

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

September 21, 2015

Fire Department Headquarters Station
Meeting Minutes #13

IN ATTENDANCE:

1. Commissioner Cornue
2. Commissioner Ridenour
3. Commissioner Roura
4. Commissioner Shestack
5. Chief of Department Colucci
6. Deputy Chief Burnett
7. Administrator Jones
8. Solicitor Braslow

NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

1. Commissioner Hamilton

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Shestack at 8:01 PM.

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

Public announcements were read by Commissioner Cornue.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #2015-45 "Appointment of Ryan C. Juengert to 'Junior' Membership in the Mount Laurel Fire Department".
Commissioner Cornue made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

PRESENTATION ON ENERGY ADVISORY SERVICES BY L5E, LLC REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS DICKINSON:

Administrator Jones briefed the Board about this issue and what benefits the Board could realize. He stated that our facilities use \$120,000+ worth of electric/natural gas each year and the selection of an energy supplier with the lowest energy cost requires public bidding and takes a lot of work and expertise that we do not have. In discussions that Deputy Chief Burnett had earlier this year with the MUA, they indicated that they had gone through this process with an energy consultant and that it has generated significant energy cost savings for them. We met with the energy consultant and have determined that this is an area where we could potentially save some money at no cost to us for their services. He then turned the floor over to Thomas Dickinson.

Mr. Dickinson thanked the Board for allowing him to address them tonight and stated that he represented the energy consulting firm L5E, LLC ('5') and provided each member of the Board with a copy of his presentation that explained how energy is sold on the open market. He added that they are an energy advisory firm with over 1700 clients and that they evaluate and make recommendations to clients on the supplier with the lowest cost for energy. He explained that local government agencies are required to go through a public bidding process in order to pick an energy supply other than P.S.E.&G.. Commissioner Shestack asked him if the \$7,000 in annual energy savings that he was projecting was just for electric and he replied that it was because natural gas currently priced through P.S.E.&G. was at a historic low and is the most cost effective option. Commissioner Shestack clarified that if we lock in an electric rate through this process, we would not be subject to market pricing increases other than those mandated through legislation. Mr. Dickinson felt that the energy market in New Jersey has hit rock bottom and stated that in our region natural gas is now the primary power plant fuel, having taken over for coal about 2 months ago. Administrator Jones added that we are in a good position right now to lock in very low electric rates for up to 4 years and that he had prepared a resolution for the Board to adopt tonight if they wanted to proceed with the appointment of the '5'. He would then work with Mr. Dickinson to pull together a bid specification and get it out to suppliers. The bidding process for this is a little different from the way we normally do it and that the Board will not have a big window to make an award once bids are received. We anticipate opening bids at 1:00 PM on the day of an upcoming Board meeting and making an award by the close of business at 4:00 PM that same day because the cost of this commodity changes daily. Mr. Dickinson confirmed this and indicated that the Board can memorialize the award that evening at their meeting to complete the process. He suggested that the Board could best meet the short time frame involved by authorizing the Chairman of the Board to sign off on the best bid received in the

afternoon to lock it in by the close of business that day. Commissioner Shestack asked Administrator Jones when he thinks we could open bids and he replied that we felt that we could have it ready for a bid opening on the afternoon of the scheduled 11/4/15 Special Meeting. Commissioner Roura asked Mr. Dickinson how long he has worked with our MUA and Mr. Dickinson replied that they were on their 3rd annual contract renewal with them. Commissioner Shestack asked Mr. Dickinson if the '5' monitors energy pricing for us and if natural gas pricing starts to move up whether they will advise the Board on what they should do and Mr. Dickinson replied that this monitoring is done every day and that they would be on top of it. Commissioner Shestack asked him whether any decision in the future by the Board to move forward with solar energy generation would affect the contract that we sign or if that is irrelevant. Mr. Dickinson stated that if the Board moved into solar energy generation, it would be considered a 'material adverse change' and that we would have to provide our supplier with 30 days notice. He did not think that it would be something that would invalidate the contract but just something that the supplier would need to be made aware of.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 8/17/15 Regular Meeting minutes and the 9/8/15 Special Meeting minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Commissioner Roura reported that he had reviewed the September monthly bills prior to the meeting and found them all to be in order. He noted that the big bills this month were debt service payments on a bond issue and a construction contract progress payment. Commissioner Ridenour made a motion to approve the payment of monthly bills totaling \$1,169,595.17 that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

MONTHLY REPORT BY ADMINISTRATOR:

Administrator Jones had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. He noted that he had some additional information to report when we get to Standing Committee Reports under 'Building & Grounds'.

