

**MOUNT LAUREL FIRE DISTRICT #1  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING / WORK SESSION**

April 6, 2010  
Fire Department Headquarters Station  
Meeting Minutes #9

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

1. Commissioner Nash
2. Commissioner Cornue
3. Commissioner Roura
4. Commissioner Shapiro
5. Chief of Department Gallos
6. Administrator Jones

**NOT PRESENT:**

1. Commissioner Shestack

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Cornue at 7:07 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence observed.

The Public Announcements were read by Commissioner Shapiro.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 10/20/09 Regular Meeting minutes, the 12/15/09 Special Meeting minutes and the 12/15/09 Regular Meeting minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 11/17/09 Regular Meeting minutes and the 12/01/09 Special Meeting minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioner Cornue abstaining.

**General Discussion:**

Status of 2001 Bond Issue Refinancing: Administrator Jones reported that there is a resolution on tonight's agenda authorizing various Fire District officials to sign off on the paperwork required to proceed with the project. He stated that the professionals are moving ahead rapidly and he believes that the bond sale will occur during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in May.

Township Financial Situation Discussion: Chief of Department Gallos reported that he did not attend the Township Council meeting last night because he didn't want to be a target with all the turmoil going on. He has heard that 15 police officers could be laid off, EMS and trash collection services may be privatized and they are eliminating janitorial staff. He added that they are investigating transferring the library to the County and taking over the MUA because of the \$16,000,000 that they have in their reserve accounts.

He stated that he had talked to EMS Chief Pagurek and was told that he had met with his employees and union representatives and they had agreed to concessions in the amount that Township officials were looking for. They had not been advised by Township officials if this was sufficient enough to avoid privatization and layoff of their personnel. EMS Chief Pagurek had requested permission from the Township Manager to preliminarily investigate a potential merger with the Fire Department as an alternative and she approved his request. Chief of Department Gallos stated that he will be meeting soon with EMS Chief Pagurek to develop a list of pros and cons and a cost analysis.

He reported that he has heard that the Mayor and Council publicly announced that there were not going to be any layoffs, even though the Township Manager has already met with all of the Department heads and sent them correspondence requesting ideas on cuts in their operating budgets. He stated that the Township Manager was going up to Trenton today to submit their layoff plan to the CSC and has heard that the Township is between \$5 million and \$8 million short for 2010.

Administrator Jones stated that if the Township is willing to consider merging EMS with the Fire Department, they would need to provide us with the billing revenue to pay for it. He asked the Board if they were willing to consider a merger because if they were opposed to it, there was no reason to have any discussions with the EMS Chief. He felt that coming up with the true cost of their operation might be difficult because many of their costs are buried within non-EMS line items. These items include insurance, workers compensation, building utilities/maintenance and debt service for their equipment and facilities. He was concerned that when you add all of that in, it might reveal that their billing revenue is not able to cover their true cost of operations. He suggested that any merger discussions might include the Township continuing to pay the debt service related to EMS and that we might not even need to continue using their EMS buildings. Commissioner Nash was interested in what the difference is between their billing revenue and the true expenses related to their operation. He guessed that it may be a lot more than everyone thinks. Commissioner Shapiro suggested forming a task force to review the information once the Chiefs have their initial meeting, which everyone agreed was a good way to proceed.

Commissioner Roura asked Chief of Department Gallos about the status of the "fee for service" program. Chief of Department Gallos replied that he has had a meeting with the Township Manager to review any concerns that Township Council had. They have strong reservations about us billing for our services and at this point will not even consider moving forward with a Township Ordinance. Commissioner Roura stated that he had spoken with Mayor Keenan last week and was told that it was a dead issue as far as the Township was concerned. He added that Mayor Keenan was under the impression that we were handling this ourselves and that we didn't need the Township involvement. Chief of Department Gallos stated that he would discuss the matter with Solicitor Braslow and ask him for suggestions and clarification of what we can do by resolution.

#### **Adoption of Resolutions:**

Resolution #2010-34 "Appointment of Joshua Persaud as an 'Explorer' Member of the Mount Laurel Fire Department". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Resolution #2010-35 "Resolution of the Commissioners of Fire District #1, in the Township of Mount Laurel, County of Burlington, New Jersey, Authorizing the Preparation and Distribution of Offering Documents in Connection with the Sale of General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2010; Authorizing the Issuance, Sale, and Award of Said Bonds; Making Certain Determinations and Covenants in Connection Therewith and Authorizing Certain Actions Related Thereto". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Fellowship President Syl Einstein reported on the future efforts that his recruitment committee was considering and stated that he would have a written plan for the balance of the year for the Board to review and approve. Several Board members concurred that this was a good idea and asked him if he could have it available for the Board's next Work Session. Commissioner Shapiro asked the Board if this meant that she was no longer needed as the liaison between the Board and the volunteers regarding spending of recruitment and retention funds. She asked Administrator Jones how he would like to see that handled and Administrator Jones indicated that he thought that the Board liaison was still a good idea as long as they submitted their requests in time for inclusion in the Board meeting packet. Commissioner Nash asked if this process is bypassing the Chief of Department. Chief of Department Gallos stated that it is not a problem because he and Deputy Chief Colucci communicate frequently with Captains McCorkle and Brady about their plans.

Resolution #2010-36 "Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act". Commissioner Roura made a motion to accept the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**THE OPEN SESSION ADJOURNED AT 7:55 PM.  
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 8:03 PM.  
THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 9:29 PM.**

Chief of Department Gallos reported that he and Deputy Chief Colucci are meeting with FEMA representatives tomorrow to submit the reimbursement paperwork for the 2/5/10 snowstorm.

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:30 PM.**