

**MOUNT LAUREL FIRE DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING / WORK SESSION**

March 3, 2016

Fire Department Headquarters Station

Meeting Minutes #3

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Shestack at 8:03 PM.

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

The Public Announcements were read by Commissioner Hamilton.

SWEAR-IN OF COMMISSIONER-ELECT DiPIETRANTONIO:

Commissioner Shestack administered the oath of office to Commissioner-elect DiPietrantonio.

REORGANIZATION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Commissioner Roura nominated Commissioner Ridenour for the position of Chairperson, which was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Roura nominated Commissioner Shestack for the position of Vice-Chairperson, which was seconded by Commissioner DiPietrantonio. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioner Shestack abstaining.

Commissioner Shestack nominated Commissioner Roura for the position of Treasurer, which was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Shestack nominated Commissioner Hamilton for the position of Clerk, which was seconded by Commissioner Roura. The motion was approved by the Board.

Commissioner Shestack made a motion to nominate Commissioner DiPietrantonio for the position of Deputy Clerk/Deputy Treasurer, which was seconded by Commissioner Roura. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Roura announced the Standing Committee assignments as follows:

Buildings and Grounds	Chairperson: Commissioner Ridenour	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Roura
Community Relations	Chairperson: Commissioner DiPietrantonio	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Ridenour
Equipment	Chairperson: Commissioner Hamilton	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Roura
Finance	Chairperson: Commissioner Roura	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Shestack
Fire Prevention	Chairperson: Commissioner Hamilton	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner DiPietrantonio
Information Technology	Chairperson: Commissioner Roura	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Hamilton
Insurance	Chairperson: Commissioner Shestack	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner DiPietrantonio
Labor Management	Chairperson: Commissioner Shestack	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Ridenour
Long Range Planning	Chairperson: Commissioner Ridenour	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Hamilton
Personnel	Chairperson: Commissioner Roura	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Shestack
Training	Chairperson: Commissioner DiPietrantonio	Vice-Chairperson: Commissioner Hamilton

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the Standing Committee assignments that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Shestack congratulated Commissioner DiPietrantonio on her election to the Board and thanked everybody for coming out to support the budget. He congratulated the new Chairperson on his appointment and thanked Administrator Jones for all his hard work on the election. He thanked Chief of Department Colucci and Deputy Chief Burnett for their help on Election Day and those Commissioners that manned the polling places that day. Commissioners Roura, Hamilton and Ridenour all echoed his comments.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 2/1/16 Special Meeting Minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution #2016-10 "Regular & Special Meeting Dates for 2016-2017". Commissioner Roura made a motion to adopt the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Commissioner Roura reported that he had reviewed the 2015 year end and February 2016 expenditures as prepared by the Administrator and found everything to be in order. He made a motion to approve 2015 year end expenses of \$105,978.20 that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board. He then made a motion to approve February 2016 bills totaling \$534,184.39 that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. 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 stated that most nights of the week and on a lot of weekends, the Headquarters Station Meeting Room was being used by different non-profit / community groups such as the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Toastmasters and other groups. He recently received a request from the South Jersey Business Association which is a group of local business owners that get together weekly and discuss business and networking. They are not a non-profit, educational or community organization and are requesting to use the Headquarters Station Meeting Room every Tuesday morning between 8 AM and 9 AM. He wanted the Board's authorization before approving their request and felt that we should initially approve it on a trial basis to see how it works out and to make sure that they don't disrupt business too much and the staff's use of the kitchenette. Commissioner Shestack had no problem with their request as long as they provide an insurance certificate naming us as an additional insured. Commissioner DiPietrantonio asked how many people they expected to have and Administrator Jones indicated it would be about a dozen. Commissioner Hamilton asked him if we charged a fee for this and Administrator Jones replied that we normally do not charge fees because these groups usually don't have any money. The Board briefly discussed the request and authorized the Administrator to work out the details with them.

