

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

March 8, 2011

Fire Department Headquarters Station

Meeting Minutes #5

IN ATTENDANCE:

1. Commissioner Cornue
2. Commissioner Nash
3. Commissioner Roura
4. Commissioner Shestack
5. Commissioner Shapiro
6. Administrator Jones
7. Deputy Chief Colucci

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Cornue @ 8:00 PM.

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

The Public Announcements were read by Commissioner Shapiro.

Commissioner Cornue administered the oath of office to Commissioners-elect Shestack and Roura.

REORGANIZATION OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES:

Commissioner Roura made a motion to maintain the current slate of Officers and Committee Chairs, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash and unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Cornue announced that he is making several Chairperson changes to the Standing Committees. Commissioner Roura will now be Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Committee and Commissioner Nash will now be the Chairman of the Buildings & Grounds Committee.

COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:

- Commissioners Cornue, Nash and Shapiro congratulated Commissioners Roura and Shestack on their re-election.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

- Special Meeting of November 1, 2010. Commissioner Nash noted a minor correction that he had brought to the Administrators' attention prior to the meeting and made a motion to approve the minutes of the 11/1/10 Special Meeting (as corrected), which was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioners Roura and Shapiro abstaining.
- Regular Meeting of November 15, 2010. Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the minutes of the 11/15/10 meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioner Roura abstaining.
- Special Meeting of November 29, 2010. Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the minutes of the 11/29/10 meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Shapiro. The motion was approved by the remaining Board with Commissioners Roura and Shestack abstaining.

Administrator Jones commented that he has completed the minutes of the December meetings and is currently working on the minutes of the January meetings. He hoped to be done with the January meeting minutes by the end of this week.

Commissioner Nash asked him if we make the minutes of both the open and closed sessions available to the public once they have been approved by the Board. Administrator Jones replied that we currently only post the open session meeting minutes on the website. We are required to make closed session meeting minutes available as soon as the topics discussed are no longer covered under the closed session exemption. Many of our closed sessions contain discussions about personnel matters or negotiations that would have to be redacted. He needed to go back and review the closed sessions of past meetings and determine if they can now be released to the public and posted on our website. He added that some closed sessions that involved only the Board members were not taped and that those closed session minutes needed to be provided by the Board member taking notes as soon as those discussions are no longer privileged.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #2011-13 "Appointment of Kevin M. Riera as 'Junior' Members of the Mount Laurel Fire Department". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Shapiro. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Resolution #2011-14 "2011-12 Special & Regular Meeting Dates". Commissioner Shapiro read the resolution by title and made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Roura. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Administrator Jones noted that a couple of meetings were moved to either Tuesday or Wednesday because of holiday observance or elections. There was general discussion about the July Special Meeting and whether the Board wanted to keep it on the schedule – in 2010 it was not scheduled in order to give the management staff a chance to take some time off in the summer. It was decided to leave it on the calendar and the Board will decide whether there is a need for it later this spring. Commissioner Roura made a motion to amend Resolution #2011-14 to move the 6/6/11 Special Meeting to 6/8/11, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

MONTHLY REPORT OF THE FIRE OFFICIAL:

Deputy Chief Colucci reported that there was some disagreement between the investigators regarding the cause and origin of last month's major fire in Brittany Commons. After a more thorough review by additional investigators, it was determined that the conclusion reached by our Departments' investigators was the correct one.

MONTHLY REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF:

Commissioner Nash asked Deputy Chief Colucci how his meeting with Masonville Fire Company went and Deputy Chief Colucci replied that they still wanted to remain viable as a Fire Company, even though most of their active members participate in the Station 363 Duty Crew program. Their monthly meetings are sparsely attended although there were a few retired volunteer Masonville members that are trying to rejuvenate the young membership.

Commissioner Nash asked him about the Miles Technology computer network evaluation that had been done. Deputy Chief Colucci reported that their evaluation report found few areas of concern and most of them have now been resolved with the addition of the 2 new servers purchased at the end of 2010. We had a meeting with them recently to follow up on the evaluation and find out if they have any services that may benefit us. Administrator Jones added that with the 2 new servers, we improved our redundancy, upgraded our software versions from 32 bit to 64 bit to take advantage of greater speed and removed several additional older servers from service by combining those operations with the new servers. The e-mail server software still needs to be upgraded but this is a complex upgrade that will take some time to plan out. He stated that we are as current as possible now with the addition of the new servers and clean software installs that we were able to do and we have much better redundancy by reformatting the old servers as backups.

