

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

May 16, 2016

Fire Department Headquarters Station  
Meeting Minutes #6

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

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

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

Public announcements were read by Commissioner Hamilton.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the 4/18/16 Regular Meeting Minutes that was seconded by Commissioner DiPietrantonio. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board with Commissioners Shestack and Hamilton abstaining.

Commissioner Shestack asked Solicitor Braslow whether a Commissioner that was not present at a meeting can vote to approve the meeting minutes of that meeting. Solicitor Braslow replied that they should not because they are voting on the accuracy of the meeting minutes and if they were not present they could not vouch for the accuracy of what was discussed.

**ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

Resolution #2016-16 "Appointment of Matthew E. Schwartz to Active Membership in the Fellowship Fire Company #2 and the Mount Laurel Fire Department". Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Shestack. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board. Commissioner Shestack administered the oath of office to the new member.

The Board took a brief recess at 8:08 PM so that the family of the new member could take pictures. The Board reconvened the meeting at 8:23 PM.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

Commissioner Roura reported that he had reviewed the monthly bills and found everything to be in order. He made a motion to approve April bills totaling \$466,327.73 that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Commissioner Shestack commented that so far in 2016, we have spent 51% of our budget but that a large chunk of that was the annual pension payment. Commissioner Roura added that there have also been a number of construction contract progress payments made. Commissioner Ridenour added that he signed off on a few change orders tonight and that they may not have been factored into the total expense amount yet. Administrator Jones reported that the Phase 1 building envelope work that included roof replacements, HVAC unit replacement and the exterior surface refurbishment work is almost complete with only a few punchlist items remaining to be resolved. The project to replace the Station 362 emergency generator and switchgear is also close to completion. Commissioner Shestack asked him how the construction project budget is holding and Administrator Jones replied that we will have some funds left over to use for some small projects that had to initially be eliminated when the Phase 1 project bids came in well over the allocated budget. He felt that all of the work under the existing contracts should be done by early to mid-summer and by then we will have evaluated the small projects to determine what we can still get done. Commissioner Shestack asked him whether we had received reimbursement for the

Station 361 water damage and the Station 362 elevator door repairs. Commissioner Ridenour added that we had a meeting with the Station 362 emergency generator general contractor to negotiate a cost sharing settlement for the costs involved with the additional natural gas pipe that had to be replaced. He added that Administrator Jones had submitted all of our bills for damage done by contractors and that they are being evaluated by the responsible contractors, our Construction Manager and the Architect.

**MONTHLY REPORT BY ADMINISTRATOR:**

The Administrator had submitted his monthly report to the Board for their review prior to the meeting. There were no comments or questions from the Board.

**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 reminded everyone we are planning a volunteer recruitment drive Open House for 6/4/16 at Station 363 and that the Township will hold their annual memorial service at 6 PM on 5/27/16 at the Laurel Acres Park Memorial. Commissioner Roura stated that he understands that the Township has picked former MLPD officer Ron Devlin to be the new EOC Coordinator and that Chief of Department Colucci will be a dunk tank target at 5 PM on 5/20/16 at Harrington Middle School.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Building and Grounds: Commissioner Ridenour asked Administrator Jones for a progress report on the construction projects. Administrator Jones reported that he had already summarized much of the progress earlier in the meeting when the monthly bills were being discussed. He added that all of the concrete work at Station 362 was completed, most of the concrete work at Station 361 was done except for several panels in the front apron and no concrete work had been done yet @ Headquarters/Station 363 yet. No paving had been done yet but would begin as the concrete work at each facility was completed. Other than the installation of the new Headquarters/Station 363 water main behind the building, no progress will be made over the next 2 weeks because of the primary election on 6/7/16 so that we don't create any access or parking problems.

**OTHER MATTERS:**

The annual election ballot question format discussion resumed with Solicitor Braslow reporting that he had spoken with the Deputy Director of the DCA and that she was very insistent that we had to include the total budget amount and the amount to be raised by taxation in the ballot question. She was also insistent that the "amount to be raised by taxation" phrasing had to be included. He felt that the ballot question format that we have been using meets all of their requirements and that the only other thing that we can do is to add an "explanatory statement" below the question to help voters better understand the wording. He suggested that he could work with Administrator Jones on this matter and report back to the Board. Commissioner Hamilton asked him what wording that they didn't like and Solicitor Braslow replied that their position is that both amounts and the "amount to be raised by taxation" phrase must be included in order to be compliant with the statutes. He added that some of his Fire Districts post a large explanation sheet at each polling place to help explain the budget ballot question and that it would not be considered "electioneering" because it was for informational purposes. Commissioner Shestack felt that we should include an explanation in the annual newsletter to help voters understand the wording of the question better. Solicitor Braslow stated that if the legislature would act on the proposed legislation that addresses the movement of the annual election to November, this whole issue could become moot because the ballot question would not be on the ballot if the 2% levy cap is not exceeded. He does believe that something will happen with the legislation between now and our next election in February 2017. Commissioner Shestack asked him if there was bipartisan support for the bill and he replied that there was.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE DISTRICT PROFESSIONALS:**

Solicitor Braslow reported that he appeared last week before the Local Finance Board (LFB) and testified on the Cherry Hill Fire District's application to replace their Burn Building/Training Center, which got tabled until their June meeting for a decision. He suggested that Board members go to the LFB website and read the transcript of his testimony because it was very interesting.

**COMMENTS OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS:**

None.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

None.

Resolution #2016-17      “Closing of Meeting Pursuant to Open Public Meetings Act”. Commissioner Roura made a motion to approve the resolution that was seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**THE OPEN SESSION ENDED AT 8:39 PM.  
A CLOSED SESSION BEGAN AT 8:40 PM.  
THE CLOSED SESSION ENDED AT 9:18 PM.**

Commissioner Shestack congratulated Chief of Department Colucci on reaching 20 years of service in April. Chief of Department Colucci thanked him and the Board for providing our staff with a college tuition reimbursement program to help them develop themselves educationally. This program has helped him to be in a position to graduate tomorrow with a Bachelor’s Degree and allows him to continue working toward completion of the 7 classes he has left to attain a Master’s degree. Deputy Chief Burnett added that he is also working on his Master’s degree.

Commissioner Hamilton 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 9:21 PM.**