

Franklin Township Fire District No. 1
Meeting Minutes
October 13, 2020

Meeting opened with the Flag Salute

The 235th meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, Franklin Township Fire District No. 1, Township of Franklin, County of Hunterdon, was called to order by President C. Patkochis at 6:30 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENT: “This meeting is convened in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided by furnishing announcement thereof, to the *Hunterdon County Democrat*, and/or *The Express Times*, and/or the *Star Ledger*, and/or the *Courier News*, by posting notice in the Municipal Building and by filing a notice with the Municipal Clerk.”

ROLL CALL: President C. Patkochis, present; Treasurer G. Reichert, present; Secretary P. Enea III, present (late arrival due to fire call); Vice President, E. Kolibas, present; Assistant Secretary, H. Laine, absent.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MONTH: A Motion to accept the minutes of the September 8, 2020 meeting was made by E. Kolibas, seconded by G. Reichert. All in favor, Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: G. Reichert advised of a total income of \$171,152.41 and expenses totaling \$ 48,633.98 for the period of September 9, 2020 through October 13, 2020.

Motion to pay the bills for the period September 9, 2020 through October 13, 2020 was made by G. Reichert, seconded by E. Kolibas. Roll call vote, G. Reichert, aye; E. Kolibas, aye; C. Patkochis, aye. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS:

G. Reichert reported that he and P. Enea had met about the QFC purchasing the ladder truck but they had not met with QFC about it. Meeting will be taking place soon with officials from QFC. Per D. Desaulniers, truck is coming fully equipped, hose, hand tools, etc. QFC planning on paying for lettering. C. Patkochis pointed out that insurance will be much higher than on the present ladder truck. No estimates at this time.

G. Reichert advised that updates to Ordinances proposed by the Fire Marshal have not yet been submitted to the Township Committee pending some clarification from the Fire Marshal. G. Reichert will check with Fire Marshal to get it done. Plan is to submit them as soon as possible.

C. Patkochis reported that repairs on Tender 2 exceeded the amount that was originally agreed upon due to a valve that was broken. The additional expenditure was \$676. A Motion was made by G. Reichert to approve the additional \$676 for a total of \$ 1876 for the repairs, seconded by E. Kolibas. All in favor, Motion carried.

C. Patkochis reported that a check in the amount of \$ 1521 was received from the QFC for pool fills. That amount will be recorded in the “fuel” account.

C. Patkochis advised that a flat tire was discovered on Tender 1 (inside rear tire) It was ordered and

replaced.

C. Patkochis asked that each Commissioner come up with a 2, 3, 5 year plan for the Board. Also, the budget for 2021 needs to be completed to be submitted before the December meeting for approval from the State. A special workshop will be planned for 2 weeks from today to work on the budget.

C. Patkochis discussed Per Diem employees and how the transition will be made from District employee to QFC employee. J. Nieliwodski reported that a Labor Attorney is now on retainer and interviews are/have been held to fill positions. C. Patkochis pointed out that proposed 12 hour shifts would create many changes in the way things are being done right now; number of weekly hours exceeding 32 hours, more insurance, more gear, etc. Because we are a Municipal entity we have to be very careful in how this is carried out.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT: C. Patkochis gave the September report. 2 Inspections, 11 Smoke Certs and 4 Re-Inspections. The Fire Marshal attended 3 DFS training classes. C. Patkochis advised that the Fire Marshal completed an inspection at Rich's Tree Service and was very impressed with their operation, noting a few things that needed to be addressed including dispensing of fuel and the height of the piles of wood pellets. State inspection requested. C. Patkochis also pointed out that to date the Fire Marshal's office has exceeded it's budgetary obligation by more than \$ 1100.00 with 3 months to go in the year.

The Fire Marshal has requested permission from the Board to attend the fire works planned for October 31st at South Ridge Community Church. Permission granted.

QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY CHIEF'S REPORT: D. Desaulniers advised of 49 calls for service for the month of September. QFC worked on station clean up and prep for Oktoberfest. Members have been participating in driver training and training in engine company operations.

D. Desaulniers reported to the Board that QFC has entered into a contract with Yardley-Makefield Fire Company to purchase their 2009 Pierce Dash 75' Aerial with a 2000 GPM, 400 gallon water tank and CAFS. Financing this purchase is being completed at this time. The QFC will be accepting bids for Tower 91 until the end of October, with the purchase going to the highest bidder.

D. Desaulnier expressed an interest on behalf of the QFC to sit down with the liaisons of the Board to discuss future plans for the apparatus fleet.

QFC will be in attendance at the fire works October 31st at the South Ridge Community Church from 4PM until event is complete.

QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY PRESIDENT'S REPORT: J. Nieliwodski advised of a safe and successful drive thru Oktoberfest event earlier this month along with providing catering for a golf outing in Califon. The QFC has interviewed 4 prospective employees for the open Career positions with an offer being made to Nick Witzak. C. Patkochis inquired as to documentation for this person. J. Nieliwodski advised that it was given to B. Crampton but no information was relayed that it should be made available for this meeting. R. Geib was able to provide some information on N. Witzak's experience to the Board, resident of Morristown, volunteer and fire chief at Mendham Volunteer Fire Co. All documentation is complete with the exception of the background check. C. Patkochis advised that the Board would no longer be paying for background checks as the employees would now be hired by the QFC, thus making it their responsibility. J. Nieliwodski inquired as to why this procedure would change as past practice has been that the District would pay for it. Additional discussion will be held to iron out these issues going forward.

G. Reichert made a Motion to accept N. Witczak as an employee of the QFC, seconded by E. Kolibas. All in favor, Motion carried.

For the November Election Township Police will be on location for the duration of voting. Voting will take place either in the engine bays or the rear lobby. In person voting will be for handicapped persons only. Drop off ballots will be accepted.

OLD BUSINESS: n/a

NEW BUSINESS: C. Patkochis advised that he has contacted Franklin Township regarding the CNC-3 form from the Tax Collector and was told it would be emailed to him. As of today it has not been received.

Prior to the proposed budget workshop on 10/25 the Auditor will need to review our books. Apparently there is a discrepancy in the amount of money the Township has collected for the Fire Tax that amounts to \$3000(\$380,000. Total vs. \$377,000). We need to find out why they seem to have arbitrarily changed the Fire Tax resulting in the overage.

R. Geib reported that he has set up a shared network site between the QFC and the District. Everyone should have received the information via a link sent to their QFC email address.

C. Patkochis advised that new tires will be needed for Car 1 and Car 3. Car 3 will definitely need them before winter. Bids for the tires will be compiled. There is still money in the Maintenance and Repairs budget that should cover it.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business a Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM by G. Reichert, seconded by E. Kolibas. All in favor, Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Elise Ennis

Charles Patkochis, President