Commissioner Nash asked Deputy Chief Colucci about the SCBA "pack trackers" and what Mechanic Skeenes and Lieutenant Jones were doing with them. Deputy Chief Colucci stated that they were handheld homing devices that allow us to find a downed firefighter by homing in on a chip inside the SCBA and that they needed to be mounted in several of our 1st due vehicles.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Commissioner Cornue wanted to review each Standing Committee to determine what we need to focus on in 2011.

TRAINING:

- Commissioner Nash reported that training is ongoing and that our new Training Officer, Captain Burnett, was meeting with his counterparts in other Departments and making progress as he feels his way along. He felt that Battalion Chief Sharkey would be able to help him get up to speed quickly and that the Chief of Department should be giving him active direction. He also felt that we have a very well-trained Department and this makes him very proud. Deputy Chief Colucci added that he wanted to see more of a focus on leadership and incident command training for our Officers and our Acting Officers to improve our inter-agency operability. He wants to take into consideration the way our volunteers operate and how their training is implemented. He felt that Captain Burnett is task-oriented and feels that he will do a good job. Commissioner Cornue felt that we have an excellent foundation to build on through the efforts of our previous Training Officers.

LONG RANGE PLANNING:

- Commissioner Nash reported that he spent some time yesterday looking over where we are at and trying to figure out how to get back up to speed. He and the Administrator went over some funding concepts and our previous plans for facilities, apparatus and other capital expenditures, as well as how to factor in funding for new personnel. Growing our personnel levels is going to be tough to do and may require going to the public with additional referendums. A 4th station is still part of our plans as well as continued replacement of apparatus, however with the economic downturn some of our needs that were based on growth in certain areas of the Township have been temporarily postponed because that growth has not happened.

EQUIPMENT:

- Commissioner Roura reported that with voter approval of the New Apparatus Capital Lease question, we can now move forward with the bidding process and State approvals. Deputy Chief Colucci added that he was researching a proposal to outfit our firefighters with personal escape system equipment this year if funding permits. Commissioner Cornue asked Administrator Jones about the next step in the apparatus procurement process and he replied that the specifications have to be completed, approved by the Board and then advertised for bidding. Deputy Chief Colucci expects the specification development to be done shortly, but he will take as much time as needed to make sure that they are done right.

BUILDING & GROUNDS:

- Commissioner Roura reported that more work needs to be done on the Headquarters roof, which is experiencing some additional leaks after repairs were made last fall. Administrator Jones added that finding leaks in flat roofs can be challenging because the leaks travel along the steel bar joists until gravity pulls them down to the drop ceilings and the origin point can be hard to locate. He hoped that the Board could someday have someone dedicated to building maintenance so that issues like this can be addressed in a more timely manner. Deputy Chief Colucci stated that with Battalion Chief Jones retiring at the end of March, Battalion Chief Kirvan is willing to take on facility maintenance issues. Commissioner Roura hoped that Commissioner Nash can take a more hands-on role due to his daytime availability.

FIRE PREVENTION:

- Commissioner Shapiro reported that a lot is being done by Fire Official Kownatsky. Commissioner Roura asked her if the Bureau of Fire Prevention has sufficient budget to put out another newsletter publicizing Fire Prevention Week in October. He could help get an "education non-profit" mailing permit if we can claim that the newsletter is for educational purposes. Administrator Jones added that we only included budget to put out a single newsletter this year, but if the Bureau could reallocate sufficient funds within their operating budget, we might be able to consider a second one. Commissioner Roura suggested that we go through the application process anyway so that we can get the "non-profit" mailing privileges in case we decide to do it. Deputy Chief Colucci asked Administrator Jones how much the election newsletter cost and Administrator Jones guessed that it was around \$7,500 with postage being the biggest expense, followed by printing and the services of the our editor. Commissioner Roura estimated that by using "non-profit" mailing rates, mailing the newsletter should cost about 10 cents each and Commissioner Shestack calculated that we could do one in the fall for less than \$6,000.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

- Commissioner Shapiro reported that activity of the Committee had died down somewhat last year and she had to see if she could round up more volunteers to get it active again. Deputy Chief Colucci stated his willingness to get more involved with this Committee so that we can start meeting with the civic associations year round and not just before the election. Commissioner Roura added that the civic associations have expressed their desire to meet with us during nicer weather and not in the middle of January.

Deputy Chief Colucci reported that the FirefightersNeeded firm had started taking photographs and interviewing volunteers for the literature that he was preparing. He added that some of the senior volunteer officers recognized the need to start spreading out the new members between the Duty Crews because they are overwhelmed on Friday nights. He felt that we may have to begin regulating new member intake so that we don't continue overwhelming the current officers as they try to mentor new members.

