

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

Meeting Held: February 27, 2020
Meeting Place: Board Office
Meeting Called to Order: 7:04pm
Members of Board Present: **Chairman** – George Brown
Vice Chairman – Richard Annacone
Treasurer – Brian Robinson
Secretary – George Flinn, excused
Commissioner – Steven Funkhouser
Administrative Clerk – Renee Evans, excused
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 & 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. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Annacone. Roll call vote, all yes.

Correspondence

n/a

Treasurer’s Report – Rich Annacone

William Penn General Account	1,803,029.07
William Penn Payroll Account	37,196.07
Expenditures: February 2020	76,301.26
TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL	76,301.26

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown

Comm. Brown: The budget has been approved by the State and returned by them, we got it this past week. We need to get that posted up on the website for the additional pages that were over and above what we submitted. They’re approval pages.

Computer Services – George Brown

Comm. Brown: We’re still dealing with the requirements of the insurance carrier and we’re not done there yet. I’ve had some conversations with them, but the items that I had from November are still open.

Fire Prevention – George Brown

Chief Brezee: Nothing to report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – George Brown

Comm. Annacone: Contracts are done, I just need a signature, we have our copy, the Firefighters can have their copy.

Legal Liaison – George Brown

Sol.Carlamere: Nothing to report. Congratulations on your budget election and your re-election as Commissioner.

Comm. Brown: Thank you.

Liaison to the District Volunteers – George Brown

Dep.Chief Brown: Seated behind me is Mr. David Horner. He comes to us with some previous experience as indicated by the thick file we already have. He's already passed the background process, everything came back clear. He happens to live literally around the corner from the Firehouse, so it's another body that we're more than happy to have here, and I'm requesting approval by the Board for his membership to the District.

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

Budget Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: The budget's been approved, we just went over that.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: The contract for the Firefighter's is done.

Personnel / Administration – Rich Annacone

Comm. Annacone: I have the Resolution for Renee. She is out on maternity leave, a leave of absence and we have a Resolution supporting that.

Sol.Carlamere: You can read just the title for the record, everybody has a copy.

Comm. Annacone: A Resolution, Board of Fire Commissioner, Fire District 6, Township of Gloucester, Camden County NJ, Confirming approving a personal/maternity leave of absence for the Fire District Administrative Clerk.

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

Personnel / Operations – Rich Annacone

No report.

Apparatus – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: For the most part, I'll defer to the Chief's report. We're waiting on something for the Squad?

Chief Brezee: If you notice the note I put in there, our service provider, Campbell Supply, in a nutshell they had a mechanic get sick, and our mechanic got sick, he'd been in and out, it is a part of a serious thing. Our stuff kind of got pushed off, pushed off, pushed off. They have hired another mechanic, he has been assigned to us, and he's been put right on top to get us caught up. He's been here several times and got some things done, and it looks like they're following through on what they said they were going to do. He was here all day today.

Comm. Brown: With the approved budget Chief, would you like to tell everyone what your plan is for the replacement apparatus.

Chief Brezee: We would like to replace an Engine. The old Squad 86, which is now known as 861 will be placed out of service, and 862 will be slid over to the reserve position and the new Engine would sit in its place. I have not chosen a vendor. I'm looking at 3 different vendors at this time. I'm looking at E-1, I'm looking at Spartan and I'm looking at Pierce.

Comm. Brown: OK. So the money is in the truck reserve, an adequate amount of money based on your estimate. I think you should get a motion from the Board to proceed along the lines that you're beginning to look for and what the alternatives are.

Chief Brezee: To give you an idea, we're going short base, small basic Engine. We went nuts if you will with the Squad...

Comm. Brown: Nuts and bolts.

Chief Brezee: We have everything we need on that Squad, and I think from what we're told out on the street, we did a good job on it, we don't need to go that route with an Engine. Just keep it a short wheel base, a smaller truck, it's there to support the Squad and that's the route we're taking.

Apparatus – continued

Comm. Brown: Have you picked a committee yet?

Chief Brezee: As of right now, the same that sat on the last Committee.

Comm. Annacone: Question...soup to nuts on this truck ballpark, what are we looking at, give or take \$100,000?

Chief Brezee: \$650,000.

Comm. Brown: A question that was just asked to me on a side bar here is, when is the purchase? This year or next year?

Chief Brezee: I thought it would have to be next year.

Sol.Carlamere: So has it already been approved by voters?

Chief Brezee: No. We were looking to go with a vote this year and purchase of next year.

