

The Board of Fire Commissioners, Gloucester Township Fire District # 4 held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday May 15, 2019 in the office of the Board of Fire Commissioners. This meeting has been properly advertised according to the State of New Jersey Sunshine Laws.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner M. Jones (here) Commissioner R. Jones (here)
Commissioner McCann (here) Commissioner Grady (here)
Commissioner Vannoni (here)

Attendees: Captain Reiss, Chief Cipriano, FF Giambri, FF Adamonis, FF O'Connor, FAM Prendergast, FF Woods, FF Kemery, Solicitor Carlamere.

Motion by Commissioner M. Jones, second by Commissioner Grady to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of 4/17/2019. All in favor, motion carries.

Motion by Commissioner R. Jones, second by Commissioner Grady to approve the Workshop Meeting minutes of 5/1/2019. All in favor, motion carries.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Grady reported that Bob Hill, the EEO Officer emailed a letter to him stating he no longer would like to represent Fire District's in that capacity.

Commissioner Vannoni asked Solicitor Carlamere if the District is required to have an EEO Officer.

Solicitor Carlamere said you are not required, but he thought it was part of the bargaining unit requirement. He said you may want to have one on an as need basis, but you are not required to have one.

Commissioner McCann said he thinks the Board needs someone who is readily available, as Bob Hill always was.

Solicitor Carlamere stated the first contact should there be an issue, would be labor council. He may have resources available if needed. He said talk to Howard Long, and then himself, the Solicitor, and see what they would recommend.

Commissioner Vannoni said our Personnel Director first, labor council after that.

Solicitor Carlamere agreed.

Commissioner Grady asked FF Kemery how this whole thing with Bob Hill wanting to re-negotiate his contract got started.

FF Kemery said that he and Commissioner R. Jones contacted Bob Hill, and he asked for a copy of our Harassment Policy, in order to do the Harassment Training for the Cadet Program. FF Kemery sent it to him electronically. It names him as the EEO Officer. He came back and said he would do the training, but his name appears predominately in the Harassment Policy, and he said he has not had contact with Fire District # 4 for years. He said he would do the training, but, but if his name was to appear in the policy, then he would have to talk to the Board about negotiating his contract. FF Kemery then contacted Commissioner R. Jones, and then hence contacted Commissioner Grady. Apparently now there has been a change of direction.

Commissioner Grady said then his name needs to be removed from the policy.

FF Kemery said they would have to get together, and review the policy, and make the necessary changes. We need to mutually agree on policy changes, and move on from there.

Commissioner McCann had nothing.

Commissioner R. Jones said the ladder is still out, and 841 is out of service. Chain saws are back together. He had Wireless out there to run a temporary cable for the watch desk. He is researching speakers for the room, at Station # 1.

Commissioner M. Jones stated that the roof at BCR was completed today. He said it was discussed at the Workshop about just continuing with the sprinkler system at Station # 2. The career staff would have some protection while they were sleeping. He would like to add the bills that were removed from the bill list last month to tonight's bill list, so the deposits can go out and the process can begin.

Motion by Commissioner R. Jones, second by Commissioner M. Jones to move forward with the sprinkler system project at Station # 2, minus the sheet rock.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner M. Jones (yes) Commissioner R. Jones (yes)
Commissioner McCann (yes) Commissioner Grady (yes)
Commissioner Vannoni (yes)

Commissioner Vannoni reported that the internet was down, it turned out to be a Comcast problem, they came out and replaced the modem.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

CLERK'S REPORT

Attached.

The Board decided to keep the July Workshop on July 3rd.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Motion by Commissioner M. Jones, second by Commissioner R. Jones to pay the June bills in the amount of \$51,040.79 which includes the addition of the 2 bills previously stated. All in favor, motion carries.

Commissioner McCann gave the Board a packet which contains information concerning the audit. Also, he stated that he found out that what the Solicitor had been telling us concerning the budget was correct, where as long as you don't overspend the entire budget, we would be compliant. However, what we did not know was that you must remove all Capital items first, and then if you don't exceed the remainder of the budget you would be compliant.

