

**Board of Fire Commissioners
GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT 6
Monthly Board Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Held: July 27, 2017
Meeting Place: Board Office
Meeting Called to Order: 6:30pm
Members of Board Present: **Chairman** – George Brown
Vice Chairman – Richard Annacone
Treasurer – Brian Robinson
Secretary – George Flinn, excused
Commissioner – Steven Funkhouser
Administrative Clerk – Jeanette Cottone, excused
Deputy Clerk – Kathleen Crockett
Solicitor – David Carlamere

Salute the Flag

The Sunshine Law – George Brown: In accordance with the NJ Sunshine Law this meeting is open to the public. The public portion will follow the regular business of the Board.

Roll call Commissioners:

Comms. Annacone, Robinson, Funkhouser and Brown are present. Comm. Flinn is excused.

Minutes of the previous meeting - Motion to accept the previous month's minutes as they are available to the public upon request.

Motion made by Comm. Annacone, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Correspondence – Kathleen Crockett

No report.

Treasurer's Report – Rich Annacone

Audubon General Account	1,455,421.02
Audubon Payroll Account	23,500.26
Expenditures:	79,601.86

TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL 79,601.86

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser to approve the Treasurer's Report as read. Roll call vote, all yes.

Open Session, Comm. Brown

Comm. Brown: I'd like to suspend momentarily the normal agenda to take care of a few items that are special tonight. First, the Chief would like to recommend a promotion.

Chief Brezee: Yeah, we'd like to recommend a promotion of Derek Kramer to Lieutenant. We ask that the Solicitor will swear him in.

Sol.Carlamere swore in Lt. Kramer. Congratulations.

Comm. Brown: Special guest number 2, Bill Loftus.

Mr. Loftus: Thank you. The reason why I'm here tonight is I wrote a special letter to the Board and to the Chief of an incident that took place with my daughter on July 9th, she was involved in a motor vehicle accident that could have been seriously worse. Anyway, the Fire Department, Squad 86 responded to the incident, and I just want to thank the gentlemen that were there because they did an outstanding job. They were very professional and they were very polite. They could tell they were well trained and did a great job. I was telling my wife and daughter that it's nice to see that we have a Fire Department in this District with this type of personnel. We are glad to see that we have a very professional and well trained Fire Department here. It doesn't get recognized a lot by the residents, but I don't see it often. But I think the guys that were there that day need to be recognized on the great job that they did. I have a letter here, I don't know if you want me to read it.

Open Session, continued

Comm. Brown: Sure, if you'd like to.

Mr. Loftus: I wrote to Chief Brezee and to the Board of Fire Commissioners, District 6. It just states:

Please accept this letter of correspondence from our family to thank you, the members of Fire District 6 Fire Company for responding to a motor vehicle accident that our daughter Nicole was involved in. This took place on July 9, 2017 on Williamstown Rd. at around 12pm. The Fire Co. arrived and quickly Dep. Chief Brown and his crew immediately went into service in a very professional manner. One could tell that the crew was well trained. As a resident of Gloucester Township, it is very reassuring to know that we have a Fire Co. that is as competent as Fire District 6. Again, we would like to thank Dep. Chief Brown and his crew who provided their service for our daughter. Gentlemen, thank you very much.

Mrs. Loftus: Yes, thank you.

Dep.Chief Brown: We don't like to see people we know like that, but we're glad to be of help.

Ms. Loftus: Thank you.

Comm. Brown: That was very nice Bill. (the Loftus family left the meeting)
Let the record show we've gone to the normal agenda at 6:38pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown

No report.

Computer Services – George Brown

No report.

Fire Prevention – George Brown

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – George Brown

No report.

Legal Liaison – George Brown

No report.

Liaison to the District Volunteers – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Any new members?

Dep.Chief Brown: : No, we are awaiting the backgrounds on the two I gave you.

Comm. Brown: They've been submitted and probably will be back tomorrow.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: The contracts, I don't know what you want to discuss on that right now.

Comm. Brown: We'll go into Closed about the healthcare benefits. We'll do that at the end.

Comm. Annacone: The healthcare?

Comm. Brown: Yes. Anything else?

Personnel / Administration – Rich Annacone

No report.

Personnel / Operations – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: Chief, where are we as far as the list for the hires?

