

The Board of Fire Commissioners, Gloucester Township Fire District # 4 held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday April 20, 2016 in the meeting room of Blackwood Fire Company. This meeting has been properly advertised according to the State of New Jersey Sunshine Laws.

## **ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Coucoules (here)    Commissioner Stout (here)  
Commissioner McCann (absent)    Commissioner Simone (absent)  
Commissioner Vannoni (here)

Attendees: Solicitor Carlamere, FF W. Spain, Local 3249 President Kemery, Shop Steward Reiss

Motion by Commissioner Stout, second by Commissioner Coucoules to approve the regular meeting minutes from March 16, 2016. All in favor, motion carries.

Motion by Commissioner Coucoules, second by Commissioner Stout to approve the Workshop meeting minutes from April 6, 2016. All in favor, motion carries.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Stout stated that there still is no date for the exit interview, as the auditors are still waiting on information from the State of New Jersey to complete the audit.

Commissioner Coucoules stated Rescue 84 has been returned to us. The generator bearings have been replaced, and they repaired the compartment lights on it as well as the compartment door open lights. Ladder 84 also was brought to Vineland Electric and the light tower was repaired. The pan tilt now works on the left side of the ladder, and the open door compartment lights were repaired. The light on the dashboard was replaced which indicated the generator being on. Engine 842 went to Buds Truck Repair today and had the pump panel lights repaired that were out, and parts are on order for the water level gauge indicator.

Commissioner Vannoni stated Commissioner Simone could not be here but he submitted a report. The doors at Station # 2, the fire rated doors will be installed next week. That will abate the fire code violation that we were issued. The new 911 phone at Station #2 has been installed as well as an address on the front of the building. He received an estimate for the poles at Station # 2 parking lot, and the estimate is \$3900.00. The Board will have to decide what they want to do about it, as that was not budgeted for this year. We will have to find the money,

and will have to get quotes for that. Merchantville Door was at Station #2 today, we are waiting for an estimate for the repairs. He said it should be noted that Merchantville Doors stated that the doors were installed wrong, they are pulling out of the wall, it is putting too much stress on the door. Commissioner Vannoni said it is his opinion, but when they get the estimate, and get it in writing, that we may want to pursue legal action against the contractor that installed them initially. Apparently this will be a significant job, as they were not installed properly to begin with. He said they wanted to make sure Solicitor Carlamere was aware of that. Commissioner Simone is still waiting on an estimate for the shut off and riser for the sprinkler system to see where that would put us.

Commissioner Vannoni said the only thing he has at the moment is Local 3249 President Kemery handed him sample policies of drug and alcohol policies, and he has not had a chance to look at them, but he will review them and get working on that in the near future.

## **CORROSPONDENCE**

None

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

None

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Stout said everyone has been given a copy of the bill list for April. Total bills are \$74,639.47.

Motion by Commissioner Stout, second by Commissioner Coucoules to pay the bills in the amount of \$74,639.47. All in favor, motion carries.

Reminder, the bill for Associated Building Specialties will not be sent until all the work is complete. Also, everyone has a profit and loss report, he asked that everyone keeps an eye on their line items.

## **FIRE OFFICIAL'S REPORT**

Attached

## **CHIEF'S REPORT**

None

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

None

Motion by Commissioner Stout, second by Commissioner Coucoules to approve all reports as read. All in favor motion carries.

Commissioner Coucoules just wanted to add that there is a training drill at Chews Landing this Saturday, and he has approved the career staff to attend.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Stout stated that at the Workshop the Board talked about the money in the budget to try to promote duty crews. He said he spoke to President Miller and told him what our thought process was, and he will take it back to Blackwood Fire Company and discuss it with them, and see if they will approve that when our money runs out, that the Fire Company will step in and continue the program going forward.

Commissioner Vannoni stated that Brian Dunlap will be the representative for the Safety Committee from Blackwood Fire Company. He said since Commissioner McCann and Commissioner Simone are heading that committee, and are not here this evening, we will wait to see if they will be holding a meeting in the near future.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Coucoules stated Gloucester County Radio is now on the 700 MHZ. He said we will get our radios programmed, portable and mobile to 700 MHZ. Gloucester County has agreed to do 5 of our radios, only, of our choosing. We currently have 25. It will be our responsibility to have the remainder programmed, at a cost of close to \$5000.00. The cost is \$150.00 per radio. It has to be done. He stated we only have \$3500.00 in our line item, so we will have to figure out where the money will come from.

Commissioner Vannoni said we maybe can get some from the computer line item. We will make it work.

Commissioner Coucoules stated that this is a must. He said we have gone on a few cover assignments to Washington Township and it was a debacle as to what radio channel we were responding to and what channel they were working on the fire ground, what we were going to be using as the cover company. That has now been rectified through our Chief and Washington Townships Chief; however we all need to be on the same page.

## **GOOD AND WELFARE**

None

## **COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR**

Local 3249 President Kemery asked if there have been any developments in regard to the contract.

Commissioner Vannoni said the Board has made an attempt and it was not met with positive results at this point and our Solicitor is going to make an attempt to contact our Labor Attorney and push this forward.

Local 3249 President Kemery said at the work session 2 weeks ago, there was mention of a minor contact with one of the doors at Station # 2 with the apparatus. Have you received an accident report yet?

Commissioner Coucoules said he has not.

Local 3249 President Kemery asked if there is a timeline or has there been contact to confirm that report is being prepared.

Commissioner Vannoni said he knows it is being prepared, but they have not followed up but they will.

Local 3249 President Kemery said on the subject of accidents, he believes there was an accident at this Station in October of 2015 at this station with Engine 841 coming in contact with the garden.

Commissioner Vannoni asked if that was the one where the back of the truck hit the flower bed.