Commissioner Roura noted that on a number of occasions over the past few years, both he and Chief of Department Colucci have fielded questions about the wording of the budget question on the ballot and that there seemed to be confusion about the word 'raised' and that people thought that it meant that we were increasing taxes. He asked if we were locked into that specific wording per state statute or whether we could rephrase the question to make it easier to understand. Administrator Jones stated that the only 3 things that he believed were required is that the budget proposal must be the form of a question and had to include the amount to be raised by taxation and the total budget amount. He felt that there may be room to get creative with the language to get around using the word "raised" but he cautioned that the more wordy the question, the more confusing it usually becomes. Commissioner Shestack suggested that we change "raised" to "collect". Commissioner Roura agreed that we could probably just change that 1 word to "collect" or "fund". Commissioner DiPietrantonio agreed that "fund" might be a good substitute. Administrator Jones felt that using "fund" doesn't flow right but that "collect" could be a good alternative. Commissioner Hamilton felt that no matter which way you look at it, you are "raising" taxes but that doesn't mean that you are "increasing" taxes. Commissioner Shestack suggested that the wording could be "Shall the Mount Laurel Fire District #1 collect \$x.xx by taxation to support a 2016 Budget of \$x.xx, representing a zero increase in the tax rate. Commissioner DiPietrantonio felt that it can't get any clearer than that. Administrator Jones felt that the question was a little awkward with the "representing a zero increase in the tax rate" addition but that we could put together an interpretive statement that would lay it all out plainly to keep the question as simple as possible. Commissioner Roura felt that an interpretive statement could make things more confusing. Administrator Jones agreed but felt that it would be a good way to explain that there is no tax increase and that funding from other sources go along with the amount being raised by taxes to make up the complete budget. Commissioner Shestack suggested that

maybe we could use the word “subsidize” and added that maybe each Commissioner could come up with a version that they like and submit it to the Treasurer for a discussion at the next meeting.

MONTHLY REPORT OF THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT:

Chief of Department Colucci had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. There were no questions on his report from the Board.

OTHER MATTERS:

None.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Building & Grounds: Commissioner Ridenour reported that work has pretty much come to a standstill with the winter weather but as the spring weather approaches, work on the site improvements will get started again. Administrator Jones added that there are still 3 projects that we are working on - the 1st project is the roofs and building envelopes, which is wrapping up and should be complete by the end of March with only punchlist items remaining. We have been trying to get the last HVAC unit replacements installed on the Birchfield Station roof for 4 weeks now, but the weather has not been cooperating in providing the 3 to 4 weekdays in a row that are needed. The 2nd project is the emergency generator replacement at the Fellowship Station – the generator is installed and operating and a punchlist has been developed. That project should also wrap up by the end of March. The 3rd project is site improvements, which will resume as soon as spring weather gets here. All of the concrete apron, sidewalk and curb replacement still remains to be done, along with the parking lot milling/paving and replacement of the water main at the Headquarters Station. Administrator Jones added that there are still 5 or 6 other small projects that we still want to try and get done if sufficient funds remain but we have to wait until we are further along with the site work to make sure that we can cover any additional costs that may come up with that before we move forward on any of them. Anything that we can’t do through bond issue funding will be included in future annual maintenance budgets. Commissioner Shestack asked him about the damage that contractors did to the elevator at Fellowship and he replied that we have submitted receipts for reimbursement of those costs along with the cost of damages at the other stations.

COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Roura reminded everyone that the annual banquet is tomorrow night. Chief of Department Colucci added that because of the problems we have had with weather early in the year, he suggested that we look at moving the date of the annual banquet into the spring.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

Resolution #2016-11 Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act”. Commissioner Roura made a motion to adopt the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board

**THE OPEN SESSION ENDED AT 9:09 PM.
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 9:10 PM.
THE CLOSED SESSION ADJOURNED AT 9:31 PM.**

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

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:33 PM.