Commissioner McCann then went on and reviewed the packet he gave to the Board. He went on to say if you look at the profit and loss report for this month and you see your line items are over 40% to 42%, maybe you should ask your self why. He listed all the line items he thought may be in trouble, and went over them with the Board. He went over the Special Operations line item that is at 151%.

Commissioner R. Jones said that has accounts payable.

Commissioner McCann said he would check on that.

Commissioner Vannoni said he would move the extra 16% in USFA Training to the regular training line item.

Commissioner M. Jones reported the Station Security project is complete, and now it is up to the Fire Company to decide when the number locks come off.

Commissioner McCann stated he is not saying anyone is doing anything wrong, we just have to watch our line items.

FIRE OFFICIALS REPORT

Attached.

Commissioner M. Jones questioned if there has been any movement on the hiring of the part time fire inspector.

Commissioner Vannoni said there has been no movement on that yet.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Attached.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Attached.

CAPTAINS REPORT

Attached.

Commissioner M. Jones asked Commissioner Grady what the progress was on the driver training for 82 staff.

Commissioner Grady replied it was ongoing.

Captain Reiss stated 3 of the 4 had ½ of the training, and it will all be completed within the 2 month time frame.

Motion by Commissioner M. Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to approve all reports as read. All in favor, motion carries.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Grady said he would like to start the conversation and come up with a game plan to go meet with Station 83, on the possibility of using their bunk room for the career staff. He would like to reach out to 83 with an offer that the Board is comfortable with, as well as the career staff is comfortable with as far as services being extended to 83.

There was a discussion by the Board, and Solicitor Carlamere concerning the fact that Fire District # 4 provides fire protection for District # 3 thru the Engine 88 program, funded by the taxpayers of District # 4.

Commissioner Grady relayed to the Board that he would like to try opening a dialog with them on the matter of the bunk room, and the fact they are in discussions about District # 82 and # 84 taking over the fire inspections may be a good start to using their facilities for the overnight career staff.

Commissioner Carlamere said it would all have to worked out in a shared services agreement with Station # 83.

Commissioner McCann questioned the Captains report that showed 4 calls in 83 for the month of April.

Captain Reiss said yes, but it does not represent the times calls were answered with an adequate response. He went on to say there are times when just a utility responds, with a piece of apparatus with just one driver. The number 4 is accurate, but it is a little gray.

Commissioner McCann said to Commissioner Grady, that the topic of speaking to Blenheim, and the Board just approved the sprinkler system. We seem to have solved our problem.

Commissioner Grady said not really, because the project will not be complete and it will leave the permit open.

Commissioner M. Jones said there had been no permits pulled for the bunk rooms at Blenheim. He said the checks approved tonight are for a deposit on the project at Station # 2. There will be permits pulled for the project at Station # 2.

Commissioner Grady said he would still like to open a dialog with Blenheim, as they seem to be a little bit vulnerable right now. It is his understanding that some of their officers do not want to be officers anymore, so this may be a good time to try. They have money and we need money. He went on to say he would like to come up with a game plan to get our foot in the door.

Commissioner R. Jones said he would go with Commissioner Grady.

Commissioner Vannoni said they need to ask them if they would be interested in merging, to have a dozen shared services agreements is ridiculous, the goal should be working towards one Fire District.

Commissioner Grady said at some point someone needs to take step one.

Commissioner Grady said he has 2 new applications, and the comment was made that the one applicant made the appointment but never showed up, and the other has an appointment tomorrow. He would suggest we hold off until they have physicals and they are good to go.

GOOD & WELFARE

Chief Cipriano said the changes to the Operational Guidelines that have been given to the Board are for review at this point. He said the Structure Fire OG the Board can adopt, 19-004.

