

**MOUNT LAUREL FIRE DISTRICT #1  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

August 15, 2016

Fire Department Headquarters Station  
Meeting Minutes #10

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

1. Commissioner DiPietrantonio
2. Commissioner Ridenour
3. Commissioner Roura
4. Commissioner Shestack
5. Commissioner Hamilton
6. Deputy Chief Burnett
7. Administrator Jones
8. Solicitor Braslow

**NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

1. Chief of Department Colucci

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Ridenour at 8:00 PM.

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

Public announcements were read by Commissioner Hamilton.

**PRESENTATION OF 2016 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARD TO FIREFIGHTER JOHN BARLOW by the KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS:**

Mike Miller, a member of the Knights of Columbus presented the Firefighter John Barlow with their 2016 Firefighter of the Year award.

The Board took a brief recess at 8:07 PM so that the Barlow family could take pictures. The Board reconvened the meeting at 8:11 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 8/01/16 Special Meeting minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioner Shestack abstaining.

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

Resolution #2016-24 "Adoption of Cash Management Plan". Commissioner Hamilton asked Administrator Jones if this was something that had to be done every year and Administrator Jones explained that he did not think so but that it was part of this years' audit exit conference and they recommended that we do it. Commissioner Shestack stated that he could not remember the last time we passed a resolution like this and Solicitor Braslow added that he recommends that it be done every year. Commissioner Hamilton asked whether there was some type of investment fund that we could invest in. Commissioner Shestack replied that all of our funds are kept in interest bearing checking accounts because there are no good investment vehicles available to us that provide a better return. Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton and unanimously approved 5 'ayes' to 0 'nays' by the Board.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Commissioner Roura reported that he had reviewed the August monthly bills and noted that they included the final 2016 JIF insurance payment. He made a motion to approve the payment of monthly bills totaling \$584,732.19 that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

### **MONTHLY REPORT BY ADMINISTRATOR:**

The Administrator had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. He added that the only thing he couldn't put into his report was a contractor recommendation for the Station 363 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Mold Remediation RFP that we opened last Friday. He has completed his review of the 3 proposals that were received and reported that 1 proposal was just under the \$17,500 bid threshold limit and the other 2 proposals were significantly over the limit. He believed that one of the contractors significantly overestimated the number of hours that would be required to do the work based on the documentation that he had included with his proposal and the scope of work that had been developed. The other contractor provided no supporting documentation with his proposal, so he was unable to compare it to the other proposals. He recommended that the Board accept the low proposal and award a \$17,353.12 contract to Belfor Restoration for the project. Commissioner Shestack had experience with them and said that they do a good job. Administrator Jones added that we have had Belfor do several small jobs for us over the last year or so and they have done a good, clean job. Commissioner Shestack made a motion to accept the Belfor Restoration mold remediation proposal that was seconded by Commissioner DiPietrantonio. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

### **BOARD QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT:**

The Chief of Department had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting but was not present tonight for questions. Deputy Chief Burnett had nothing to add to his report in his absence. Commissioner Ridenour asked him to elaborate on the status of Quint 3614. Deputy Chief Burnett reported that we have been in communication with Emergency One, the manufacturer of the apparatus for guidance on what can be done to repair/replace the rusted frame rails and the cost to do so. They had provided us with several cost proposals to rehabilitate the apparatus, which Supervising Mechanic Skeenes had evaluated and provided his opinion on. He felt that if we were going to proceed with any extensive repairs, we should probably consider taking care of a few other things that should be addressed while the truck is torn apart. He added that once they remove the aerial ladder, cab and body from the truck there could be other problems found that should be fixed or upgraded, which could quickly exceed what we have available to spend. Commissioner Hamilton asked him how old the vehicle was and Deputy Chief Burnett replied that it is a 2001 model and therefore 15 years old this year. Commissioners Hamilton and Shestack both asked him how many years that we believe we can get out of it and he indicated that we always felt that with good maintenance it should last 15 to 20 years. Commissioner Shestack felt that we had always intended to get 20 years from the 5 Emergency One vehicles that we bulk purchased in 2001.

Commissioner Hamilton asked what the \$300,000 Emergency One proposal would include or was that just a guess figure. Deputy Chief Burnett replied that the rusting frame rails would be replaced along with a few components that would be exposed when the truck is stripped down to that level. Emergency One had strongly suggested doing a total rehab of the vehicle by replacing the entire chassis, engine, transmission and cab assembly for around \$450,000. He added that Supervising Mechanic Skeenes wanted to keep and re-use the engine because it did not have all of the new emissions equipment that comes with new apparatus today and is more expensive to operate and less fuel and power efficient. The Emergency One representatives were not sure whether they were allowed to do that, so there are still some unanswered questions that needed to be answered before we could consider all of our possible options and present the Board with a recommendation. Commissioner Hamilton asked him how many more years that we would extend the truck's life expectancy and Deputy Chief Burnett replied that probably an additional 5 years of front line status and then another 5 years in reserve status if we went with the less expensive option but maybe a little more if we took the more expensive route since it would be considered as a 2017 model. Commissioner Hamilton asked him what a new replacement Quint would cost and Commissioner Shestack replied that it would be about \$675,000 with Commissioner Ridenour adding that it was probably closer to \$800,000. Deputy Chief Burnett added that we are still waiting to get the estimated replacement cost numbers back from Emergency One so that we can assess the cost to repair versus the cost to replace.

