

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

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 14, 2021

**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 R. McGeady, M. Ruppert and A. Sartorio. Absent A. Mozumdar. Also present: Chief Adam Verducci, Deputy Chief K. Rendall, Lt. N. Garrymore, Engineer J. Kabis, QPA W. Newberry and Attorney E. Perkins.

**Approval of Minutes**

On the motion of Commissioner Sartorio, seconded by Commissioner Ruppert, the minutes of the meeting of September 9, 2021, were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment** - None

**Meetings**

Emergency Services –no meeting held.

Fire Prevention – No meeting held.

Rescue Task Force – Drill conducted. No meeting held.

**Chief's Report**

Chief Verducci reported that there were 74 calls in the month of September. Over 50 of the calls were related to Tropical Storm Ida. The company also responded to a house fire on Bedens Brook Road and an animal rescue call.

## **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

E107- The TPMS module replacement part has been received and will be installed after it is programmed.

E107- CAFS PTO/ Pump transfer case output shaft is worn. Seagraves Sales & Service will come to the firehouse during the next two weeks to provide an estimate on the cost of repairs.

The apparatus has an issue with the auto stow function for the deck gun and the light tower stow feature. Four Lanes will visit the firehouse to diagnose the problems and quote the repairs.

T46 – The parts to repair the frame have been delivered by E-one. Stewarts has been contracted to tow the apparatus to Mercer Spring for the repair. The apparatus will likely be OOS at Mercer Spring for two weeks. Since new rear tires (8) are needed, the Board discussed doing this while the truck is at Mercer Spring. All other repairs on the apparatus are on hold pending completion of the frame repair.

B46- The EGR and turbo were replaced by Ditschman Ford since the last meeting. The apparatus has a suspension issue as it leans to the passenger side. The Engineer is obtaining a repair quote. The Engineer and officers are working on a lighting upgrade plan and possible re-wiring of the high-idle switch.

Milspray has been contracted to apply an annual undercoating to all vehicles with the exception of Car 46-2 and Tower 46. The cost of the undercoating is \$1,897.00 without Tower 46 and \$2,294.00 if Tower 46 is included.

## **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.

### **Invoices from the 2021 Budget:**

**Administration:** Office Expenses: \$303.59.

**Total Cost of Administration: \$303.59**

**Operations:** Apparatus Housing: \$16,000.00; Insurance: \$10,205.00; General Operations/Repairs and Maintenance: \$6,038.38; General Operating/Other: \$239.34; General Operations/RH Mutual Aid: \$5,000.00; General Operations/Utilities: \$596.56; Supplies: \$2,624.66; Training \$8,873.46.

**Total Cost of Operations: \$49,577.40**

**Total 2021 Budget Cost of Administration and Operations: \$49,880.99.**

**Resolution 2021-18 Payment of Bills**

*The Chief Financial Officer having certified there are sufficient unencumbered funds remaining in the 2021 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 bills in the total amount **\$49,880.99**.*

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

**Purchasing**

The requisitions approved at the September meeting for the Hydrant Gate Valve (NJFE) and the chargers (M&W), have been converted to purchase orders and have been issued to vendors.

The following items have been ordered but not delivered: M&W (radio scanner for Car 46-2; Witmer (smoke fluid); Witmer (helmets)

Chief Engineer Kabis is handling the scheduling of the annual preventive maintenance for the apparatus.

**Requisitions**

Chief Verducci requested approval of the following requisitions: E107 Deck gun repair \$100.00; E107 light tower repair \$150.00; E107 MIV valve replacement \$1,760.00 (Four Lanes); Undercoating of apparatus \$2,294.00; three sets of turn-out gear \$12,200. Total requisitions \$16,304.00.

Chairman Sartorio moved approval of the listed requisitions; second by Commissioner McGeady. The motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Attorney Perkins reported that the BOFC has received its annual CNC 3 certification from the Montgomery tax assessor. The value of district ratables as of January 1<sup>st</sup> was \$1,961,473,277. New construction and improvements certified as of October 1<sup>st</sup> were \$15,900,669. Using the 2021 fire tax rate of 0.050% this results in an increase in fire tax revenue for the coming year in the amount of \$7,950.33.