Chief Brezee: I've made the contacts with Civil Service. We've had several meetings to discuss how we're going to do this. The initial step was to provide the Gloucester Township Police Department with the names of contact information. They will contact the first 6 on the list to respond to GT Police, fill out their particular application for fingerprint and they're going to handle that first step. They will get back to us as soon as that's been completed. Then they'll give me a time on how long it takes.

Comm. Annacone: Is the first step to come here and pick up the packet?

Personnel / Operations – continued

Chief Brezee: No, the first step is go to the Police Dept., when contacted by the Police Dept., go there and fill out their application for fingerprinting, be fingerprinted. They'll run a background and report them back to us. When all six are done, we'll contact them to come and pick up our application which will probably be within a week or so.

Comm. Annacone: When is that going to start?

Chief Brezee: Within 2 weeks. The Police should already be working.

Comm. Annacone: My only concern with that is we want to give them a time frame on where to come pick up the packet. If you send them to the fingerprints first, there is no time frame there.

Chief Brezee: What they have to fill out for the police is not our packet.

Comm. Annacone: Right, but if somebody doesn't show up, is that going to disqualify them? I don't think it will.

Chief Brezee: If they don't show up for that?

Comm. Annacone: Once we send them a letter to come here and you have so much time to do it, if you don't, you're out.

Chief Brezee: The Police said that's the way they did Chews' and Blackwood I believe. At Blackwood they didn't do a very good one. With Chew's, they did it where they started with those and I'm just following kind of the same procedure. Civil Service said that was fine.

Comm. Annacone: So what's going to happen if they don't show up for the fingerprint?

Chief Brezee: Well they're going to have to answer to us as to why.

Comm. Annacone: OK.

Dep.Chief Brown: : It would be part of the process.

Comm. Annacone: Does there have to be a date or something on that letter to go...

Chief Brezee: The Police handle that though. They put that letter out, they put that date on it, which is I think at least a week. So they have a week to contact the Police Department. But I can't tell the Police you have to do this in this amount of time.

Comm. Annacone: Right I understand that part of it.

Chief Brezee: So they're going to put the date on it and, I understand what you're saying if somebody doesn't make the date or whatever, we're going to have to figure that out. Under the suggestion of the Police Dept., I did this step first. They want to knock this out first.

Comm. Brown: I have a list of the steps we discussed the other day. I want to circulate that to both the Chief and Comm. Annacone to make sure I didn't miss anything. And then we'll get our side going as soon as I hear back from you. Anything else?

Apparatus – Brian Robinson

No report.

Fire Department Equipment – Brian Robinson

No report.

Fire Department Operations – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: I'll refer to the Chief.

Training – Brian Robinson

No report.

Insurance – George Flinn

No report.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Communications – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: Same thing, refer to the Chief's report in regards to the LED lighting in the Engine room and they look great. The Chief and I discussed the other day that possibly if there is anything available near the end of the year in my portion of the budget that we may go with another strip and continue to go with the LED lighting. I didn't see them at night time, but they really look good out there.

There are some other issues we need to discuss in regards to Building. The Building Committee hasn't met...I can't tell you when we met the last time, but we put everything on a hold there because of the situations in the Township I think. So now we've been talking about the kitchen, about getting rid of the equipment in the kitchen. We have a person out there to purchase part of the kitchen items in there, and we can't get any of that out of the hall. The hall was built around the equipment, so we would have to break a hole in the wall and put money out for that which was not budgeted for, so it's something else we're going to have to discuss on what we're going to do for the volunteers in the kitchen area.

Comm. Brown: I think there was some surplus equipment we talked about between the last meeting and this one. I spoke to the Solicitor about what we needed to do in order to get rid of that surplus equipment and whether we do or don't, I think so that we don't have to have a special meeting if we could get a list of what that potential surplus equipment is, it's not normally a problem that's brought up so that we could move forward a little faster. If we could get that, that would be great. Remember, it's not how fast you mow, it how well you mow fast.

Chief Brezee: We'd have to measure and see what we can get out of the kitchen and ...

Comm. Annacone: Sounds like a good tool day for training.

Chief Brezee: That's the problem, any money we would make to get most of the stuff out whole that's worth anything, any money we would make would be put back into putting the walls back together. Not to mention that I would not want to open up the walls and find out it's structural. The fact is that hallway used to be wider and there used to be a doorway right across from it that was wider than the door that sits there now. So I know how they got it in there. But then the hallway was shortened up and the door was taken away.

Comm. Brown: Just a silly question because I forgot, is there anything in the architect survey about those walls and what's around them.

