling by Four Lanes. Work delayed due to parts availability. No action on replacement of the broken tripod light mount. The parking brake on the truck has been adjusted.

U46 – There is an issue with the catalytic convertor. Apparatus to be taken to the dealership for warranty repair by the Deputy Chief.

FP46 – The battery was tested and the terminals cleaned. There have been no ignition problems since this action.

Engineer Kabis noted the need of exercising the motor on Marine46 in a barrel at intervals so assure proper operation in an emergency.

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. Additional detail is included in the Treasurer's report. The report was accepted as presented.

Administration:

Total Cost of Administration: \$0

Cost of Operations:

Apparatus Housing: \$16,000.00(FY23); General Operations: Repairs and Maintenance \$1,259.61(FY22); Operating Insurance: \$10,925.00(FY23); Snow Removal: \$650.00(FY22); Utilities: \$468.54(FY22), \$104.99(FY23); Testing and inspection: \$1,080.00.

Total Cost of Operations: \$3,458.15(FY22); \$27,029.99(FY23)

Total Cost of Administration and Operations: \$30,488.14.

Resolution 2023-1 Payment of Bills

*The Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient unencumbered funds in the FY 22 budget to pay the bills as presented and having designated the accounts to which each should be charged, the Board authorizes the Chief Financial Officer to pay the Administration and Operations bills in the total amount of **\$30,488.14**.*

On Motion of Commissioner Hogan, 2nd by Commissioner Ruppert the BOFC unanimously approved payment of the bills.

The website has been updated to include the November minutes.

The second check from Montgomery Township containing the remaining balance of tax proceeds for the FY22 year in the amount of \$497,654.50 was received and deposited during the last week of December.

Purchasing: All P.O.'s approved during FY 22 have been issued including the MEMS Pulse Ox from Concord Health in the amount of \$4,590.00.

Requisitions: No requests

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2023-2 Designation of Official Newspaper – In compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, Commissioner Ruppert moved a resolution designating the Courier News as the official publication of the Board. The Princeton Packet is designated in the event that a second paper is required. Courtesy notification will be supplied to the Montgomery News. Chairman Sartorio seconded the motion which was then approved by unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION 2023-3 Designation of Official Banking Depositories – Chairman Sartorio moved a resolution designating PNC Bank and Northfield as operating account depositories; PNC Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada are designated as

capital account depositories. Commissioner Morrison seconded the resolution which was approved by unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION 2023-4 Adoption of a Temporary Budget – Mr. Newberry noted that he had circulated a draft proposal after reviewing prior year expenditure patterns. State statute requires the BOFC to adopt a temporary budget to pay bills prior to the anticipated approval of the FY23 budget by the voters at the referendum on February 18th. The proposed temporary budget is in the amount of \$147,037.81 representing 14% of the prior (2022) budget exclusive of capital items. Chairman Sartorio moved the adoption of the temporary budget, second by Commissioner Hogan. The temporary budget was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 2023-5 APPROVING THE READING OF THE FY23 BUDGET BY TITLE

Whereas N.J.S.A. 40A:14-78.2 provides that a Board of Fire Commissioners may read a budget by title prior to adoption if during the week preceding the hearing it has been posted in public place as notice in the district, and is made available to each person requesting a copy during said week and at the hearing; and

Whereas, the Board of Fire Commissioners has complied with these conditions, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the FY23 budget shall be read by title.

Chairman Sartorio moved the resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Morrison and adopted by a unanimous vote.

2023 Budget – Chair Sartorio noted that copies of the approved FY23 draft budget have been distributed to all members of the board. He noted that the budget conformed to the cap law and reflected an increase in the amount to be raised by taxation of \$20,191.00. This increase will not increase the local tax levy over the amount set in FY22. The budget also includes \$300,000.00, approved by the voters at the recent referendum, for capital purposes of replacing radios and replacing the brush truck. Total anticipated expenditures for FY 23, including capital purposes, will be \$1,376,280.00. The Division of Local Government of the DCA has approved the budget for adoption. Additionally notice of tonight’s hearing has been published in the Courier News and posted at the municipal building.