Commissioner Hamilton felt that if a new apparatus cost \$800,000, it might not be prudent to spend almost \$500,000 on repairs and not get significantly more service life out of it. Commissioner Roura asked Deputy Chief Burnett if we had a timeline for receipt of the information we need and he replied that we should have everything by the end of August so that we can fully brief the Board at the 9/6/16 Special Meeting. Commissioner Ridenour felt that what it comes down to is whether we are going to spend between \$375,000 and \$500,000 for a refurbished apparatus that may have another 5 years of front line service life vs. \$800,000 for a new apparatus with the potential for 15+ years of front-line service life. Commissioner Hamilton asked whether the Quint has any value in its present condition and Deputy Chief Burnett replied that we don't believe so, although we sold its twin several years ago for around \$80,000. Administrator Jones added that this apparatus is not likely worth anywhere close to that value because of the problems it has and we really can't put it back on the road in good conscience. Commissioner Ridenour added that we also have to look at the age of the aerial ladder and that it has some issues and a lot of service hours also. Administrator Jones suggested that we may want to consider asking voters for authorization to replace several other aging apparatus now as opposed to the 2021 time frame that we had been planning for so that we don't have to do this all over again in a few years. Commissioner Ridenour suggested that we could also stagger the purchase of some apparatus, buying 1 or 2 every 3 to 5 years. Administrator Jones felt that this might pose a problem because we would be going before voters for major capital purchases too often and added that from the time that we start the process until the new apparatus is actually delivered usually takes about 2 years. He added that if we don't refurbish it, the Quint will likely never go back into

service and we will have to write it off of the active inventory now, potentially selling it to someone for the value of the parts in order to get the most value out of it. Commissioner Ridenour asked if the Quint was still on Capital Lease and he replied that it was not. Commissioner Hamilton asked how many months a refurbishment would take if we chose to go that route and Deputy Chief Burnett replied that it would take several months and would have to be done at the Florida Emergency One factory. Administrator Jones added that another facet of this problem is that we would have to write a refurbishment specification for the work and then go out to bid with it and we have already been advised that nobody other than Emergency One as the original manufacturer would even want to touch the project, so Emergency One can pretty much charge whatever they want because there will be no competition. He was also concerned about whether we would even want to have Emergency One repair the Quint because anytime that we have had warranty or other issues, we have not received anything close to good customer service. This has resulted in a lot of additional expenses that we have had to bear because they refuse to support customers that have to deal with their engineering and manufacturing mistakes. He suggested that the Board think long and hard before we send any truck back to them for this level of repairs and in signing any contract with them for new apparatus.

Commissioner Hamilton felt that we would be best served financially in exploring our options for a new apparatus. Administrator Jones agreed with Commissioner Ridenour's point that before we commit to purchasing any new apparatus, we should really look at what type of apparatus that we really need and try to begin staggering future apparatus purchases in order to establish a more manageable apparatus replacement schedule. Commissioner Ridenour added that we should probably be relegating apparatus to "reserve" status for 5 years or so once they get to the 10 to 15 year of front-line service mark so that we can extend their life expectancy a little more. Deputy Chief Burnett added that over the last 5 or 6 years we've been able to keep our tax rate stable trying to do more with less but it might now be time to raise the tax rate a little to implement a more affordable and frequent apparatus replacement plan. Administrator Jones added that another thing that has changed since our last apparatus purchase in 2011 is that we have implemented 24/7 staffing at each station, so we can now guarantee a ladder tower response any time it is dispatched. The guaranteed ladder response was the reason that we purchased the 2 Quints in 2001 so that each of the 24/7 staffed stations (Station 361 & Station 362) had an aerial ladder and could guarantee that we would have at least 1 aerial ladder device hit the street. He felt that now was a good time to do a thorough review of our entire apparatus fleet, where they are deployed and what our response strategy is before we make any decisions on what to put before the voters for approve.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

None.

**OTHER MATTERS:**

None.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE DISTRICT PROFESSIONALS:**

Solicitor Braslow reported that he got here early tonight to meet with Masonville Fire Company President Tremper, but he was not here. Commissioner Roura stated that President Tremper was here earlier but left because nobody was here, so it sounded like there was a meet time misunderstanding. Commissioner Roura asked Solicitor Braslow to reach out to him and coordinate with him on the turnover of materials that he needed to review.

Solicitor Braslow reported that he had met again with the Local Finance Board and that there is still no resolution on the Cherry Hill burn building issue that he has been working on.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Shestack reported that the MLFD softball team has advanced to the Mt. Laurel Recreational Softball League Championship playoff game next Sunday at 4 PM at either the Larchmont or Turnpike fields.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

None.

Resolution #2016-26 "Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**THE OPEN SESSION ENDED AT 8:51 PM.  
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 8:52 PM.  
THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 9:01 PM.**

Commissioner Roura made a motion to make an offer of conditional employment to Firefighter Brad Garafola that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

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

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:02 PM.**