

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

MINUTES OF JANUARY 11, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board was called to order by Chairman Mozumdar 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 Gerry Hogan, Rich Hopkins, Stephen Morrison, Andy Mozumdar. Absent Commissioner Michael Ruppert.

Also present: Chief Adam Verducci, QPA Bill Newberry, Engineer Justin Kabis and Attorney Eric Perkins.

Absent: Deputy Chief Kyle Rendell.

**Approval of Minutes**

On the motion of Commissioner Hopkins, seconded by Chairman Mozumdar, the minutes of the meeting of December 14th, 2024 were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment** - None

**Meetings**

Emergency Services – No meeting held.

Fire Prevention – No meeting held.

Rescue Task Force- A drill was held in December.

**Chiefs Report**

Chief Verducci reported that there were 36 calls in the month of December. The most significant calls included a Medivac stand-by and high-water rescues on

December 18<sup>th</sup>. There were 337 total calls for the 2023 year. This represents a slight decrease in calls from the prior year. There were 180-day calls (5 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and 25 calls during the night shift (11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m.). The Route 206 commercial strip again accounted for the most calls.

Company officers for the 2024 year include Deputy Chief Kyle Rendall, Captain Dan Labos, Lt. Justin Neves and Engineer Justin Kabis.

Chief Verducci indicated that the officers were considering altering the apparatus response order once the new aerial apparatus was delivered. Noting that Rocky Hill normally will provide a pumper to the Route 206 commercial strip calls, Station 46 may make the new aerial the first due apparatus. Implementation of this concept will await the arrival of the new apparatus.

The Local Emergency Planning Council (LEPC) will meet on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

The Engineers report which was emailed to all members contains a more detailed explanation of repair and PM activities. It was noted that activities were limited pending approval of the budget.

**U46-** PM completed on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Requires new shocks and possibly tires. Assessment and completion of repairs in March.

**E107-** Still waiting for Four Lanes to trouble shoot the light tower stow sensor.

**R46-** Waiting Four Lanes re-location of the rear differential vent.

**FP46-** annual PM performed on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **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. Mr. Newberry noted that the bills included the second payment on the workers compensation insurance policy for FY24.

**Administration:** Audit: \$10,000.00 (FY23); Professional fees: \$525.00 (FY23); Grants: \$2,999.00 (FY23).

**Total Cost of Administration: \$13,524.00 (FY23).**

**Cost of Operations:**

Apparatus Housing: \$16,000.00 (FY24); General Operations Snow Removal: \$1,655.00 (FY24); General Operations Insurance: \$23,247.96 (FY24); Repairs and Maintenance: \$12,900.15 (FY23); Utilities: \$930.53(FY23); Training and Fire Prevention: \$3,437.12 (FY23); Supplies/Turn-out gear: \$15,765.20 (FY23)

**Total Cost of Operations: \$40,902.46 (FY24). \$33,033.00 (FY23)**

**Total Cost of Administration and Operations : \$87,459.46**

**[\$46,557.00 (FY23) and \$40,902.46 (FY24)].**

**Resolution 2024-1 Payment of Bills**

*The Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient unencumbered funds in the 2023 and 2024 budgets 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 **\$87,459.46.***

*On Motion of Commissioner Morrison, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Hogan the BOFC unanimously approved payment of the bills.*

Mr. Newberry reported that the BOFC received the 2023 fire tax proceeds in the amount of \$1,015,500.00 at the end of the year. Mr. Perkins noted that the amount did not include the State Supplemental Fire Safety Grant. He will follow up with Montgomery Township to determine why this amount was not received.

Mr. Newberry indicated that in accordance with the December meeting resolution upon receipt of the fire tax monies he transferred the sum of \$375,000.00 from the operating account to the capital account.

**Purchasing**

**Requisitions:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION 2024-2 Designation of Official Newspaper** – In compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, Commissioner Hogan 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 Mozumdar seconded the motion which was then approved by unanimous vote.

**RESOLUTION 2024-3 Designation of Official Banking Depositories** – Chairman Mozumdar moved a resolution designating PNC Bank and Northfield Bank as

operating account depositories; PNC Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada are designated as capital account depositories. Commissioner Hopkins seconded the resolution which was approved by unanimous vote.

**RESOLUTION 2024-4 Appointment of LOSAP Administrator**- Commissioner Hogan moved a resolution designating Corebridge Financial as the designated investment institution and administrator for the LOSAP program. The resolution was seconded by Chairman Mozumdar and adopted by a unanimous vote.

**RESOLUTION 2024-5 Adoption of a Temporary Budget** – Mr. Newberry noted that the BOFC is statutorily required to adopt a temporary budget to pay invoices received prior to the budget referendum on February 17<sup>th</sup>. he had circulated a draft proposal after reviewing prior year expenditure patterns. The proposed temporary budget is in the amount of \$147,000.00 representing 14% of the prior (2023) budget exclusive of capital items. Commissioner Hogan moved the adoption of the temporary budget, second by Commissioner Hopkins. The temporary budget was unanimously adopted.

**RESOLUTION 2024-6 APPROVING THE READING OF THE FY24 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 FY24 budget shall be read by title.

Commissioner Hopkins moved the resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Hogan and adopted by a unanimous vote.