Chairman Sartorio opened the meeting for public comment on the FY23 budget. No members of the public appeared to comment on the budget. Commissioner Ruppert made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Commission Hogan seconded the motion which then passed on a unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION 2023-6 ADOPTION OF THE FY23 BUDGET

Whereas, the proposed FY23 budget has been approved for adoption by the Division of Local Government of the Department of Community Affairs, and

Whereas, the budget, and the public availability of copies of the budget, has been published on the BOFC website and in the Courier News, and

Whereas, notice of a public hearing on the adoption of the budget has also been published and posted as required, and

Whereas, no person or persons have raised objections or made comments regarding the budget, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the FY23 budget in the amount of \$1,376,280.00, of which sum the amount of \$1,015,500.00 is to be raised by taxation, is adopted and shall be placed before the public for approval at an election/referendum to be held on Saturday, February 18, 2023.

The above resolution was moved by Chairman Sartorio, seconded by Commissioner Hogan and approved by a unanimous vote of the Board.

BOFC Election: Chairman Sartorio noted that thus far only Commissioner Hogan has indicated an interest in the three-year term. He will file his election documents prior to the deadline. Chairman Sartorio will speak with the election clerks who worked at the last election to determine if they are available on February 18th.

Annual Posting of LOSAP Activity: Gene Keller Jr. presented the board with his analysis of LOSAP activity for FY22. The report indicated that 34 members will receive approximately \$45,370.00 for their response activity during the year. This is a reduction of about \$10,000 from the FY21 year when 33 members received awards. The reduction is largely due to the end of COVID restrictions and the return to on-campus learning by members who are college students. Commissioner Hogan moved a resolution directing the posting of the report for 30 days as required by law so that members can review it for accuracy. Commissioner Ruppert seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

EMPLOYMENT OF GRANT WRITER: Chairman Sartorio reported that representatives of Station 47, Station 46, Station 45 and Station 53 met to consider the possible employment of a grant writer to seek funding for necessary upgrading of radios which must be accomplished by 2025 according to Somerset County officials. Station 53 has previously had success obtaining grant funding utilizing the services of Firehouse Grants, LLC. It has been suggested that a joint grant involving all of the emergency services in the township might have a better chance of being funded. The proposal would be for each of the fire districts and Montgomery EMS to request funding in the amount of \$200,000. Rocky Hill would seek a total of

\$200,000 for the fire company and the squad. The grant program requires a 10% match which would have to be included in the FY24 budget. Chairman Sartorio noted that the \$200,000 amount would not be sufficient to fund the replacement of all radios but should cover a significant portion of the cost. The cost of the contract with Firehouse Grants for the district would be \$2,249.00. In the event the grant application was not successful it would be resubmitted in the following year. Commissioner Hogan moved approval of the contract with Firehouse Grants, LLC. Commissioner Ruppert seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Firehouse Generator – No update

T46 Replacement: No update. The anticipated delivery date is May of 2024.

Deputy Chief Vehicle – The proposed agreement with Montgomery Township for the purchase of a surplus police vehicle has not worked out. Given the amount approved at the budget referendum consideration is now being given to bidding the car purchase as a complete project.

FEMA – The MUA document remains pending. Deputy Chief Rendall reported that on appeal the Board has been awarded an additional \$29,600.00 from FEMA for the loss of the deputy chief vehicle. This brings the total of FEMA remuneration for the vehicle to \$60,000.00.

Banking – As Commissioner Mozumdar was absent there was no report on the progress toward the investment of capital funds in T-bills.

Renewal of Contracts with MTVFC#2 and Rocky Hill - Chairman Sartorio noted that both agreements have been executed by all parties and were uploaded to the State FAST system as part of the DLGS budget approval. The original documents will now be placed in the BOFC files.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on February 9th.
Motion by Ruppert, 2nd by Hogan. Motion passed without objection.