BOARD QUESTIONS FOR THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT: Chief of Department Colucci had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. He noted that he had nothing new to report since the 9/8/15 Special Meeting, but that he did have an item for the Closed Session. He added that he would like to schedule the upcoming promotion swear-ins for the November Special Meeting to accommodate the schedules of the families of those being promoted. Administrator Jones recommended passing the appointment resolutions at the 10/19/15 Regular Meeting so that they are in place when they start their new positions in early November. Chief of Department Colucci reported on the upcoming Papal visit, stating that there has been a lot of coordination between our local agencies and the NJ State Police, FBI, Secret Service and everyone else involved. Our main concern will be potential traffic congestion on Routes 38, 73, 295 & the NJ Turnpike and the grid lock that heavy traffic might cause on roads feeding into them. We have taken the precaution of blocking off the schedule for that weekend so that we have full staffing. Commissioner Shestack asked him if we are prepared to bring staff in on overtime and he replied that we have informed the career and volunteer staffs to remain available and flexible during that period.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Labor/Management: Commissioner Cornue reported that discussions about changes to the Stipend program are moving along and in the home stretch with the document in final review by our Special Counsel and that he hoped to have it done this week. Commissioner Shestack wanted to make sure that Solicitor Braslow reviews it once the Special Counsel was finished with it. Commissioner Cornue stated that he would and hoped to have a final discussion on it at the next Labor / Management Committee meeting on 9/28/15. He will then submit the final package to the Board members for a final review and to answer any questions that they may have. Commissioner Shestack stated that the key things he was concerned about are if we can track, manage, evaluate and measure it and what the financial impact will be. Commissioner Cornue replied that the financial impact we anticipated last fall is projected to be about \$43,000 in 2015.

Building and Grounds: Commissioner Ridenour reported that the roofers are working on exposing and replacing the interior mansard roofing at Station 361 and we have not seen any issues so far – this was an area that we had a lot of concerns about due to existing leaks. Administrator Jones added that once the Station 361 roof tear-off and replacement begins it will take 4 to 5 weeks to complete and that it is being held up waiting for delivery of the 3 new HVAC units and their roof curbs. The Station 363 roof tear-off and replacement will begin tomorrow and will take about 3 weeks to complete. The Station 362 roof membrane overlay has not started yet because of a delay in removal of the main stairwell skylight but we are working with the general contractor to work that out. He added

that we opened bids for the 3rd and last big piece of the project, the Station 362 emergency generator replacement and assuming that it comes in around \$200,000 as he anticipates, we'll then be able to make final decisions on the scope of work items that we eliminated from the Phase 1 contract in order to bring it in closer to our budget figure. He would like to have the Board's permission to discuss adding back into the contract some of the more important items that were eliminated with our professionals and the general contractor since the pricing is available and we can add them back in as change orders to get more of the work done. He was hoping that we could add the HQ Shop roof replacement, Station 363 HVAC unit replacement and the Station 363/HQ exterior EIFS cleaning/sealing back in if funding permits.

Administrator Jones brought up a bill from the Architect for the additional work that they performed on the Phase 1 contract in going out to bid for a 2nd time and then handling the negotiations between the bidders. This was a lot of additional work that had not been anticipated and he felt that their charge of \$5,591.25 was justifiable and should be paid. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed that the Architect had done what needed to be done to get an acceptable contract and authorized payment of the bill for the additional work that they performed.

Information Technology: Commissioner Roura reported that he and Commissioner Shestack have been provided with information on proposed apparatus MDT and network upgrades that have been budgeted for this year. The biggest expense was for new apparatus MDT laptops and associated mounting hardware, which prompted a couple of concerns. Commissioner Shestack expressed concern about the individual cost of the proposed laptops and whether software and licensing was included. Administrator Jones replied that no new software or licensing was required since these laptops are replacements for existing laptops that are almost 7 years old. He added that Captain Fox has recommended that the new apparatus MDT's be configured to utilize the existing GIS database that he has been working on with the MUA, who are willing to provide us with 3 of their 5 bulk GIS licenses in order to access and maintain the database. This coordination with the MUA has been in progress for over a year and has been beneficial for both of our organizations already, and could provide additional benefits to other Township agencies that they are trying to convince to actively join them.