Local 3249 President Kemery said he thinks that sounds about right. One of the small parts needed to get repaired. Was a report prepared on that?

Commissioner Coucoules said I believe you are talking about the trim piece, and yes a report was done on that.

Local 3249 President Kemery asked if the report was received on that.

Commissioner Coucoules replied he believes he has that one.

Local 3249 President Kemery said one last question with the apparatus maintenance that you have outlined, has there been an increase to the District by farming the repairs out.

Commissioner Coucoules said unfortunately yes.

Local 3249 President Kemery said he will say to the Board that the Board decision will not go unchallenged. He will suggest to you as a labor representative and as a taxpayer that we meet and discuss the issue and we get this back on track, so money can be properly allocated where it needs to be in this Fire District. He said you just talked about \$5,000.00 for radios to make sure every member is safe, and he reminds the Board that they have a grievance arbitration order that states every member will have communications. He thinks they need to get back in communication and move the in house mechanic issue forward. He went on to say as a taxpayer, no if ands or buts on the bay doors at Station # 2 if a job was paid for he has no intention on paying for it a second time. Do whatever needs to be done to recover any losses in getting the repairs fixed.

FF Spain ca you explain to me how the procedure for maintenance has changed.

Commissioner Vannoni said it is a work in progress.

FF Spain said a few months ago he sat here and listened when you were going to have a mechanic.

The mechanic was going to be sent away to school and now he understands that idea has collapsed.

Commissioner Vannoni said at this point it has. It is a work in progress.

Shop Steward Local 3249 Reiss said something he has always wanted to do was to have the address posted on Station # 2, Gloucester Township Public Works did it for free. He asked if we have made any progress on the Safety Committee.

Commissioner Vannoni said yes we have Brian Dunlap from Blackwood Fire Company, and there will be more representation from the Fire Company. He said Commissioner Simone and Commissioner McCann are representing the Board and he wants to sit down with them and hopefully there will be a meeting in the near future. He does not have any information on that.

Shop Steward Local 3249 Reiss said Kemery submitted a letter to the Board, and he will be the career representative on the Committee. The reason he is asking is because one of the things he thinks needs to be talked about heavily is in the past and as a Union we have a staffing problem but we have never really delved into it. He said he understands the Safety Committee is probably the best avenue for that conversation. He said as a matter of record, and he did a little homework, just in April alone between April 1 and April 18, he ran some numbers off the incident report. He divided them between daytime when career staff responds and nights and weekends.

35 Runs

6 total runs between 6-4 Monday thru Friday

29 Total runs outside of those hours, nights and weekends

Average number of personnel is just shy of 7 per call

Percentage of time the apparatus hits the street understaffed:

6:00 am to 4:00 pm - 38% only has one person, 13 % (2) on the truck, 50 % (3) people on the truck, and we have yet to have a response with (4) people on the truck

Nights and weekends - 4 instances where an apparatus did not respond to a call, 7 % (1) on the truck, 41 % (2) on the truck, 32% (3) on the truck, and 20 % (4) or more on the truck.

He went on to say the reason for him doing this is not to pick on anyone or find fault. He stated they had a call last week during working hours with 2 engines responding as an investigation call, which could have turned out to be a HAZ MAT call, it did not, with a chemical spill and we had 3 people respond. This shows that what some people say as days are a crap shoot, this is getting to be the norm.

Commissioner Vannoni asked if he could have copies of those numbers.

Shop Steward Reiss said they are had written, but he will get him a copy. Again he said he is not trying to villainize the Board, Blackwood Fire Company or the career staff, he just said that if we do not have a real conversation about these things it is going to continue to spin out of control. He said the Fire District is staring down a very long gun, we have a building that is torn down, we have apparatus that is deteriorating, and we are trying to do all these products at once, and we are still not putting a product on the street. If we don't start taking a look at ourselves, the problem is not going to go away. He is not trying to make anyone look bad, he is just trying to initiate the conversation, sooner rather than later, and much more seriously than we ever have before. In his opinion it is a problem, and we have to start somewhere, maybe the safety committee, or take it a step further and look into our options with other fire districts. He is putting out his view on the matter.

Commissioner Vannoni said very good.

Commissioner McCann has joined us at the meeting.

FF Spain said he would like to second what the firefighter just said and asks the Board to take into consideration what he just said. You have to do something about numbers. He wishes he could tell you what to do about numbers, somebody has to do something.

Commissioner Vannoni said it will be looked into.

Shop Steward Local 3249 Reiss said to Commissioner McCann that he would like to see if this can be addressed by the Safety Committee, and he supports that, that is why he elected to be on that committee. He wants to see if happen more frequently, and not like other committees that have been started and then fizzled. He would like to see some real progress come out of that committee.

Commissioner McCann said the Safety Committee does not have a designated purpose at this point. The workmen's comp representative came and talked to us concerning our accident record. There were some things we could be doing as far as safety, that could be presented on a monthly basis as well as reviewing accidents that have previously occurred, and how we could have possibly prevented them. It was more in line with personnel safety. He said he feels as though members personal safety is on the line every time they go out with a reduced crew. When we sit down and talk, we will see what direction we want to go in. We will decide how often we are going to meet; right now we are set up to do quarterly. We all know there are more safety concerns to discuss, than a quarterly meeting will allow us to take care of.

This would be a topic for you, FF Reiss, to bring to the meeting.

Commissioner McCann then asked if maybe associate members should be represented. They have safety concerns as well. He will bring this up at the next workshop and let the Board decide. He said he will talk to everyone to see what day or evening will work for everyone.

With no further business to discuss.

Motion by Commissioner Stout, second by Commissioner Coucoules to adjourn. All in favor, motion carries.

DATE: April 20, 2016

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Simone, Secretary

