

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

Meeting Held: March 28, 2019
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
Commissioner – Steven Funkhouser
Administrative Clerk – Jeanette Cottone
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: All present.

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 – Jeanette Cottone

Adm.Cl.Cottone: It’s been distributed.

Treasurer’s Report – Rich Annacone

William Penn General Account	1,863,334.54
William Penn Payroll Account	25,641.27
Expenditures: 03/28/19	151,457.89
TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL	151,457.89

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Flinn to accept the Treasurer’s Report as read. Roll call vote, all yes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown

No report.

Computer Services – George Brown

Comm. Brown: There is money in the budget to replace the phone system. We’ve had several meetings with Verizon. What they’re trying to provide to us is much more than what we need. It’s twice as expensive as we were originally told it would be, so we’re going to look at what our choices are. But what they proposed is not what we needed. A couple of us on the committee have met with them so I’ll defer to report on that for next month.

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: I'll start...any new volunteers?

Dep.Chief Brown: We're awaiting on the driver's abstract and the background check on one. We've actually gotten two additional in the pipeline from the two we had prior through the Safer Grant website, they came in through that. Hopefully some of them will pan out.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

No report.

Personnel / Administration – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: We've had interviews for a new Clerk to replace Jan, and we've decided on Renee Evans, and she will be our new Clerk.

Comm. Brown: Welcome Renee. And I'd like to put on the record that a question came up as to why the appointment wasn't approved by the Board in advance. The position as approved by the Board some time ago, so the position is here. There is money in the budget so you don't need any more approval for that. The Board two months ago appointed a committee to select and interview, which consisted of Comm. Annacone, myself, Mr. Allen and the Clerk. We interviewed 11 people, time was of the essence. So much of the essence that we got Renee's resume, looked at it, and given the fact that she's got an MBA, and came out of what would be as much a stressful environment in terms of Government related work, she worked at a casino. And for anybody who has ever worked at a casino, you have people hanging over you all the time, which is in my opinion three times worse than the pension people which is pretty bad. She's got a lot of that kind of government-related experience. With that and her education and experience is why we selected her. If the Board would like to vote on that selection, it's not necessary, but I think it might be a good thing.

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson. Roll call vote, all yes.

Personnel / Operations – Rich Annacone

No report.

Apparatus – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: I'm going to defer to the Chief's Report. The apparatus is good, the training is up to date, the Deputy Chief is going to cover the photograph to make sure we all match up. Other than that, nothing.

Fire Department Equipment – Brian Robinson

No report.

Fire Department Operations – Brian Robinson

No report.

Training – Brian Robinson

No report.

Insurance – George Flinn

No report.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: I know I said last year that we were all done with the air conditioners and heaters, but I forgot that the radio room has an air conditioner-heater unit underneath the desk in there, and it's full of holes, air is blowing in there like it's not even there. It needs to be replaced, so I'm working on that. As the Chief reported, they're going to do the roof on the shed. They have the materials and all for that. They're going to take down the awning out front and in going around the building looking during storms and all, we still have a few leaks which we all know about. The yard sprinkler system will be turned on soon. That's all I got.

Communications – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

EMS / Supplies & Equipment – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Dep.Chief Brown: Hi! Fires are up lately. The Chief and I have gone over some of the operational issues. We've met with some of the other Chief's to try and rectify those. Only one of them was in our local, off of Sherri Lane. We also noticed in the Chief's report, we're getting our money out of the warranty work on the new Squad. There was an issue with the boom, but it's been fixed with a leak. The new mechanic at Campbell's was been doing a heck of a job. Also the Board received a copy of the latest Chief's Orders. The second of which that was attached to the Chief's Order report was in relation to riding assignment positions. Recently the County Chief's Association approved standardized riding assignments for Engine and Ladder Co. assignments. In the spirit of following with that, we adopted the. Ours we've had now for about eight years and practically the same as what the County approved. As Comm. Robinson brought up, we're going to have a picture evening here on Wednesday April 10th at 7pm, to get all the firefighters photographed in both individual shots and a group shot. The career staff will be here for that and the Commission is invited to attend as well. As far as the firefighters uniform for the evening will get out shortly. And also as part of the Chief's report, the end of his narrative portion there was an excerpt I wanted to read for the record, not just because it was in the report, but I feel tonight it is important enough that we should highlight it. The Chief wrote:

Tonight's meeting marks the end of an era for Gloucester Township Fire District 6. The first full time employee of the District will retire after 26 years. We can all agree on the exceptional job the Administrative Clerk, Jan Cottone has done for Fire District 6. Jan is hands down the most respected Fire District Clerk in Gloucester Township and it's mutual aid partners. As much as we will miss having Jan as our Clerk, I assure you that several other Fire District Clerks are asking themselves "now who am I going to call?"