**2024 Budget** – Chair Mozumdar noted that copies of the approved FY24 budget have been distributed to all members of the board. Commissioner Morrison noted that the budget conformed to the cap law. He reported that he uploaded the budget approved at the December meeting to the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) using the FAST program. After several minor presentation revisions which did not impact any of the numbers, the DLGS has approved the budget for adoption. Total anticipated expenditures will be in the amount of \$1,378,280.00. The budget includes the use of \$335,780.00 in fund balance and capital monies. The amount to be raised by taxation will be \$1,035,500.00 and will not increase the local tax levy over the amount set in FY23. The budget includes the use of \$250,000.00 in capital reserve monies, approved by the voters at the recent referendum, for the purpose of completing the purchase of a new aerial apparatus.

Mr. Perkins noted that notice of tonight’s hearing on the adoption of the budget has been published in the Courier News, posted at the municipal building and on the BOFC website and made available to members of the public as required by law.

Chairman Mozumdar opened the meeting for public comment on the FY24 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 2024-7 ADOPTION OF THE FY24 BUDGET**

**Whereas**, the proposed FY24 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 FY24 budget in the amount of \$1,371,280.00, of which sum the amount of \$1,035,500.00 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 17, 2024.

The above resolution was moved by Commissioner Morrison, seconded by Commissioner Hopkins and approved by a unanimous vote of the Board.

**RESOLUTION 2024-8 Adoption of a Schedule of Open Public Meetings**

Chairman Mozumdar noted the statutory requirement that the Board adopt and publish a schedule of meetings for the coming year. He moved the following schedule of meetings to be held on the second Thursday of each month beginning at 7:30 p.m. Commissioner Hopkins seconded the motion which was then adopted by a unanimous vote. The schedule of meetings is as follows:

**Regular Meeting Dates:**

**Work Session Meeting dates:**

January 11, 2024

January 25, 2024

February 8, 2024

February 22, 2024

March 14, 2024

March 21, 2024

April 11, 2024	April 25, 2024
May 9, 2024	May 23, 2024
June 13, 2024	June 20, 2024
July 11, 2024	July 25, 2024
August 8, 2024	August 22, 2024
September 12, 2024	September 26, 2024
October 10, 2024	October 24, 2024
November 9, 2024	November 23, 2024
December 12, 2024	December 26, 2024
January 9, 2025	January 23, 2025

**Annual Posting of LOSAP Activity:** Chairman Mozumdar noted that Gene Keller Jr. presented the board with his analysis of LOSAP activity for FY23 at the December meeting. Mr. Keller was unable to attend tonight’s meeting but has reported that there were no material changes in the numbers since December. The State has not yet published the approved program numbers for the year, which will increase the total expenditure when applied to qualifying members. Commissioner Hogan moved a resolution directing the posting of the LOSAP report at the firehouse for 30 days as required by law so that members can review it for accuracy. Commissioner Morrison seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**FY 24 Election** - Chairman Mozumdar moved the appointment of Brian Bonder and John Wallmark as election clerks at a rate of \$250 each for seven-hour period. Commissioner Hogan seconded the motion which was unanimously approved. Commisioners Hopkins, Mozumdar and Ruppert are currently collecting petition signatures to run for the open positions on the BOFC. Chairman Mozumdar will obtain the voter lists from the Somerset County Board of Elections. It was noted that the Board of Elections has indicated that they will initially mail 1,748 mail-in ballots at a cost of \$2.72 each at an initial cost of \$4,754.56. Additional voters may request mail-in ballots and the BOFC will be invoiced for the total amount after the election.

**DCA ARPA Grant** – No response to the grant submission as of this date.

**Renewal of Agreement with Fire Company** – Chair Mozumdar noted that the DLGS would not approve the lease agreement with the fire company which was submitted as part of the budget review process as it does not expressly state the amount of rent to be paid each month but refers to the prior year agreement for the amount. He moved a resolution amending the agreement to include the specific rental amount of \$16,000.00 monthly. Commissioner Hogan seconded the motion which then passed by a unanimous vote.

**AFG/FEMA Grant** – No update available.

**ISO Evaluation** – No follow-up has been received from ISO.

**Tower Replacement** – Seagraves indicates that the fabrication of the apparatus cab should begin next week. Delivery of the completed apparatus is anticipated in April. It was noted that 95% of the purchase price will be due when the apparatus is delivered to local vendor. The balance will be due when the apparatus is delivered to the firehouse. An updated contract will need to be executed after the February budget referendum. The current investment at RBC of the monies for this purchase comes due next week. Chairman Mozumdar made a motion to reinvest the 1.1 million for a 90-day term at a 5.25% interest rate. Commissioner Hogan seconded the motion. It was unanimously adopted with the noted exception of Commissioner Hopkins who abstained.

**Sale Of T-46** - Chief Verducci indicated that he would recommend commencing the sale of T-46 after confirmation of progress from Seagrave on the new apparatus. It was suggested that photos be taken, and an advertisement be prepared in anticipation of a February posting. He suggested that he will be will implementing orders to reduce the responses for the existing T-46 to conserve it from wear and tear while during the sale process.

**Brush Truck Replacement** – Mr. Newberry noted that the BOFC needs to advertise its intent to award a contract to CET Pumps through Sourcewell for the purchase of the skid unit in the amount of \$20,404.84 at the February meeting. Chief Verducci continues to work on obtaining quotes for the body installation and lighting packages.

**FEMA** – No action on the MUA.

**Change of Election Date** – No action at this time.

**Firehouse Generator** – The delivery date for the generator remains January of 2024.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at

8:44 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on February 8th, 2024.  
*Motion by Mozumdar, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Hogan. Motion passed without objection.*