

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

Meeting Held: October 22, 2015
Meeting Place: Board Office
Meeting Called to Order: 6:30 pm
Members of Board Present: **Chairman** – George Brown
Vice Chairman – Joseph Chew
Treasurer – Richard Annacone
Secretary – George Flinn, excused
Commissioner – Steven Funkhouser
Administrative Clerk – Jeanette Cottone, excused
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, Chew, Funkhouser and Brown are present. Comm. Flinn is sick.

Comm. Brown: I would like the minutes to reflect that this Board is in crisis this evening because the Clerk is not here, so who knows what will happen.

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 – Comm. Brown

Comm. Brown: Correspondence has been received and accepted.

Treasurer's Report – Rich Annacone

Audubon General Account	1,621,619.62
Audubon Payroll Account	26,246.62
Expenditures:	98,369.11

TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL 98,369.11

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Computer Services – George Brown

No report.

Fire Prevention – George Brown

Comm. Brown: I'd like to really thank everybody for another great Fire Prevention, the guys did a great job. Chief, good job. I'd also like to thank Chris Rinaldi who brought out his fun picture box this year which was an added value. Everybody is really pleased, you guys worked very hard. I don't think it would happen if it wasn't for you, so thank you again. The community really appreciates it.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – George Brown

Comm. Brown: We have met with Keith on October 6th I think it was, and we've not heard back from him on our most recent proposal. We met with Keith and Adam Craig.

Legal Liaison – George Brown

No report.

Liaison to the District Volunteers – George Brown

No report.

Apparatus – Joe Chew

Comm. Chew: The Chief's report covered everything that's going on with the apparatus.

Fire Department Equipment – Joe Chew

No report.

Fire Department Operations – Joe Chew

No report.

Training – Joe Chew

Comm. Chew: I believe there is a burn building coming up next month.

Chief Brezee: November 10th.

Comm. Chew: Everybody received a copy of the Chief's report. I'd like to make a motion that we accept.

Comm. Brown: I would like to hold off until we talk to the Chief about his report, if it's OK.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Joe Chew

Comm. Brown: I'm sure it might have been like one of those mental things that you don't want to talk about, but it says here that you're the Budget Co-Commissioner, and it's budget time.

Comm. Chew: Yes it is. The Chief and I have started conversations on what we need to do on our end of the budget for Operations, Equipment and Training. I'm going to assume that everybody else is starting to look because it is the time to start. Other than that, I have no other report.

Comm. Brown: My own comment to the Board on the budget is that we're only getting an additional \$1,000 in revenue this year which is much lower that we have gotten in previous years. That's a fact, it's not emotion, it's not politics, it's not anything. So we're going to have to be very sharp given the fact that I think our goal, our commitment to the Chief was that we would be able to figure out how to get enough equipment for the new truck so that we wouldn't be taking stuff off there. So I think we have to be very smart going into next year. We were very good this year if you look at the numbers, they're all good and we're on track with our plan, but I think we're going to have to maybe have some sort of a work session or some sort of meeting with the people making the decisions so that we can continue on. I think this year so far we're in great shape, but if we let go right now, we'll be in trouble next year. We're committed to new firefighters next year, we're committed to a new truck that we want to staff and we've got a building issue too as well as everything else. So it's not going to be easy. This could be probably the most difficult budget given all that we want to do, so we're going to have to really work hard on that one.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: As Comm. Chew just said we're getting it together and have it done by the end of the year as usual.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: Comm. Brown already talked about that.

Personnel / Administration – Rich Annacone

No report.

Personnel / Operations – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: The Chief just gave me a Uniform Policy to look over.

Comm. Brown: Can we talk about the new uniform policy tonight so we don't drag it on for a month. Chief would you like to discuss that?

Chief Brezee: I just received a folder, but this comes after months and months of Chris and I discussing what we want to see in a policy. We definitely have to tighten this up on all ends, the Uniform policy to make sure that we're putting the image out there that we want to put out there. I haven't read through everything yet, it depends if you guys want to wait till the next meeting to go ahead and vote on if we're going to put it in effect.

Comm. Annacone: I haven't even read it yet, I just got it tonight.

Comm. Brown: It's the request to wait till next month?

Chief Brezee: Yeah, give everybody time to review it. If there are any questions, by all means forward them to me and I'll answer those questions and look for approval at next month's meeting.

