

Board of Fire Commissioners, District II

October 7th, 2024

President Cliff Sharp opened the meeting at 6:35 PM.

The American Flag was then saluted, and the Lord's Prayer was recited prior to the start of the meeting.

Members participating were:

Mark Sheppard, Fred Hundt, Cliff Sharp, Ron Sutton Jr. Bill Horseman.

Minutes

The minutes of the September 3rd meeting were sent to all via email. Motion was made to accept the minutes by Mark Sheppard and seconded by Bill Horseman. All those present voted to approve the minutes from the August 5th Commissioners meeting.

Treasurers Report:

Tonya from the CPA office attended the meeting She handed out the detailed report from the CPA firm reflected all transactions since the last meeting.

The ending checking balance was \$148,711.38 The total assets showed \$269,561.38. A motion to accept the report was made by Mark Sheppard and was seconded by Cliff Sharp.

Roll call vote was taken:

Ronald Sutton Yes

Mark Sheppard. Yes

Fred Hundt Yes

Cliff Sharp Yes

Bill Horseman Yes

Fred Hundt then made a motion to pay all bills for next month's period and it was seconded by Mark Sheppard.

Roll call vote was taken:

Ronald Sutton Yes

Mark Sheppard. Yes

Fred Hundt Yes

Cliff Sharp Yes

Bill Horseman Yes

At this time the Board decided to go over the 2025 budget. Tonya was at the meeting to review next years budget with the board.

All the line items were reviewed, and it was decided to decrease the line 601 Stipend from \$8,200.00 to \$5,000.00.

Also to change the line item 810 rent from \$30,000 to \$33,200. It was decided to take the state regulated increase of 2% across all line items listed in the budget.

Tonya then presented a resolution for approving salaries of the treasurer and secretary pertaining to the pay to be received by the board's treasurer and the secretary. Both positions will be paid \$600 in 2025.

Resolution 24-08 was read out loud by Tonya.

Roll call vote was taken on the resolution

Ronald Sutton Yes

Mark Sheppard. Yes

Fred Hundt Yes

Cliff Sharp Yes

Bill Horseman Yes

Tonya advised the board that there is a new law created by the New Jersey Local Finance Board on incentives paid to Fire and EMS. The law was explained to the board by her. It was decided that the members losap money will be distributed to the qualified members from both the fire commission and the fire company this year in the amounts that they have earned. The Fire Commission will present the first checks and the Fire Company second.

Tonya then brought to the board that the auditor should be chosen for the 2025 year. There firm uses an auditor near the office in Marmora who charges the same as the current auditor who has been with our fire district for many years.

Fred made a motion to have the CPA firm stay with Nightlinger, Colavita and Volpa in Williamstown. Mark made a second to the motion and all present voted the same.

Tonya excused herself from the remainder of the meeting and was thanked by the board.

Old Business:

Board President Cliff Sharp, Fred Hundt and Chief Don Hundt met with our insurance company to discuss. The insurance company confirmed that all carriers require all drivers to have at least 3 years of driving experience before they can get behind the wheel of any emergency vehicle.

The insurance company representatives were questioned about coverage insurance for the non-members working in the kitchen at fund raisers and the coverage on attendees going to fire school.

Mark had a copy of the umbrella coverage for non-members working in the kitchen from 2021 /2022.

As of tonight's meeting, Mints Insurance has not replied to either question. Mark was authorized to call the Insurance company as soon as possible for answers.

He was asked to let all members know their answer. The Fire Company is sending new members to the Counties Fire school in November, and we need answers.

After a thorough review of the current budget the board Fred made a motion for the Chief to purchase two sets of turnout gear at approximately \$5,000 per set. The motion was seconded by Ron Sutton Jr. This was the suggestion at last month's meeting.

Roll call vote was taken:

Ronald Sutton Yes

Mark Sheppard. Yes

Fred Hundt Yes

Cliff Sharp Yes

Bill Horseman Yes

Don reported that all the repairs were made to the steering box on 1202, and the unit is back in service.

Don reported that the radio straps that the Board authorized him to purchase at the convention were purchased for \$810.00.

Fred questioned if the remainder of the spare SCBA bottles hydro were tested yet. Don said that all spare bottles are now hydro tested.

New Business:

The Fire Company recommended that we take on two new members. Martin Garcia was reinstated back into the fire company. Martin lives on Buckshutem road in the Laurel Lake fire district. He was a previous member. The other new member is Lexie Burt. Lex lives in Mauricetown with her dad Steve. Lex will be starting the county fire school in November.

Ron Sutton Jr voted to have them join and it was seconded by Cliff Sharp. All members present voted affirmative.

Mark brought to the attention of the commission a issue he has had with an existing member. Much was said about this member and Ron Sutton Jr, stopped the discussion and said that this is really a personnel matter that should be discussed in a closed door session by the board. Fred asked if anything was put in writing. It was thought that there are policies and procedures in place to handle this type of action.

Fred was asked to contact our attorney Todd Heck for some legal guidance with this issue.

Ron Sutton Jr reported to the board on the rescue squad meeting he attended with a few other commissioners from Mauricetown and Port Norris at the Laurel Lake fire house. The meeting took place in Laurel Lake on Thursday October 3rd. The squad presented their financial situation and advised at the time that EMS service will be discontinued Monday morning October 6th. due to the lack of any funding. The Squad told the representatives from Mauricetown and Port Norris that they will attempt to run volunteer as long as they can. It was further reported that the squad sent out a text on Monday (today) that they would still be operational for the day.

There was a two car accident today, Monday the 7th on Buckshutem road with multiple injuries. Three ambulances showed up from other communities. Laurel lake was on a call in Port Norris.

The meeting was full of stories from everyone in attendance. Fred said that he has talked with the Township Committee and has been told multiple times that the Township Committee says the EMS service is not their problem, and it needs to be handled by the local Fire Commissions.

Ron Sutton Sr who is a Fireman in Mauricetown and also the mayor will try to set up a meeting with the other township committeeman to discuss this again.

Fred suggested that we ask the vice mayor Joe Klaudi to meet with the Mauricetown fireman to discuss his plans and listen to our ideas. We will have his attention and a lot more time to discuss without a lot of verbal interference.

The Board of Commission feels like this would be a good idea hoping Joe Klaudi will agree with this.

Fred will reach out to Klaudi for some possible times and get back to the fire company.

Chiefs Comments:

The Chief also reported that the boat trailer still needs to have all the wheels greased. Steve reported he still needs to get to both the wheels and the GPS update. It will get done.

Don asked Steve Burt about EMT recertifications. Steve will be taking classes, and the commission will pay for this from the training budget. Don asked Megan about her certifications, and she is currently up to date.

Steve said that at a recent call the rescue truck was used. There was a need for a gas meter and the truck does not carry one. He suggested that we possibly purchase a 5 gas, gas meter and carry it on 1221.

Mark made a motion to purchase one at approximately \$1000.00. Cliff Sharp made the second and all present voted affirmative.

Public Portion:

Mark brought to the attention his response to comments made by Fred at the last commissioners' meeting. Fred had made accusations that Mark continually oversteps his bounds when he's asked to do something or meet with other agencies such as the insurance Company or the lawyer. He presented his documentation that showed all his actions were done with the board's directions and had not overstepped his assignment.

The meeting was opened to the public.

adjourned at approximately 8:10.pm