

**MOUNT LAUREL FIRE DISTRICT #1**  
**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
January 20, 2014  
Fire Department Headquarters Station  
Meeting Minutes #1

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Roura at 8:02 PM.

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

The public announcements were read by Commissioner Hamilton.

Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to open the Public Hearing on the 2014 Budget that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Resolution #2014-01           “Authorization for the Board of Fire Commissioners to read Budget by Title”. Commissioner Ridenour made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Roura informed the audience that the 2014 Budget being considered for adoption tonight by the Board has been approved by the State Department of Community Affairs. He added that this Public Hearing is required by statute to provide the public with an opportunity to ask questions and provide comment on the 2014 Budget.

He asked members of the Board if they had any questions or comments about the 2014 Budget that was before them for adoption tonight and there were none. He summarized that the Finance Committee has presented a 2014 Budget to the Board that will decrease the tax rate by 0.4 cents this year after 3 years of 0% increases.

He asked the audience in attendance if anyone had any comments or questions and there were none.

Commissioner Shestack made a motion to close the Public Hearing that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 8:07 PM and the Regular Meeting agenda resumed.

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

Resolution #2014-02           “Appointment of Shane M. Walker as a ‘Junior’ Member of the Mount Laurel Fire Department”. Commissioner Shestack made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Resolution #2014-03           “Appointment of Don J. Suh as a ‘Junior’ Member of the Mount Laurel Fire Department”. Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Resolution #2014-04 "Appointment of Adam I. Messa to Active Membership in the Masonville Fire Company #1 and the Mount Laurel Fire Department". Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board. The new member was administered the oath of office by Commissioner Roura.

The Board took recessed at 8:12 PM to allow families of the new members to take photographs. The Board reconvened at 8:19 PM.

Resolution #2014-05 "2014 Adopted Budget Resolution Mount Laurel Fire District #1, Fiscal Year: From January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014". Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. All members of the Board voted to approve the resolution.

Commissioner Ridenour made a motion to approve the following group of resolutions that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. Commissioner Hamilton read each by title.

Resolution #2014-06 "Authorized Signatories for Bank Accounts"

Resolution #2014-07 "Resolution to Approve the 2014 LOSAP Program Final Certified List of Eligible Volunteer Members"

Resolution #2014-08 "Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract for Insurance Broker Services in Fiscal Year 2014 to Bollinger Insurance"

Resolution #2014-09 "Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract for General Legal Counsel Services in Fiscal Year 2014 to Richard M. Braslow, Esq."

Resolution #2014-10 "Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract for Municipal Accounting & Auditing Services in Fiscal Year 2014 to Bowman & Company, LLP"

Resolution #2014-11 "Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract for Labor Counsel Services in Fiscal Year 2014 to Lane J. Biviano, Esq."

Resolution #2014-12 "Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract for FMLA & FLSA Counsel Services in Fiscal Year 2014 to the firm Capehart & Scatchard, P.A."

Resolution #2014-13 "Formal Adoption of Administrative Policy #04-014 (revised 12/16/13) Mutual Exchange of Time"

There were no questions on any of the resolutions. The motions was unanimously approved by the Board.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Shestack made a motion to approve the 9/16/13 Regular Meeting minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Shestack made a motion to approve the 10/21/13 Regular Meeting minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. Commissioner Roura noted that he called the meeting to order not Commissioner Cornue and asked the Administrator to correct the error for the record. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Cornue made a motion to approve 11/18/2013 Regular Meeting minutes that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioner Shestack abstaining.

#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Commissioner Cornue made a motion to approve the monthly bills of December 2013 totaling \$553,775.04 that was seconded by Commissioner Ridenour. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Ridenour made a motion to approve the monthly bills of January 2014 totaling \$541,732.99 that was seconded by Commissioner Cornue. 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.

Commissioner Roura reported that late last month, the Administrator addressed an oversight by the Township regarding several previous year SFSP grants that had been awarded to the Fire District by the State. The grants had been sent to the Township in 2010, 2012 and 2013 but due to an oversight on their part had not been forwarded to the Fire District. Unfortunately, the State does not notify us that these grants have been awarded so the Administrator was unaware of its' existence. The Township Treasurer did not realize that our SFSP grants were part of the overall grant payments that they received from the State in those years and therefore did not forward it to us. The discrepancy was brought to our attention by our auditing firm, Bowman & Company, last summer when they were internally reviewing grants of their clients and realized that some of their clients had not received them. They looked into it further, found a State website notification page that confirmed the awards and advised us to discuss it with the Township. Administrator Jones was deep into the CBA retroactive pay calculations at the time but followed up with the Township Treasurer when there was a problem with the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter tax payment. She looked into it and agreed that they needed to remit the grants to us and was able to send us the 2012 and 2013 amounts before 2013 closed. She could not release the 2010 grant because that was prior to her taking office and stated that we would need to discuss that with the Township Manager. The 2010 SFSP grant amount was just over \$10,000. Commissioner Roura asked the Board if they want to press the Township for those funds or to just let it go and not cause them any aggravation. He was in favor of not pushing the issue if our auditors were okay with it since it was over 3 years ago at this point. Commissioner Shestack asked Solicitor Braslow if the Township could legally keep those funds or would they have to return them to the State if they don't forward them to us. Solicitor Braslow believed that they are required to forward them to the Fire District or to forfeit them back to the State. Administrator Jones stated that he would get together with the Chief of Department and approach the Township Manager about it and see if we can get easily resolve the situation and not cause any bad feelings on their part.

**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. Commissioner Roura asked him about the "Active 911" software that the Department had been testing. Chief of Department Colucci stated that the trial period had expired but the consensus was that everyone liked it and that we were going to subscribe to it as a replacement for the "IAmResponding" software program we had been using.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Public Relations:** Commissioner Roura asked the Board members if anyone had any input or comments on the latest draft of the newsletter. He asked when the final draft had to be done in order to go to the printer. Commissioner Shestack replied that the deadline for release to the printer was this Friday. Commissioner Roura added that he has a couple of minor corrections but overall liked what the Committee had come up with. Chief of Department Colucci asked him to send him his changes and he will get them over to Dennis @ RAS Associates to incorporate them.

**OTHER MATTERS:**

None.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE DISTRICT PROFESSIONALS:**

Solicitor Braslow reported that approximately 2 weeks ago the ad-hoc Committee that he and Administrator Jones were serving on met with State Senator Donald Norcross to discuss a number of fire-related issues and possible legislation to address them. The main topics were the creation of permissive legislation to allow Fire Districts to move the annual election to the November General Election date, not have our budget voted upon by the public as long as it is under the 2% levy cap and removal of the requirement to have capital leases for fire apparatus and equipment voted on by the public. Senator Norcross seemed receptive to these ideas and some of the other topics we raised such as a regional Fire District concept and the possibility that hydrant rental and hydrant rental rate increase costs be placed outside of the levy cap. Committee members all thought the meeting was a good one and that we now had a chance to have some legislation proposed by the Senator on some of the ideas we proposed.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:**

None.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Fellowship Fire Company President Paul Guelich asked what the SFSP grant was for. Administrator Jones replied that it is a general grant by the State each year that must be used by Fire Districts or Fire Companies for fire or personal protective equipment.

Resolution #2014-14           “Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act”. Commissioner Hamilton 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 8:51 PM.  
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 8:52 PM.  
THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 8:57 PM.**

Commissioner Roura reminded everyone that the 2014 Fire Department banquet is this Saturday at The Westin.

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

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