Personnel / Operations – continued

Comm. Brown: I have one addition, I looked at it quickly. I would like the policy to reflect the fact that the labor

agreements do not permit the IAFF logo on anything and the agreements are now in discussion. I fully support pink shirts once a year for breast cancer, and I think we should put money in the budget so the volunteers also can have a pink shirt during that period in which the Chief authorizes the use of those. But a uniform policy to a simpleton like me means that everybody wears it, and there are no exceptions. So I would like Chief next year whenever you authorize that to be uniform of the day that everybody has whatever that is. And if it's pink tutu's, then we'll buy pink tutus. That's the only thing I would like included in the policy that when the Chief or the Board authorizes some non-standard whatever to be the uniform of the day, that everyone has one. And that no uniform would reflect anything other than the District logo, unless provided in the labor agreement. Anybody disagree with that? (hearing none) Thank you.

Insurance – George Flinn

No report.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Photographer – George Flinn

No report.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: The generator out back is fixed, the switch was broken on it. The building is still standing right now We got a report back from the County. They came out and did a report on the building, a mold report and took a look at the building. They really didn't find anything out of the ordinary in regards to the report. They did find a couple of leaking areas. It's been leaking on the wood in the hallways here, and we need to prioritize and fix-up so we can deal with that. Same as the floor in the hall, we're going to have to do something with that. But other than that, it's somewhat a pretty good report because I was thinking they would come back with some serious numbers on the mold report.

Communications – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

EMS / Supplies & Equipment – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: I guess it's all OK.

Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: Uniforms were just talked about for next year. That's all I have.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Comm. Brown: Chief, your report. I have one comment. The letter that I thought you wrote to the Chief of 85 is excellent. I don't know whether or not it makes any sense that we should copy the Chairman of the Board into that letter.

Chief Brezee: Yes I will, I intend to.

Comm. Brown: OK. I know I approved it yesterday, but then I was thinking about it today and I think it would be a good thing so that he can't....

Chief Brezee: That he never got that.

Comm. Brown: I think the report was great, and along those lines after thinking about it some more today, you were specific about them not bringing anything other than an engine or squad into a dwelling fire. I'm wondering if we ought to be more specific. Most of the alarm calls that we get would be because there is smoke, right? And the smoke would be a dwelling fire. So should we also tell them to only bring an Engine or a Squad to an alarm call?

Chief Brezee: They should only be bringing what is dispatched. The boxes are set up so that we want a

Chief – continued

particular piece of apparatus. In all of our boxes in that case state an Engine. We feel that the Squad is

suitable as a replacement to an Engine. So we have no problem whether they bring the Squad or their Engine. We have a big problem when they bring the Quint. The other big problem with that is, that decision is not made by the Chief of that department, and that's a problem. When somebody in the uniform ranks can turn around and say "we're taking this truck instead of that truck", it's a problem. And we noted that in the letter and we expect that to be fixed. If it's not fixed we'll take issue with it. But the boxes are set up, and we've met with everyone that we set the boxes up with. Look, this is the apparatus that's on that dispatch, this is what we want you to bring, and everybody agreed with it.

Comm. Brown: OK, but without me having to look through my phone and look stupid, I think today we had two alarm calls in which they responded with Quint.

Chief Brezee: We had one, but yes.

Comm. Brown: Well maybe in the last couple days. So my question is, when they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing which they didn't do today, let's keep it in...

Chief Brezee: And we asked them, after incident review and we didn't expect anything was going to change until we put it in writing, which we did today. That'll go out next week. I expect to hear some backlash, but that will be handled. And they'll be given a point next week that if it happens past this day, that's it.

Comm. Brown: OK. In case there is any doubt about it, your title is Chief, not someday Chief. Whatever you say is what the Board backs you on, and if that's what you want that's what they've got to do. And if they're not doing that, then that's a problem for us to solve going forward.

Chief Brezee: Chris and I have had the conversation that we would not have a problem with adding a piece of apparatus out of another town at that particular time then sending that rolling piece of apparatus home.

Comm. Brown: I'm just again reiterating having read your letter, having been at the scene when the wrong piece showed up, understanding the consequences of that. This Board stands fully behind you to do whatever you've got to do. And it shouldn't just be blowing fires, it should be whatever you put in your box assignments they need to follow. And if they can't, we need to figure out what's next. At least for most of us this Board has had a pretty long tenure of figuring out what we got to do next, so we're ready. We got to do what we've got to do here. But your letter was great.

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

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: Nothing to report.

Resolutions – Jeanette Cottone

Comm. Brown: None.

Old Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: There was only one item of Old Business which had to do with the Volunteer resolution that was not discussed at the last meeting. There was a resolution regarding the Juniors I think it was. Did we ever get that resolved?

Comm. Funkhouser: A policy for the Juniors?

Comm. Brown: I think the Solicitor was going to look at it.