He would like to get orders for this equipment placed so that it can be integrated into our system by the end of 2015. He stated that we have been evaluating a testbed of this laptop hardware for 9 months and have validated that it seems to be able to reliably function in the cab of the apparatus during that time. After evaluation by staff at all 3 stations, the consensus is that we should pursue a purchase of this hardware to replace the original Panasonic Toughbook MDT's that were purchased in 2008. They have served us well and validated the value of having a data terminal in the cab of each apparatus and will be recycled within the Department to serve other less abusive roles with fire inspectors and some office areas. Commissioner Shestack was concerned about the \$2,500 cost per laptop and Administrator Jones explained that they were more costly due to the "semi-rugged" specification that they met and that additional memory and graphics capabilities were also included in order to work with GIS data. Commissioner Shestack was also concerned about the price of the 3 desktop computers that were part of the request and Administrator Jones explained that they too are designed to meet the memory and graphics requirements for manipulating GIS data and have large 27" monitors to suitably view GIS data. Commissioner Roura asked how the testbed laptop performed and Chief of Department Colucci replied that it performed better than expected and that everyone that used it seemed to be happy with it. Deputy Chief Burnett added that doing the testbed provided valuable information and demonstrated that the proposed laptop was able to do what was required at a cost effective price. Administrator Jones added that the laptops would all have 5 year warranties and replacement plans. Commissioner Shestack noted that we had budgeted \$80,000 for this project and Commissioner Roura stated that we would only have to spend about \$46,000, which was well within that budget. Chief of Department Colucci noted that the initial MDT program costs was approximately \$100,000.

Commissioner Shestack asked Administrator Jones about the server upgrades and he replied that the upgrades are for new routers and switches that would replace routers and switches that are well past end-of-life support and were original back when we established the MLFD network at the 3 stations. They are now over 11 years old, are no longer supported and don't have the throughput to handle all of the video bandwidth that we are using for training and other purposes. He added that we were trying to be proactive on this and to hopefully address data "bottleneck" issues that these routers and switches are contributing to.

OTHER MATTERS:

The Board briefly discussed the retention of L5E, LLC for energy advisory services. Commissioner Shestack noted that he has personally switched energy suppliers and it can be very cost effective. Commissioner Roura was comfortable with it because the MUA has been using them for several number years and they seem to be satisfied with their services. Commissioner Shestack agreed that this is a complicated subject and that if the Administrator feels he needs their expertise to put this out to bid, it makes sense to do it. Commissioner Ridenour and Commissioner Cornue both agreed. Commissioner Shestack asked Solicitor Braslow if he had any comments on this subject and he replied that he did not and concurred that it was a good idea.

Adoption of Resolution #2015-46 "Resolution Authorizing the Appointment of L5E, LLC ('5') to Provide Energy Advisory Services at no Direct Cost to the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Mount Laurel Fire District #1".

Commissioner Cornue made a motion to adopt the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Roura. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

COMMENTS OF FIRE DISTRICT PROFESSIONALS:

None.

COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:

None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

Resolution #2015-47 "Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**THE OPEN SESSION ENDED AT 9:10 PM.
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 9:12 PM.
THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 9:27 PM.**

Commissioner Ridenour reminded everybody that the Fire Prevention Week Open House will be held on 10/7/15 in the Wegman's parking lot in the Centerton Square shopping center. Commissioner Shestack noted that he and Commissioner Ridenour planned on attending.

Commissioner Roura asked Chief of Department Colucci how the Fall Festival went and he replied that from all that he has heard, it went well.

Commissioner Cornue asked when the Junior Member Competition was being held and Chief of Department Colucci replied that it is being held on Saturday, 10/2/15 @ 9 AM at the BCESTC.

Commissioner Cornue asked him how the Fire Prevention Bureau was functioning with the part-time fire inspector staff. Chief of Department Colucci replied that it was going well but that several addition part-timers are needed to really provide the coverage that we had envisioned. Deputy Chief Burnett added that we need to get them more focused on the administrative end.

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

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:32 PM.