The initial transmittal of FY 21 tax monies to the district from the township should occur later this month.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Replacement of T46:** The BOFC engaged in a lengthy discussion on the schedule for the replacement of the apparatus. It was noted that if replacement is included in the FY22 capital budget and a purchase contract is issued after voter approval, the apparatus will still not be delivered, and no monies would be expended until FY23. Chief Verducci reported on the discussions of the truck committee. The committee would like to replace the existing apparatus with a 95-foot Seagraves aerial scope. The estimated cost of a replacement apparatus would be around 1.7 million. He noted that the proposed replacement would not have a pump or water tank. This will reduce the cost of the apparatus and also reduce its weight. He pointed out that the tower rarely flows water without a pumper and that the water tank on the current apparatus is too small to extinguish even a small fire. He also noted the extensive repair history on the existing apparatus and the amount of time that it was out of service for repair. In several instances the OOS time was increased because parts were not available from a U.S. vendor. The new residential and commercial construction in the district was not envisioned when the present apparatus was purchased. The replacement apparatus would have the ability to access areas that the present apparatus cannot reach.

The BOFC reviewed the existing capital replacement schedule to determine the impact of this expenditure on the planned replacement of other apparatus. It was noted that the BOFC will also be purchasing a command vehicle in FY22 as C46-2 was destroyed during Ida. The insurance settlement of \$30,000 from the existing car will offset some of the cost of the replacement, but the balance of approximately \$55,000 will be an unanticipated expenditure. The BOFC will seek FEMA grant money for the balance of the C46-2 loss but even if FEMA money is allocated it will take many weeks if not months to be confirmed.

It was noted that the BOFC would need a description and budget amount for both the aerial and command vehicle in the very near future if they are to be included in the FY 22 Capital budget. A special meeting to permit voter approval of capital projects for the coming year must be noticed at least ten days prior to the meeting date, if voter approval is sought on the date of a regular meeting. The notice period is considerably longer if voter approval is requested on a special date. It was agreed that the Chief and committee would provide firm prices by the next work session meeting.

**2022 Budget:** Chairman Sartorio noted that he has developed a draft of the FY 22 budget and will distribute it to the members of the Board before the work session meeting. He requested the Chief and Deputy Chief to provide a list of needs for operations, supplies and training as soon as possible.

**EMS Budget Request:** Both fire districts have approved monies in an amount sufficient to purchase the mobile rehabilitation tent/trailer. QPA Newberry is in the process of issuing a purchase order from each district to complete the purchase.

**Fire Prevention Fine Monies** – No action at this time noting the continuing post Ida work in progress.

**Viburnum Underground Tanks** – No report

**Renewal of Rocky Hill Agreement-** The consensus of the BOFC is that the renewal agreement should include performance metrics to substantiate the financial support provided. One suggestion would be to have Rocky Hill personnel work on apparatus in District 2. Concerns were raised as the Rocky Hill personnel are borough employees. It may be possible to utilize such personnel for pre-planning and hydrant testing in Boxes 5 & 6 of the district adjoining Rocky Hill. It was suggested that a provision in the renewal agreement should provide for active participation by Rocky Hill in pre-planning for potential events in the commercial area covered by these boxes. Joint drills in this area should also be considered. Further involvement of Chief Harris would also be of benefit, perhaps by having him attend BOFC meetings on a quarterly basis.

Chairman Sartorio moved renewal of the Rocky Hill contract subject to a revised agreement including revisions as discussed above. Commissioner Ruppert seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

**Grants:** Chief Verducci reported that he was working with Commissioner Mozumdar to submit a joint AFG grant application with Rocky Hill Fire Company. The grant would request funding for radios in anticipation of the upcoming requirement for frequency changes.

**Communications Policy:** Deferred to a future meeting.

**Northfield Bank:** Chair Sartorio will contact the bank to determine secure remote, log-in access to the account for QPA Newberry.

**ADJOURNMENT** There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m. The Board will hold a work session meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup> to continue the apparatus replacement discussion and review the draft budget. No action will be taken at that meeting. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the BOFC will be held on November 11th, 2021. *Motion by McGeedy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ruppert. Motion passed without objection.*