Motion by Commissioner Grady, second by Commissioner M. Jones to adopt Operational Guideline 19-004 Structural Fires. All in favor, motion carries.

The Operational Guideline for Incident Response 19-003 is still out for review.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

FF Kemery stated when this problem first arose, he spoke to the attorney for the New Jersey State Fireman's Association, Richard Braslow. He asked if one District was permitted to sue another in the same municipality. He did not think that would go anywhere. He did say, that District # 2 and # 4 could ban together and tell District # 3 that if an alarm call comes in you would be glad to send any available volunteers. If none are available, we can not send anyone.

Commissioner Vannoni said he brought this up at the joint OPS Meeting and no one else was on board with it.

FF Kemery said as a taxpayer of Fire District # 4 he pays for them to respond to a call in this District, and if possible, to assist 83, not be 83. It is another option on the record.

On the subject of the budget, you stated you ate up 85% of your budget, the State has concerns, the auditor has concerns, and the CPA is looking into things for you. Someone has to answer the 911 call. At one of his last meetings Commissioner Stout said we are not in great shape, but we are not in terrible shape either, we need to watch our money and we should be ok. He hopes all the players get together, and work on a resolution before there is a serious problem. He said he was at a car fire recently, and the only thing that responded was Engine 88, at 6:30 in the evening. He hopes we are seriously paying attention to this.

In regard to the applications, he said he spoke to the one applicant, the problem is Kennedy Health Alliance only has people there, who do the necessary blood testing from 7:30AM to 2:30 PM Monday thru Friday. That is a problem for people who work.

He went on to say that other Fire Districts, given all the information is there, allow the Personnel Director to approve the final application without it being approved by the entire Board.

Solicitor Carlamere said it has to be approved by the Board. They can be made members, but they are not firefighters until they are approved by the Board. You can do it conditionally, where you can approve it, with the idea that the physical will be completed in a certain period of time.

There was a discussion if they would be able to go to a lab to get the blood work done, and also it was stated that the Stratford Office, the hours for blood work is 8:00 to 4:30 Monday thru Friday.

Commissioner R. Jones said he will find out from Linda at Kennedy, how to handle people who can't get there during the week, or if they can go to a lab.

Motion by Commissioner Grady, second by Commissioner M. Jones to approve the applications for Shawn McMahon and Joseph Clark, pending the outcome of their physicals, with the 6-month probationary period. All in favor, motion carries.

FF Kemery stated that getting the EEO Officer situation resolved is top priority because people need to know where to go if they have an issue.

Commissioner Vannoni said e believes the policy reads that it should first be reported to the Chief, or maybe the Personnel Director, so they should not be contacting the EEO Officer anyway.

Commissioner Vannoni said this will be put on the Workshop agenda for June.

Chief Cipriano said the Cadets had their 3rd class on Saturday, and they are engaged and excited. He thanked FF Kemery, FF Shrader for their input.

Commissioner Grady asked if there was any outreach to get more Cadets.

Chief said he is working on getting it out there.

Commissioner Vannoni said the parents signed a social media waver for the Cadets.

Chief reported unsettling issues with AMR Ambulance Service. He met with the supervisors, he and Chief Breezy and they will see if the issues are addressed.

Commissioner Vannoni asked if they will bring it up at the Mayors Meeting.

Chief Cipriano said they will. He said the issues are just complete laziness on their part, like not wearing safety vests on the highway at 3:00 in the morning and walking into lanes of traffic.

FF Kemery said AMR and Pine Hill are now in discussions that they will not maintain a truck from 12:00 midnight to 6:00 am.

Commissioner Vannoni confirmed that they, AMR, wants the Fire Districts to pay for them to remain on during that time, and are currently not running at that time. He said that is a topic that should be discussed with the Mayor at the Fire District Meeting with him.

With no further business to discuss.

Motion by Commissioner M. Jones, second by Commissioner McCann to adjourn. All in favor, motion carries.

DATED: MAY 15, 2019

BY: _____
John Grady, Secretary