

MOUNT LAUREL FIRE DISTRICT #1
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 20, 2010
Fire Department Headquarters Station
Meeting Minutes #18

IN ATTENDANCE:

1. Commissioner Cornue
2. Commissioner Nash
3. Commissioner Roura
4. Commissioner Shapiro
5. Administrator Jones
6. Deputy Chief Colucci
7. Fire Official Kownatsky
8. Solicitor Braslow

NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

1. Commissioner Shestack
2. Chief of Department Gallos

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Cornue at 7:05 PM.

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

The public announcements were read by Commissioner Shapiro.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Special Meeting of August 27, 2010.
Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Shapiro. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

RESOLUTIONS:

- Resolution #2010-61 "Appointment of Kristopher S. Steinmetz as a Junior Member of the Mount Laurel Fire Department".
Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Roura. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- Resolution #2010-62 "Appointment of Matthew J. Weston as an Active Member of the Fellowship Fire Company #2 and the Mount Laurel Fire Department". Commissioner Nash made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Shapiro. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- Resolution #2010-63 "Authorization for the Sale of Surplus Property". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

- Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the September bills totaling \$1,382,389.30, which was seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board. Administrator Jones explained that \$377,000 of that amount was the annual principal and partial principal payment due on 9/25 for the 2001 Bond Issue.

MONTHLY REPORT BY FIRE OFFICIAL:

- Fire Official Kownatsky reported that he has been actively pursuing the outstanding fees owed to the Bureau and is about \$5,000 away from his goal. Commissioner Shapiro asked him if he had changed the smoke detector certification fee schedule yet and he replied that he has not been able to get the Township to make the revisions to the ordinance yet. Municipal Clerk Pat Halbe has advised him that Township Council is currently not making any fee schedule changes in ordinances, but she will do her best to try and get them to see the benefit to the community in making the changes he is seeking.

- Commissioner Roura asked him about a reference in the Chief of Department's report regarding a meeting with the DCA, the Township Construction Official about Captain Evans contacting the State directly with a complaint. Fire Official Kownatsky stated that after Captain Evans discussed a code issue involving access systems on stairwell doors with the Township Construction Official and didn't like the answer he was given, he went directly to the State for their opinion and clarification. The State issued a preliminary decision and met with us to discuss it. Fire Official Kownatsky, Battalion Chief Jones, Chief of Department Gallos, and Tom Dawson from the Township Construction Office along with State UCC and UFC representatives met out at the location and the issue was resolved. As a result of being blindsided by this situation, he instituted a General Order that prohibits anyone from the Department from contacting any outside agency about a fire prevention issue without his authorization.
- Commissioner Roura asked him how the preparations for Fire Prevention Open House night were progressing. Fire Official Kownatsky replied that things are going well, although they realized today that Harrington Middle school is having their Back-to School night on the same night, which might hurt attendance a little. He had worked with the School District months ago to prevent just such a conflict, but somehow they scheduled it for the same night anyway. Deputy Chief Colucci added that we will probably need to fill about 13 positions with approximately 4 to 6 hours of overtime to properly staff the event, which the Board approved.

MONTHLY REPORT BY ADMINISTRATOR:

- The Administrator had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. Commissioner Cornue stated that the Administrator has informed him that the 2011 Budget proposal is almost completed and will be reviewed first by the Finance Committee (Commissioners Shestack, Nash, Administrator Jones and Deputy Chief Colucci). Commissioner Nash asked Administrator Jones when the budget needs to be completed by and Administrator Jones replied that we should complete our debate by the end of November so that it can be adopted in early December. He added that the Board needs to have some discussion on the New Apparatus Capital Lease question, which he would like to see completed by the end of September. The wording of the question and a thorough understanding of what the Board is asking voters to approve is an important issue that the Board needs to spend some time on. Commissioner Roura stated that the Apparatus Committee is meeting this Thursday and if he cannot attend he'll make sure that they know that the Administrator needs their preliminary cost figures.

MONTHLY REPORT BY THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT:

- Chief of Department Gallos had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

TRAINING:

- Commissioner Nash had nothing to report.

LONG RANGE PLANNING:

- Commissioner Nash had nothing to report.

EQUIPMENT:

- Commissioner Roura stated the Apparatus Committee has been making progress.

BUILDING & GROUNDS:

- Commissioner Roura had nothing to report.

FIRE PREVENTION:

- Commissioner Shapiro had nothing to report.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS:

- Commissioner Shapiro had nothing to report.

INSURANCE:

- Commissioner Shestack was not present

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:

- Commissioner Shestack was not present.

FINANCE:

- Commissioner Shestack was not present.

PERSONNEL:

- Commissioner Cornue had nothing to report.

LABOR / MANAGEMENT RELATIONS (combined):

- Commissioner Cornue had nothing to report.

OTHER MATTERS:

- Commissioner Cornue stated that since Commissioner Shestack was not present and because he felt it very important for all 5 Board members to be present for the "Fee for Service" proposal discussions, he was tabling the subject until the next Special Meeting on 10/4.

COMMENTS OF FIRE DISTRICT PROFESSIONALS:

- Solicitor Braslow reported that he has had discussions with Assemblyman Wisniewski about the status of the Governor's promised 'tool kit' bills. Assemblyman Wisniewski was working on the annual election issue and seemed receptive to the comments and concerns that Fire District Association representatives had expressed. He stated that the Governor wants all elections to be consolidated into the November General Election, including the non-partisan elections held in May. His rationale for this position is the high costs of conducting elections and the greater voter participation that would result from a November consolidation. An alternative idea was for the State to switch to a mail-in ballot system and eliminate the need for polling places altogether, which Solicitor Braslow felt introduced great potential for voter fraud. Another idea that had been proposed was to allow voters to only vote on Levy CAP referendums in the June Primary Elections, but that this could create problems because annual budgets requiring decisions on the referendums would not be in sync. He came away from the meeting with a feeling that they simply don't know what they are doing.

COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:

- Commissioner Shapiro expressed the pride she felt while in the presence of the WTC steel now housed at Station 362 and hopes that we can arrange to have a ceremony there every year on 9/11 to remember the events that took place that day.
- Commissioner Roura felt that the ceremony on 9/9 was a great event and commended Captain Evans and everybody else that pulled it together.
- Commissioner Nash repeated those comments and felt that the local residents that attended were also impressed. He appreciated the performance of the bagpiper and hoped that he will be part of any future annual ceremonies.
- Commissioner Cornue agreed that the bagpiper's performance was excellent and paid a wonderful tribute to those who lost their lives that day. Commissioner Nash added that Commissioner Cornue gave a very nice speech to open the ceremony.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no public participation comments offered.

Resolution #2010-64 "Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act". A motion to approve the resolution was made by Commissioner Roura and seconded by Commissioner Nash. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

THE OPEN SESSION ENDED AT 7:56 PM.

A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 8:04 PM.

THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 8:31 PM.

Commissioner Roura reported that per discussions at the last meeting, he had prepared and e-mailed to the Board members a draft letter for distribution to the membership advising them that the Board has reorganized and has a new Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer and gave the reasoning behind the changes. He asked the rest of the Board to please review it and provide suggestions on any revisions that are needed so he can e-mail it to the membership. After reviewing the draft for a few minutes, the Board provided Commissioner Roura with a few minor suggestions.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:43 PM.