Chief Brezee: I wouldn't think so. He never opened anything up to see what's structural.

Comm. Annacone: You'd be better off making the entrance to the hall area bigger and taking it out that way.

Chief Brezee: The ice room sits this much higher than the kitchen and you'd have to go up and over.

Comm. Funkhouser: There's just too much right now for us to do anything with that kitchen. It was not budgeted, it was something that came to us throughout the year.

Chief Brezee: After it all went down and we realized we couldn't get what was worth anything out of there and it was kind of determined that we would sit down and go over this again another time.

Comm. Funkhouser: Scrap wise, you wouldn't get much for it if you're going to scrap it.

Chief Brezee: The most value in it is we would get Tom Kenny...the good Captain would put together a man vs. machine drill and we'd go from there.

Comm. Funkhouser: But there is some equipment that apparently people could use.

Chief Brezee: The problem is, like the deep fryers are a dime a dozen and ours are 30 years old, not a lot of people would be interested. The walk in box could come out in pieces, I think that would get out and might be worth something. But it's been 10 years since that compressor's been running. For some reason we found the compressor was cut.

Comm. Brown: OK, so could you as the Chairman of the Building get whatever people you want to try and look at this. Even if it's a subset of the entire Building Committee...I don't think Jan cares what's in the kitchen.

Chief Brezee: As far as the kitchen went, it was kind of Lt. Kramer's brain child, so he's back now and we'll get back with him and let him continue to lead this.

Comm. Funkhouser: Right.

Comm. Brown: Anything else?

Comm. Funkhouser: No.

EMS / Supplies & Equipment – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Chief Brezee: I don't have anything else but the report.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Annacone to accept the Chief's Report.
Roll call vote, all yes.

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: Nothing to report.

Resolutions – Kathleen Crockett

Cl.Crockett: None that I have.

Old Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Just an update on the Social Media policy. The Chief was able to get some documents that we wanted that were referenced in the Court of Appeals case that came in just last week. I sent them over to the Solicitor today. The comment made to the Chief by Howard County is that this case is going to the Supreme Court, and I spoke to the Solicitor today asking him for an opinion whether we could proceed or we should wait for a Supreme Court rejection of the case or acceptance, and the Solicitor's opinion was...

Sol.Carlamere: You don't know how long that's going to take or where it is right now. The Appellate Division upheld the social media. The case really didn't direct itself to the contents of substance in the Social Media, it was a specific act that they addressed.

Chief Brezee: My opinion, and I'm not an attorney by any means, but everything that I've read into this now is that they are winning on the fact that he was told to remove it and he didn't remove it. So they're winning on insubordination, they're not winning on the policy itself.

Sol.Carlamere: Correct. The content of what was just said and the fact that there are organizations like Fire Company's, para military that you follow discipline, you need that efficiency and order of rank and there was insubordination and that's where that case seems to be going.

Comm. Brown: But it seems to me without that code of conduct they wouldn't be in the position that they were, so I do think we need both and that was what I took away. I think our social media policy was ok, but it never talked about the....

Chief Brezee: I think it's awesome that a one page policy is holding us along.

Comm. Brown: Right.

Chief Brezee: And that, in talking to the guys from Howard County is, they 100% admit this is vague, this is simple. And of course the question is, this is a one page policy, how good can it be. And it stood the test of time so far. It was a three page policy and we brought it back to a one page policy. It's vague and we know it, and as long as we follow it and enforce it is why we are and where we're at in winning.

Comm. Brown: I'd like to have that in place for when the new hires get here so there is no doubt about what we're thinking. As far as length is concerned, let us not forget that the Gettysburg address wasn't that long either.

Chief Brezee: Absolutely. I think it's great

New Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Lowes sent the Chief a request for the use of the facility, next Friday the 4th from 1-4pm. We've let them use it before, we're going to be using their facility on Fire Prevention night. A comment made to me by the person I spoke to yesterday. I didn't realize it that he used to be the store manager down there in 2012. He said we have had the best relationship with you of anybody anywhere. So we greatly appreciate it. So I'd like to again approve the use of the Social Hall for Lowe's as part of our ongoing...

Comm. Annacone: What do they want to use it for?

Comm. Brown: Just a meeting.

Chief Brezee: It's a Manager's meeting.

Motion made by Comm. Annacone, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: We just spoke about the surplus items in the kitchen, so if we could get that by next month, that would be great.

