

The Board of Fire Commissioners, Gloucester Township Fire District # 4 held a Regular Meeting on June 21, 2023. The meeting was held at Blackwood Fire Company, 14 W. Central Avenue, Blackwood NJ 08012. This meeting has been properly advertised according to the State of New Jersey Sunshine Laws.

COMMISSIONERS: M. Cristella, M. Jones, J. Vannoni, J. McCann

ATTENDEES: Captain Reiss, Solicitor Carlamere

Motion by Commissioner McCann, second by Commissioner Jones to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of 5/17/2023. All in favor, motion carries.

Motion by Commissioner Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to approve the Workshop Meeting minutes of 6/7/2023. All in favor, motion carries.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Jones reported Engine 842 was sold, for \$7,000.00. Tower ladder is currently on GovDeals for sale. The lettering on the Cascade is complete. The FAM will need to add some straps for additional equipment. He asked the Chief and the line officers in charge of gear, for a list of the gear that needs to be replaced. He gave them until July 19th. The DEF issue with Squad 88 seems to be rectified.

Commissioner Cristella reported he is getting pricing on having the asphalt re-coated at BCR. He is going to get a price to have the hallway painted.

Commissioner McCann had nothing to report.

Commissioner J. Vannoni reported moving the Health Benefits to a new plan is still in progress. He thanked everyone involved in the DEF problem for helping to get the issue resolved. At this time, it seems to be ok.

The Workmen's Comp Insurance increased by \$4,000.00.

District # 6 is still investigating consolidation, and the way it looks, our taxpayers would see their costs reduced by .5% and their taxpayers would increase by .5%.

Chief is changing where they get the background check done, he is looking into pricing.

He is hoping the claim for Squad 88 DEF issue will not have to be used.

842 has been removed from the insurance.

CLERK'S REPORT: Attached

TREASURER'S REPORT: Motion by Commissioner McCann, second by Commissioner Jones to pay the June bills in the amount of \$26,231.35. All in favor, motion carries.

FIRE OFFICIAL REPORT: Attached

CHIEF'S REPORT: Attached

Commissioner Jones spoke about Tower Ladder 84. The broker thinks we get in excess of \$50,000.00. He would require a 90-day contract, and if sold he would get 10% of the sale. The Board decided to have him attend the Workshop meeting on 7/5.

The following was a follow up to the Chief's Report:

Commissioner Jones and the Board discussed air packs and bottles, and selling the excess. District # 3 is currently borrowing bottles.

Commissioner Jones brought up the topic of gear, and the Board discussed the gear situation. After discovering the condition of the gear room, it was decided FF Woods will be put in charge of the gear and gear room.

Commissioner Jones said they will not buy new cribbing, there is plenty of wood in the shed that can be used for cribbing.

Commissioner Vannoni said yes, all the equipment has been moved to BCR, and has been inventoried, and is now in a locked container. He sees no reason for equipment to be at Central Avenue. The key should only be made available to certain people. The Board needs to control it. He said decisions are being made outside of the Board, and he will speak to the Chief concerning it tomorrow.

Commissioner Jones asked Commissioner Vannoni where he would like to store the key for the locked storage container.

Commissioner J. Vannoni said the shop at BCR, one to FF Giambri, and one in the Commission Office.

Commissioner Jones asked permission to replace the office computer.

Commissioner J. Vannoni said he will check with the technology Commissioner.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Attached

CAPTAIN'S REPORT: Attached

There was a discussion on the Zallies Grant, and BFC has sent a list of needs.

Commissioner McCann brought up Storz's fittings for hydrants.

Commissioner J. Vannoni said he will not pay anything to the water company.

Motion by Commissioner Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to allow Captain Reiss apply for the Zallie's Grant. All in favor, motion carries.

There was a discussion on making the training room a registered site, and that the room was up to code. With that being resolved:

Motion by Commissioner McCann, second by Commissioner J. Vannoni to adopt a resolution to make the training room a registered site. All in favor, motion carries.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Cristella-yes, Commissioner Jones-yes, Commissioner J. Vannoni-yes, Commissioner McCann-yes.

FIRE APPARATUS MECHANIC: None

Motion by Commissioner Jones, second by Commissioner J. Vannoni to accept all reports as read. All in favor, motion carries.

Motion by Commissioner Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to pass a resolution to sell Engine 842, in the amount of \$7,000.00 to Juan Gutierrez. All in favor, motion carries.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Cristella-yes, Commissioner Jones-yes, Commissioner J. Vannoni-yes, Commissioner McCann-yes

Commissioner J. Vannoni thanked the President of BFC for submitting a report, but he questioned how long this investigation is going to take. He said he is going to suggest the Chairman write a letter to the President of BFC to get some answers on this topic.

Solicitor Carlamere said it has taken way too long at this point, and he suggested BFC hire a forensic accountant to look into the matter.

Commissioner Jones said he keeps hearing the President of BFC says this and that. His feeling is, the President is on a leave of absence, so therefore he does not have a say in the matter.

Commissioner McCann stated he did not steal from the Board of Fire Commissioners, so therefore the Board does not have a say in the matter.

Other Board members stated the funds he allegedly stole, came from the Board of Fire Commissioners, and the insurance they are hoping to collect from, was also paid by the Board.

Solicitor Carlamere stated the Board does have a vested interest in this, because once this story is out, the Board is the one who will have to answer for this. He said Fire District # 4 is an umbrella over BFC, so therefore will be the ones who will have to answer for this. He said you will be painted with that same brush. Their cup is being supported by taxpayer dollars.

Commissioner Cristella stated their funds are coming from the Board, which is taxpayer dollars. He said the BFC line officers don't see any sense of urgency in this matter. He said it shocks him,

that BFC acts like this is just another day. He said that should be to the forefront, rather than the amount of funds that were allegedly stolen.

Commissioner J. Vannoni said he will contact the Chairman and get him to draft a letter, to get some of these questions answered.

Commissioner McCann stated at the first BFC meeting after the alleged theft, everyone was concerned. At the following meeting, we were told no new news, still waiting on the investigation. At the last meeting, with no update, he thought the members were very responsive to Commissioner Jones comments.

Commissioner Cristella said we had a figure, 4 days after the incident, and the actual figure is probably within a ear shot of it. He went on to say, that at the onset, it was stated the figure was around \$50,000.00. It is not going to be \$250,000. So, the initial figure, it going to be pretty accurate. Why can't the investigation continue?

Commissioner J. Vannoni brought up the subject of the equipment that came off of the tower ladder, and he said Commissioner McCann suggested the bell be made into a memorial bell, which he thought was a great idea. He said the members have other ideas, but he wants to make sure there is communication concerning where this equipment is, and he questioned the sign boards off of the tower ladder.

Commissioner Jones said he knows where they are.

There was a discussion on the bells that have been removed from the apparatus.

Captain Reiss questioned the Assistant Chief status, and questioned why there has not been any communication from the Chief on the matter. He would encourage the Board to have the Chief communicate the status of that position, and if vacant it needs to be filled.

Motion by Commissioner McCann, second by Commissioner J. Vannoni to go into closed session to discuss Personnel. All in favor, motion carries.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Cristella-yes, Commissioner Jones -yes, Commissioner J. Vannoni-yes, Commissioner McCann-yes.

All items discussed in closed session will remain closed at this time.

With no further business to discuss.

Motion by Commissioner Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to adjourn.

DATED: June 21, 2023

BY: _____
Michael Jones, Secretary