Sol.Carlamere: So as long as you get the vote in, and it would have to be a special type election. As long as you do that procedure, and you're saying you have enough reserves and you do not have to go to the Local Finance Board so you don't have to do all that advertising in 10 places, all that kind of stuff. Unless you're doing what they call private financing, lease purchase, a lot of District's do.

Chief Brezee: Which all of them are doing, and in talking to the other Chief's about the finance board...

Sol.Carlamere: But if you're purchasing it cash in a sense, you do not... because they call it a bonding, and then they include in that bonding new lease purchase agreements. So as long as you're not doing that, you don't have to through that. Once the voter says yes, you just tell the voters it will be placed in the budget from your reserves...you're good.

Comm. Brown: The purchase has to be placed in the budget?

Sol.Carlamere: Yeah, so what you'll do is approve it this year, then when you do your budget next year, you'll show non-tax dollars which is in that restricted reserve, that offsets the purchase so it doesn't affect your allover budget.

Chief Brezee: That's exactly what I remember doing with the Squad.

Comm. Brown: OK, thank you. The Squad purchase as I recall took longer than we anticipated. My point is this, if we get the voter approval and what not, we can do things comfortably and have it ready for 2021.

Sol.Carlamere: Just to interject, is that you research it and pick up some of these co-ops, like Houston-Galveston, they're pretty big what they do, then you don't have to worry about all the advertising, you just have to award the process through them and advertise that, you don't have to go out and advertise the specs and all that kind of stuff because they're already qualified to have already done that.

Chief Brezee: Yes, we did Houston-Galveston with the Squad.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Robinson to approve the beginning of the replacement Engine.

Fire Department Equipment – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: It looks like we're all caught up, I believe everything is in from the orders.

Fire Department Operations – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: Outstanding.

Training – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: Training is going splendidly. That is it sir.

Insurance – George Flinn

Comm. Brown: Comm. Flinn is not here, but I have a question about insurance and I want to get it resolved before the next topic that I'm going to talk about which is re-organization. But how ready are we to move from our current insurance carrier? We can move that? We can move away from the JIF?

Chief Brezee: I'm sure we could, but I don't understand.

Comm. Brown: OK, so I think that's something to be prepared to talk about in reorganization. You can give us the down sides of leaving the JIF, but what they're requiring from us right now in terms of cyber security is absolutely ridiculous, and it's going to impose a very severe burden on the District if they don't relent on some of their requirements or if we don't find another carrier. It's like nothing I've ever seen before. The unfortunate thing is it's not coming from people who are experts about cyber security, it's coming from people who stayed at the Holiday Inn last night. So be prepared for that when we talk about reorganization.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: Referring to the Chief's Report, we had a problem with Dry Guys down the basement. We had a mold problem. We had a dehumidifier down there that has gone caput on us, and Dry Guys has requested that we put in two dehumidifiers because of the two separate rooms that are down there with the moisture that's down in the basement. The Chief came back with a price for them, it was a guesstimated price...

Chief Brezee: They were supposed to send me a more formal price and I can call for that.

Comm. Funkhouser: Whatever we do, it's got to be fixed. We're starting to get mold problem where this thing was blowing air directly up to the ceiling down in the basement. They said it wasn't really bad right now, but it has to be corrected. So we'll have to look into it. I think it was approximately \$2,000 for dehumidifiers?

Chief Brezee: Yes for dehumidifiers. You'd have to go to another company for remediation and I'm researching that at this time.

Comm. Funkhouser: OK. That's all I have to report.

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

Chief Brezee: My report's been submitted, there is nothing else.

Comm. Brown: This is kind of a Building or Operations question, so I'm asking the Chief. What if anything would happen should the current virus descend upon New Jersey? What would be needed if anything additional?

Chief Brezee: In the building or in the operations?

Comm. Brown: In both.

Chief Brezee: Right now, they're just suggesting that the P95 masks which apparently are being sold one a piece for \$100 on Amazon. I believe we do have some in stock, but that would be our first line of defense. We are more of a support to the medical. So I'm watching it as well, and I don't know if you agree, but it seems like they're all way out there. I don't think they're giving us very good information as what to do. And it scares me, I watched that guy from one country up there saying this isn't that bad as he's coughing and sweating, and the next day he was diagnosed with the virus.

Comm. Annacone: I'm far from the medical profession, but it is my understanding that this virus isn't as bad as the regular flu.

Chief Brezee: One side says that, one side says...

Comm. Brown: And again, the internet doesn't help.

Chief Brezee: We're not receiving anything from the Department of Health, which in New Jersey, they're the ones who send us that information.