New Business – continued

Comm. Brown: I forwarded an email from the Local Finance Board proposing new rules. It would set forth the public disclosure and hearing requirements for the ratification of labor contracts. I'm going to emphasize the following word because it will come up in closed "and other compensation." We need to be mindful of that. It's in a 60 day review period and it may or may not be approved. I don't know if you've seen that, but it's quite extensive. It now requires a notice of public meetings, public meetings, discussion of contract, a review period by the taxpayers, it's an enormous change in labor contracts and benefits.

Comm. Brown: The other item is part of the hiring process. The Chief spoke to Comm. Annacone and myself and I'll see if I can be brief about this, if I miss anything let me know but I felt very strongly that we should have some background checks besides electronic ones. We reached out to a company called Profile Organization to do background checks. We had a conference call with them the other day.

Comm. Annacone, the Chief and myself. I haven't said how that organization would work for us. I will circulate that at the end of the evening to Comm. Annacone and the Chief to see if I missed anything. If I did not, we would put together a letter of engagement saying this is how we're going to use you, this is the cost and this is what you're going to provide back to us. The process would be that we would do all the things we would do ourselves, our background checks...if they're adequate we'll go on that, the Gloucester Township Police Dept., a whole bunch of things that we could do to help ourselves. Then we could turn over anybody that was not rejected through those processes for him to go out and do face to face interviews with the references. Anyone with the references would suggest that he talk to which is what I think Comm. Robinson told us months ago that he used to do it that way at Cherry Hill....

Comm. Robinson: I'm not a fan of references... I'm a fan of three on them.

Comm. Brown: I felt that the gentleman that we spoke to has done this before. He's done this for business. He's a former Philadelphia Police Lieutenant and did mention it on the call that it's on his profile as a former FBI agent. He has an extensive business and said there is no right way or wrong way, you kind of got to see where it takes you. But I think that's the point of what you were trying to say and that's what we heard him say the other day. So I would like the Board's authorization on behalf of the Chief and Comm. Annacone to proceed with the steps we want to go with including putting in writing what we expect from him so we can get this process moving.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Annacone to approve the profile organization. Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Funkhouser: I received a letter from the Heating and Air Conditioning, Mr. Henry.

Chief Brezee: Comm. Flinn usually handles this for Comm. Funkhouser because it's Bob's Heating and Air Conditioning. In our last PM's, they kind of came to the conclusion that the air conditioner on top of the bunk room is probably not going to make it until the end of August, could or couldn't. He hasn't really done us wrong yet. Any time something is failing, he's good at showing me where it's failing. But in looking at it, he said the same thing I was thinking that that unit is way too big. The unit that does all of these offices on the side of here is smaller than the unit that doesn't have one single room. So in summary, we need to replace it. I checked with Comm. Funkhouser, he says we do have the money. Roughly the quote is about \$9,800 to go with a unit that's half the size of what's up there which is 5 tons. That will cover everything soup to nuts. Same thing like we did with the Social Hall where you have to fill the voids of where you shrunk and things like that. He also talked about some fail-safes on there to make sure this thing isn't going to run when it shouldn't run. There are new environmental things that are out there. The quote says \$9,800, maybe we approve up to \$12,000 in case something goes down.

Comm. Funkhouser: This says it's a turnover of a week I think.

Chief Brezee: If anything, we know that he gets it done in a week.

Comm. Brown: The Solicitor just advised we need two quotes.

Chief Brezee: So can we approve the amount and get a second quote?

Sol. Carlamere: So you don't have to wait till next meeting?

Chief Brezee: Yes.

Comm. Brown: Can I ask a question, is that air conditioning only or heat and air conditioning?

Chief Brezee: It's both, it's everything.

Comm. Brown: OK.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Annacone to approve an amount not to exceed \$12,000 with a second quote. Roll call vote, all yes.

Public Portion – George Brown

n/a

Closed Session – George Brown

Comm. Brown: I'd like to go into Closed Session at 6:56pm to discuss the outstanding issue on the labor contracts regarding healthcare benefits.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Annacone to go back into Open.
Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Let the record show the Board has gone back into Open Session at 7:10pm.
Roll call, all present.

Comm. Brown: During the Closed Session we discussed the issue of healthcare benefits to the employees, and the Board would like to seek an opinion from its labor council regarding a proposal to try and move this issue that's been outstanding since 2015 forward.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Annacone to approve reaching out to Mr. Long. Roll call vote, all yes.

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Annacone, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser to adjourn the meeting at 7:11pm.
Roll call vote, all yes.