

## Franklin Township Fire District No. 1

### Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2022

Meeting opened with the Flag Salute

The 255th 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 December 14, 2021 meeting was made by E. Kolibas, seconded by H. Laine. All in favor, Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF SPECIAL END OF YEAR MEETING MINUTES:** A Motion to accept the minutes of the December 28, 2021 meeting was made by G. Reichert, seconded by P. Enea. All in favor, Motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** G. Reichert advised of a total income of \$ 2116.00 and expenses totaling \$64,207.99 for the period of January 1, 2022 through January 11, 2022. The largest expense for this time period was the yearly payment for the fire truck.

Motion to pay the bills for the period of January 1, 2022 through January 11, 2022 was made by E. Kolibas, seconded by G. Reichert. Roll call vote, G. Reichert, aye; P. Enea, aye; E. Kolibas, aye; H. Laine, aye; C. Patkochis, aye. Motion carried.

### **COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS:**

C. Patkochis gave an update on the status of the Worker's Compensation company change that will take effect in February. A list was compiled with the help of QFC on 12/31/21 and submitted for a policy quote to take effect on 2/15/22. Regarding VFIS policy renewal, it was noted that they will no longer cover illness caused by PFAS contained in class B foam.

Regarding the status of contracts with Alexandria Township and Union Township, C. Patkochis advised that he has had no response to his many attempts to set up a meeting to discuss with Alexandria Township. C. Patkochis has reached out to Alexandria OEM to see if they can arrange for a potential meeting. However, Union Township's new Mayor will be coming to QFC tonight to meet with an informal discussion planned.

R. Geib and B. Patkochis gave an update on potentially changing cellular carriers due to the poor connection in our coverage areas. They have had discussions with First Net (an ATT subsidiary) that would provide superior service as it is geared to emergency services to not only QFC but would also offer the service to the membership. Prices need to be obtained for their service, equipment, including potential Hot Spot capability while on calls. The service we have now through Verizon, while cost effective, no longer suits the needs of the District as a whole. The need would be for 10 mobile units, IPADS or Microsoft Surface Pro were mentioned, as our IPADS are outdated. More information to follow.



C. Patkochis advised that 8 volunteers and Career Members have been sized for new turnout gear.

C. Pakochis gave the following assignments to the Board Members:

Purchasing: C. Patkochis and E. Kolibas

Finance and QFC Liaison: G. Reichert and H. Laine

Repairs and Maintenance: P. Enea

G. Reichert will be submitting vouchers for payments to Franklin Township CFO.

**FIRE MARSHAL'S REPORT:** C. Patkochis read the report advising of 1 Inspection, 4 Smoke Certifications, 1 Re-Inspection and 1 Permits. All 2022 Registration letters have been printed along with registration invoices. A request has been made to the Township Tax Collector for a list of farm properties to coincide with LEA audit. G. Reichert advised that he has been investigating potential solutions to the issues ongoing at the Hampton Inn. The goal would be to come up with a method of fining the offenders for cooking or smoking in their rooms. B. Patkochis advised that the QFC has responded 27 times in 2021 with the majority of the alarms being between 10PM and 2AM and 95% of those due to smoking in the rooms. The installation of a new alarm system that is hyper-sensitive was noted.


**QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY CHIEF'S REPORT:** B. Patkochis provided the Board with the list of 2022 QFC Operational Leadership names. There were 817 total calls for service in 2021. The highest number ever for fire response of 384 and a total of 496 EMS responses, a 300% increase since forming the EMS division. The QFC is hopeful to begin a 24 hour staffing model in April 2022 with a proposed 4 full time and 15 per diem staff. This model would create a 24 hours ON and 72 hours OFF schedule and would include Career, Fire Marshall and District Staff. B. Patkochis pointed out this "fast and staffed" approach should be discussed when meeting with Alexandria and Union Townships.

**QUAKERTOWN FIRE COMPANY PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** R. Geib reported that a new phone system is in the works, to be installed soon. QFC has voted to transition Junior Member, Mason Shoffner to full Firefighter member of the QFC and will begin Firefighter 1 training in February. It was noted that Tyler Unkert has also turned 18 and will be making the same transition. A committee has been formed to review and revise QFC bylaws to update several sections with better definitions of member status and transitions like those of Junior to fill Firefighter. B. Patkochis advised that 4 members have been sent Certified Letters regarding their status with the QFC. C. Patkochis advised that swift follow-up would be appreciated so that we can proceed with removing gear, etc., if their intention is to not participate in an effective manner. C. Patkochis advised R. Geib that the Board's plan is to provide the QFC with a check to pay off the Ladder truck at the March meeting and that they should be prepared to transfer the Title to the District as soon as the payment is made to the finance company.

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

Respectfully submitted,

  
Elise Ennis

  
Charles Patkochis, President