INSURANCE:

- Commissioner Shestack reported that this Committee meets in the 4th quarter of the year when renewals start coming in for evaluation. He added that he is very happy with our current JIF and the relationship that we have with our broker. He knows that Administrator Jones is always looking into new policies that are being offered in order to make sure that we maintain the best coverage possible for our members.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

- Commissioner Shestack stated that we discussed IT earlier this evening.

FINANCE:

- Commissioner Shestack reported that the Finance Committee will meet again in the 3rd and 4th quarters to review the budget and prepare a spending plan for next year. In the meantime, he would be helping Commissioner Nash and the Long Range Planning Committee review possible funding ideas for the 4th station and the equipment and personnel to staff it.

PERSONNEL:

- Commissioner Cornue reported that this Committee deals with problems and issues as they occur and over the past 18 months has been pretty busy with grievances and CBA negotiations.
- Deputy Chief Colucci reported that we must still be in the running for the \$182,000 SAFER grant that we applied for last fall because we have not received a "denial" letter yet. He has heard that all of the "denial" letters have already been issued and awards are starting to be made. Our grant is a "Tier 3" grant, which means that we are requesting funds for 2 men based on attrition, either through layoffs, retirements or resignations. He noted that the Westampton Fire Department just received a SAFER grant for a couple of new firefighters.

LABOR / MANAGEMENT RELATIONS (combined):

- Commissioner Cornue reported that he is pleased that volunteer and career meetings are both scheduled to meet each month and feels that they have been making some good progress on issues.

OTHER MATTERS:

Administrator Jones reported that he would like to move forward with the replacement of the 2 copiers at Headquarters now that the budget has been approved. Both machines are 10+ years old, have over 600,000 copies on them and still work, but it is getting harder to get major components when servicing them. He suggested that if they are replaced, we can move them out to Stations 361 and 362 and get a few more years out of them due to reduced usage. He has worked with our long-time copier representatives at Tri-State Office Solutions and they can provide what we need on State Contract for less than \$9,250, which will bring us in under our \$10,000 budget. Commissioner Shestack asked if the service contract cost is included in that price and Administrator Jones replied that the per copy service contracts are extra at about 1½ cents per copy, all inclusive on supplies except paper and staples. Administrator Jones added that the new copiers give us everything that we have now but are faster and have better scanning options, which we want to exploit as we start to archive some of our paper documents. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Roura made a motion to accept Administrator Jones' recommendation, which was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Nash asked Administrator Jones if we could possibly look into inexpensive laptops for Board members so that they could have agendas and other documents e-mailed to them for use at Board meetings. Administrator Jones replied that we can look into it to see what is available because this is a year that we should have some IT budget available for these kinds of things. Commissioner Shestack agreed with Commissioner Nash and would meet with the Administrator and Roman to see what is available on State Contract.

Administrator Jones reported that he met with representatives of T-Mobile today to discuss their interest in installing a cell antenna mast here to address a severe service deficiency that they have in this area. He toured the Headquarters Station complex with them so that they could take measurements and determine if the site was suitable for their needs. At the end of the tour, they felt that this location was a good fit for them and that they would likely propose the addition of a 10' antenna mast on top of the Station 363 hose tower. The equipment cabinets could be mounted on the exterior of the Station 363 2nd floor just above the roof line of the Headquarters Station. They would purchase power from us and add a phone line for monitoring of their equipment. He expressed his concerns about making holes in the roofs, which they felt would not be necessary. There was no discussion about how much they would propose to pay per month for the use of our location, but they typically look for a 10 year lease with two 10 year extensions. The next step is for them to review the hose tower structural steel plans to make sure that the hose tower is designed to handle the additional loading, at which time they will submit a lease proposal for us to review. Commissioner Roura asked him if there would be any radio interference and he replied that he was told there would not be. Commissioner Shapiro asked him if there were any variances needed and he replied that they always have to apply to municipal Planning Boards for permission to erect any kind of antenna or tower. In our case, the new antenna would rise about the 35' limit, so they would have to get a variance for that. They will provide us with concept drawings to get our approval on what the new antenna and equipment will look like from the ground. He hopes to have something back from them within 6 weeks or so for the Board to review. Once we get a little further along with this project, he will see if they are interested in adding antennas at Stations 361 and 362.

Resolution #2011-15 "Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act". Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Nash made a motion to adjourn the meeting that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**THE OPEN SESSION ADJOURNED AT 9:26 PM.
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 9:36 PM.
THE CLOSED SESSION ADJOURNED AT 11:33 PM.
THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:35 PM.**