Comm. Brown: I think the reason why the information is not coming out of the Federal organizations just yet in the way you would expect is because they haven't been funded. And I heard it said that the first thing is in order to get everything going is you have to have funds to do that.

Chief Brezee: It was my understanding there was a Federal program for this type of thing and it was shut down several years ago. But like you're saying, the first step will be to put the program back together.

Comm. Brown: The President has proposed some funding, and the Senate and House has said it's not enough and they're

Chief – continued

arguing while nothing gets done, that's the problem.

Chief Brezee: I'm watching both sides, one says get ready, the other says don't be alarmed.

Dep.Chief Brown: We should be receiving information from the Division of Fire Safety as things progress and updates.

Comm. Brown: My point is this, there is not a lot we can do just yet, but we should be thinking about what we would do depending what happens.

Dep.Chief Brown: It's probably going to come...our guidance and direction will probably going to come from the County level, how it's going to get rolled out is the County OEM. It's not going to be left up to each individual Fire District. The Department of Health is going to oversee the EMS issues, provide guidance there. They've already updated for all of the State and County communications centers, they've already updated the medical command and guide cards for all takers with possible symptoms of the Corona Virus. So there is some progress being made at the State level for emergency response. It's small right now because that's what he said, and I'll beat the horse to death, but there's very much that we don't know.

Comm. Annacone: Operational, there really isn't nothing to do right now other than those masks that really aren't available right now.

Comm. Funkhouser: Our department has cut down on our EMS runs in the Township, so we probably wouldn't be responding to someone who has this...

Chief Brezee: It would be dispatched as a medical emergency, flu like symptoms or something.

Comm. Funkhouser: Do you think Chief that we should look into purchasing gowns for the staff?

Chief Brezee: We have all the BSI items tucked away in case we need them.

Comm. Funkhouser: So we do have it.

Chief Brezee: I'll get the guys to go through everything to make sure. We have it tucked away. Generally our EMS budget per year is about \$1,000.

Comm. Brown: Yeah, it's not enough, it's just not enough.

Chief Brezee: \$100 a mask now.

Comm. Brown: \$10,000 for a respirator. Anything else now Comm. Funkhouser?

Comm. Funkhouser: I don't think so.

Comm. Brown: Thank you.

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: Nothing else.

Resolutions – Kathleen Crockett

Cl.Crockett: We had the one Resolution for Renee earlier, that's all we have.

Old Business – George Brown

Comm. Robinson: We touched on in the past on mounting TV's, in case we had to set up our building as a command center, a think tank, whatever you want to call it, possibly putting one in here and one in the office. I don't know if we can move forward?

Comm. Brown: We could, but I think I'd like to have a discussion about putting one in the Commission office. I don't think it's appropriate, I'm not denying you a need to have something in the building if you want. But I think a TV in there, for the kind of work that gets done on a day in and day out basis would be a major disruption. And if you put it in with the intent of having something if you need it, it won't be long before it's on all the time. It's just not conducive to dealing with our residents. I don't think the Commission office is the right place, and I don't think the office is the right place even for a command center. So I'm not against your idea, I'm against putting it in where people have to talk on the phone, somebody wants to watch QVC and somebody wants to watch something else. I think the Commission office is a bad idea. It's just disruptive, and again, I look at this as the business side, I don't look at it as the Operations side. We have to continue to take care of people coming in with smoke inspections by the dozens every day, and dealing on the phone and accounting systems and other kinds of things, I think if you want to set that up as a command center, then you ought to find someplace else to put the Clerks. It's just not conducive to the majority of the energy that's consumed in the building on a regular daily basis. I think it would be very disruptive. I talked to the Clerk about that, and she agrees. So can we find another spot, whatever you want, but I just don't think it should be...

Comm. Funkhouser: What's the purpose for a command center in this firehouse?

Comm. Robinson: All I'm looking at is down the road if we had people housed temporarily in our hall. If we had

Old Business – continued

a finance group working out of that office for the big storm, and your thinkers are in there away from the public. Obviously certain work groups shouldn't be in the same room with each other, if it's that big of an operation. Just looking that far ahead.

Comm. Funkhouser: Maybe when we get some money to build a new firehouse, we can add that in there, but right now I really don't see a command. We got the police department that's going to command, all the cameras, and I'm not against what you're saying, but I don't think we have the room in this building to do something like that right now, that's my opinion.

Comm. Brown: I'm not saying we don't have the room, I'm just questioning where we do it. I don't think it belongs in the Commission office.