Comm. Funkhouser: We had a policy on the Juniors.

Dep.Chief Brown: Are you talking about the application signature sheet?

Comm. Brown: Yes. So is that resolved?

Dep.Chief Brown: We have the document put together now, and asked the Solicitor to approve that one. There is also another issue in regards to...

Chief Brezee: Which was noted in the report that we had discussions on the physicals. Right now we do not send Junior members for entry physicals. We feel strongly that we should as well as the legislation. The physicals we feel we should be sending them for no other reason than we need to know...we don't want to put somebody in a situation. And although they're Juniors and not going into interior firefighting, but it's well documented that when the pager goes off, your heart rate takes off. Heart problems are the number one killer of firefighters, and the way we've looked at it is that's from Junior all the way up to the Senior man. So we would like the Board to start approving those physicals for Junior members. We would also like the Juniors to receive the same insurance that a regular firefighter/member is receiving. I know there was legislation on that.

Comm. Brown: OK, it sounds like we have two motions. One is the Junior's get an entry physical, which is not the same as the Firefighter 1 physical?

Old Business – continued

Chief Brezee: No, it is the same, but we don't send them for it.

Comm. Brown: Resolution number 1 is that Junior's get the same physicals as those going to Firefighter 1.

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

The second part of the resolution is that the Juniors receive the same insurance coverage as a regular Firefighter 1 candidate.

Comm. Annacone: Question. What kind of financial output are we talking?

Dep.Chief Brown: I believe since 2011 it's been mandated by statute that if you're going to have Junior's in your organization, they need to have the same insurance. There was actually a juvenile that was killed on his bicycle, his name escapes me at this time...

Comm. Annacone: There is legislation on this?

Dep.Chief Brown: There is legislation on this.

Comm. Brown: Again, the thing about these resolutions is that they find their way into the budget process which we're now into, so we have funds for those.

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

Comm. Brown: Alright, we've covered those two items. How about the Old Business item regarding the signature issue?

Dep. Chief Brown: That was months ago...

Comm. Brown: But I don't think we ever voted on it. I think the Solicitor, and I only have that in my notes because the Clerk told me about it that we discussed it but never voted on it. So I'm not here to reopen the discussion of the document, but so that we officially vote on that. We skipped over it two meetings ago.

Dep.Chief Brown: It was in regards to the contract. All the volunteers in the District are independent contractors of the District. Basically what the issue was is because we have minors as Junior firefighters signing on as independent contractors, because they're not of the age of 18, they can't sign for themselves. All that we've done, and I can go grab a document real quick, is added an additional signature line where the parent or guardian sign that they also consent.

Comm. Brown: And again the Solicitor approved it, we just never voted on it as a Board. So all I'm trying to do is clean up that lose item.

Sol.Carlamere: It goes back several meetings.

Dep.Chief Brown: All it was, was the "I the undersigned parent or guardian of so and so understands and consents to the above." We will also have the Junior's sign just so we have in our own record that they understand what the policies and procedures are when they're brought into the District.

Comm. Brown: And by the way, I brought that up because Jan has reminded me like 21 times, and in her absence I would like to respect her sense of detail.

Motion made by Comm. Chew, seconded by Comm. Annacone to approve the second line signature as noted above. Roll call vote, all yes.

New Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: New Business? (hearing none)

Public Portion – George Brown

Chief Brezee: I just wanted to say, I had a discussion at dinner tonight with my wife and today marks 2 years as Chief of which I've had more than one moment of "what the heck did I get myself into." But to be serious, I appreciate the Board's support I've received over the last 2 years. I enjoy the challenges, I've enjoyed the job so far. This conversation just blew me away tonight, because then it turned into November 1st will be my 20th year completed as a career firefighter here. January 1st will be my 25th year completed as a member of Erial.

Comm. Brown: That's great. I have a couple things to say about that. Number 1, I think for the last two years you and everybody has done a great job. I think this department has no place to go but to be on top. If we're not in the County right now we'll be pretty soon, then we'll be in the State. You've done a great job. Second thing is, I remember meeting you in the Dunkin Donuts parking lot the night before you made Chief and I warned you "is this really what you want?"

Chief Brezee: I tell everybody I was promoted in the parking lot of a Dunkin Donuts.

Comm. Brown: And actually the truth is we asked for volunteers and everybody took one step backwards

Public Portion – continued

except for you, so there we go. Nice job, nice job for everybody...really appreciate it. The time flies when you're having fun.

Closed Session – George Brown

n/a

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Annacone, seconded by Comm. Chew to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Thank you everyone, great job. Keep it up. Hold the force, don't let go.