For me and my family, Jan is more than just a co-worker, she is family. The love and caring Jan has displayed to me and the members of my family are a testament to the type of person she is. In the years that Jan and I spent together at District 6, we have endured all the ups and downs together not only in work but our personal lives. I don't think anyone was happier for me when I was promoted to Chief as Jan was. They say no one is perfect, but if there was anybody in this building who was close, it is Jan.

A popular saying with Fire Chiefs is "I want to leave it better than I found it." I can certainly say that Gloucester Township Fire District 6 is better because for 26 years we had the best Administrative Clerk watching over and caring for this District and its members.

I congratulate Jan on her well-deserved retirement and want her to know that she will be dearly missed. Jan is our family and we love her. YOU MADE IT GIRL!

Motion made by Comm. Annacone, seconded by Comm. Robinson to accept the Chief's Report.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: It's early in the year, but what I'm hearing throughout the District and other attorneys who represent Districts, you should prepare this year. I understand the State is going to be moving towards changing its budget process again this year. I think they're heading towards on-line filing just to give you a heads up and prepare for that. Welcome to the new employee. And your comments as to the manner in which the Board sought out a replacement, the record should reflect that the manner of approaching was appropriate under the governmental law.

Comm. Brown: I have one question, what time are the pictures?

Dep.Chief Brown: 7pm.

Comm. Annacone: I have a question for the Solicitor. She is provisional, is there anything we need to do with the State?

Sol.Carlamere: The State knows of the hire and knows it's provisional, correct?

Adm.Cl.Cottone: Not yet. We have to put her in there.

Sol.Carlamere: That's the only process you have to do.

Comm. Brown: Are we going to increase the fill-in rate, and if so, when is it effective and what is the amount? I think in prior meetings we said we would match District 5. They did a \$1 raise...

Adm.Cl.Cottone: It was effective the first of the year. They did it at their year-end meeting. They went from \$13 to \$14 per hour.

Comm. Annacone: I think we probably should match that. I would have liked to have been more notified that they were going to do it, but I think it's appropriate.

Comm. Brown: Is there any documentation?

Comm. Flinn: They bumped it up as of January 1st. We were supposed to wait until the budget was approved, but District 5 went ahead and did it anyway.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Annacone to bump up the fill-in salary \$1 an hour effective the 1st of January, 2019. Roll call vote, all yes.

Adm.Cl.Cottone: Effective the 1st of the year?

Comm. Brown: So we'll have to have some retroactive.

Resolutions – Jeanette Cottone

Adm.Cl.Cottone: Nothing this evening. The next resolution coming in should be regarding the Audit.

Old Business – George Brown

No report.

New Business – George Brown

No report.

Public Portion – George Brown

Dep.Chief Brown: The plaque for the firefighter's didn't arrive on time, we should get it next week.

Jan, on behalf of all the firefighters, current, past and present, separate even from the Chief's statement, we'd like to thank you. On a personal note, when I started here in 2003, the separation between the District and the firefighters was almost immeasurable. And throughout all the ups and downs, and some of us have been here, and you are essential in keeping a lot of us here, keeping a lot of us on track, I'm going to miss walking the office saying "I didn't do it." We wish you well.

Adm.Cl.Cottone: I still have your email for you so don't relax too much.

Dep.Chief Brown: We greatly appreciate you and you help keeping us together.

Adm.Cl.Cottone: Thank you very much. It's been a ride, but a good ride, an up & down ride a fun ride, but nothing we couldn't get through, especially here. It's bittersweet.

Comm. Robinson: For those of you who don't know, Kathy's last day is tomorrow too.

Dep.Chief Brown: There's a cruise to somewhere none of us know about.

Adm.Cl.Cottone: We'll be chatting over Irish coffee on Monday morning.

Closed Session – George Brown

n/a

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Annacone to adjourn the meeting at 6:46pm. Roll call vote, all yes.