Chief Brezee: I wouldn't be opposed to setting it up in our training room, the training section of our Social Hall to have a couple large TV's in there. One we could use for training rather than the screen. The screen can be hard to see, but with technology in TV's now, it would be better for us to project our power points and our training videos and everything up on to TV's in that room, which in turn could be used for, if we had a storm central here one night. We should also have, which has happened several times, us housing some residents for a couple hours.

Comm. Brown: And the TV's were important.

Chief Brezee: We were trying to rig our little TV's to put kids movies on to keep the kids occupied and things like that.

Comm. Brown: So can we proceed with thinking about what we would need in there, because we always call it the multi-purpose room, and I don't think we have enough technology in there.

Chief Brezee: I would agree.

Comm. Funkhouser: Make sure they're waterproof because of the leaks.

Chief Brezee: You can get big TV's for very small prices these days.

Comm. Annacone: I like the idea, but if you're going to go that far, you might as well actually make a training room and not a big hall. We're not getting out of this building for a long time, so someone is...

Comm. Brown: We need something for at least a couple years, so can we get somebody to work with Comm. Robinson from your side and come up with what we need and anything else that we would want to have in terms of furniture, fixtures etc., I don't think we have an unlimited budget but we can work with what we have.

Chief Brezee: We need to get the wireless better in there, we can buy another projector, but we're doing it down the Fire Academy, switching over to TV's because it's a better setup. As long as we have the technology in that room, we can add some walls to close those rooms off, it's going to look like a ballroom until we make some changes. I'll put a Committee together and we'll sit down and start discussing. To Chris's credit, he's put together some great programs that we've hosted two or three other Fire Companies in here with us.

Comm. Brown: And with all due respect, has anybody come in and said I'm not coming to this class because it's a ballroom?

Chief Brezee: No, but I do receive a lot of comments as to it's still a ballroom, why isn't it being used as a ballroom.

Comm. Brown: I get them all the time, and the answer is, we've got to run our business first and that's why we call it a multi-purpose room. And in fact, when we were looking at new buildings, every one of them didn't call it a command center or training center, they called it a multi-purpose room.

Comm. Annacone: And the acoustics would be so much better if it could be blocked off with walls.

Comm. Brown: I understand that. There are a lot of things that could definitely be better.

Chief Brezee: I think we could afford a couple walls going up.

Comm. Brown: But you've got to deal with building permits, and the Township. You two guys work it out, I'm certainly available to help. My only point was that I want to keep the daily business that goes on Monday-Friday as quiet in there and as productive as possible. Because it doesn't take much in there, even sometimes if you get 3-4 firefighters in there, they don't mean it but it's disruptive. And especially while we're in this transition between a new Clerk and a new Accountant, maybe a new Attorney here or there. Anything else? (hearing none)

New Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: We need to set a date for the reorganization meeting. I spoke to Jan yesterday, I would like it to be not next week, and I'm only saying not next week because we have to advertise it. The following week, and pick a night if everybody is available, or tell me when you're not available. Pick any night, could be the 11th as long as we get the window for advertising. (discussion) So the 11th works at 6:30pm. I'll send Jan an email so she can do the advertising. The purpose of that is I just want to start with the Chief's contract and the Chief's responsibilities and a few things that we're all on the same page as part of the reorganization. Also as part of that is, and I want to bring this up right now, is there a desire to

New Business – continued

reappoint the Labor Attorney?

Comm. Annacone: I have no desire to reappoint the Labor Attorney.

Comm. Brown: OK, that's why I'm asking, so we can try anticipate how we're going to deal with that before the 11th. Anybody else have a comment on that. (hearing none) Alright, so that will be the subject for that meeting.

Sol.Carlamere: So I'll speak with Jan, because the things that you talked about you might want to discuss in Closed Session, so besides advertising as a reorganization meeting, as an agenda item she has to put in there Closed Session. This way you have the flexibility if you need it.

Comm. Brown: Now, one question that was outstanding when we discussed doing it this way is whether or not our Cash Management carries over until that meeting. So do we need a resolution to maintain our Cash Management?

Sol.Carlamere: For the effectiveness of your budget?

Comm. Brown: No for the effectiveness of where we put our money. Those are all those appointments that we generally make at the first meeting of the year.

Sol.Carlamere: So if you do them at this meeting, you're OK doing it at that meeting. So if you do it and then whatever changes you have to make, you can make them.

Comm. Brown: OK, I just wanted to make sure.

Sol.Carlamere: That's fine.

Public Portion – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Public Portion? (hearing none)

Closed Session – George Brown

n/a

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Annacone to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: I'll get sworn-in tonight, one less thing for the next meeting.

Sol.Carlamere swore in George Brown as Fire Commissioner (applause)

Comm. Brown: Thank you everyone.