

Franklin Township Fire District No. 1
Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2021

The meeting opened with the Flag Salute

The 242nd 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; Vice President, E. Kolibas, present; Assistant Secretary, H. Laine, present.

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MONTH: A Motion to accept the minutes of the February 9, 2021 meeting was made by E. Kolibas, seconded by H. Laine. All in favor, Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: G. Reichert advised of a total income of \$ 1913.87 and expenses totaling \$18,286.99 for the period of February 10, 2021 through March 9, 2021.

Motion to pay the bills for the period of February 10, 2021 through March 9, 2021 was made by G. Reichert, seconded by P. Enea. Roll call vote, G. Reichert, aye; P. Enea, aye; E. Kolibas, aye; H. Laine, aye; C. Patkochis, aye. Motion carried.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS:

G. Reichert reported on the Fire Marshall Ordinance revision status with the Twp. He has met with them and the Township Attorney to discuss adjustments, both up and down regarding fee changes. The Ordinances will be discussed in a work session coming up and will be presented, hopefully, at their next regular meeting on 3/11/21. C. Patkochis asked for clarification on the changes. G/ Reichert advised that there were minimal fee changes at the advice of the Attorney. Also, some of the changes were in conflict with State Code.

H. Laine advised that the Policy Handbook was available in 365 for review. G. Reichert advised that the context is accurate with some wording such as “director” to be changed, he had made his own personal notes on the individual policies and will meet with H. Laine to make corrections. C. Patkochis advised that he has read the entire document and feels that it is hard to follow in the print copy since there are no page titles or numbers on the pages. Can this be fixed? H. Laine advised that each computer file has the Policy named. C. Patkochis and P. Enea agreed that each Policy needs a heading on the page so that if printed out for example, the person receiving a copy would know the subject matter H. Laine will look into making the above mentioned changes along with adding an adoption date to each Policy and have ready to adopt at next meeting.

P. Enea reported on repairs for the month. Engine 91 was the subject of a shock recall. D. Desaulniers advised that he and C. Milcarek checked Engine 91 upon receiving this information and found that the shocks on Engine 91 were not the ones being recalled. The shocks being recalled are too long and could cause the shock mounts to break.

C. Patkochis advised the Board that Ralph Anthony Auto repair did the oil change on the Explorer (Car 2) for \$36.00 and did not change for the oil filter or labor. Doing business locally should be done whenever we can. C. Patkochis also reported that the muffler on the pick up was repaired by Rick Allen. Future repairs to this vehicle should be considered carefully as the repair expense is beginning to outweigh the value of the vehicle.

Quotes for testing of hoses, ground ladders and fire pumps were received. Fire Flow will do the testing at the Training Center on Friday. The cost will be \$4110.00. This does not include testing of the Aerial Ladder which was certified prior to purchase.

G. Reichert made a Motion to spend \$4110.00 for hose, ladder and pump testing with Fire Flow, seconded by P. Enea. All in favor, Motion carried.

C. Patkochis presented a bid from the Fire Store in the amount of \$ 1240 as low bid for 8 sections of 3"x25' hose.

P. Enea made a Motion to purchase the hose from the Fire Store in the amount of \$1240.00, seconded by E. Kolibas. All in favor, Motion carried.

C. Patkochis advised that we need to find a new electrician to service our generator as the company that has done it in the past (Mt Salem Electric) is under new ownership and does not have adequately trained employees to service our generator.

FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT: C. Patkochis presented the report for February 2021. There were 2 Inspections and 3 Smoke Detector Certifications. R. Dziminski continues to work Mondays and D. Sulpy provides coverage on Wednesday or Thursday. The Fire Marshall's Office continues their effort to bring local businesses into compliance with the State and Local Fire Code.

QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY CHIEF'S REPORT: D. Desaulniers advised of 51 calls for service in the month of February with many of them taking place during a very bad stretch of inclement weather. This was successfully accomplished by staffing the station for the duration of the events and being able to provide immediate and adequate responses to the incidents.

March is starting out to be another busy month with 27 calls already in a 9 day period. 4 structure related fires with one being in the first due area bringing out 18 members and 8 pieces of apparatus.

D. Desaulniers discussed two training opportunities that the QFC would like to request the funding for from the District. The first is a required mandatory course from Beyond the Basics Fire Training and Consulting for Blood Borne Pathogens, Confined Space, Right to Know and Hazmat Refresher. The cost is \$250.00 . The second is a 90 minute virtual training course from Deputy Chief (retired) Frank Viscuso on leadership development and skills. The cost of this training is \$750.

G. Reichert gave concern regarding the cost of the second and it taking most of the training budget for the year for just one 90 minute class and whether it would be worthwhile. C. Patkochis advised that the QFC is aware of the training budget. G. Reichert advised that he had no problem with the \$250 for the first training class.

E. Kolibas made a Motion to spend \$250 for the required mandatory refresher course, seconded by G. Reichert. All in favor, Motion carried.

P. Enea made a Motion to spend \$750 for the virtual training, seconded by H. Laine. All in favor, except for G. Reichert who was a Nay. Motion carried.

D. Desaulniers inquired on a portion of monies for fines collected by the Fire Marhsall's office being available for training purposes. C. Patkochis said he believes that is for Fire Marshall training but someone should look into this. G. Reichert will check with the Fire Marshall.

QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY PRESIDENT'S REPORT: R. Geib advised that this month's GFC business meeting resulted in the development of two new committees being created by the President. The first was created to address long term projects and goals for the QFC. The second is the Recruitment and Retention Committee to address declining membership, re-engagement of existing members and added focus on the junior program. C. Patkochis advised that recruitment days are long gone and focus on retention of existing members is key. R. Geib advised that he is hoping to see more members come back and is already seeing a positive trend.

R. Geib reported that during the month of March the QFC is holding 31 days of Positivity with daily updates and reminders for members of positive ongoings and happenings at the QFC to promote a more positive attitude and brotherhood among the members. A Town Hall Meeting was held for members to openly comment and offer feedback to the Executive Board and Officers. The meeting was well attended and many good ideas and thoughts were discussed which will be addressed as initiatives throughout the year. C. Patkochis echoed that the Town Hall was a positive step and should be done on a more frequent basis.

R. Geib reported no new members this month. He also updated the Board on computer issues being resolved with inhouse repairs to wiring and new routers being installed.

NEW BUSINESS: C. Patkochis annouced the 2020 Audit will take place March 30 and 31st if any member of the Board would be interested in taking part in it.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Elise Ennis

Charles Patkochis, President