

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

Meeting Held: May 27, 2021
Meeting Place: Board Office
Meeting Called to Order: 6:40pm
Members of Board Present: **Chairman** – George Brown
Vice Chairman – Brian Robinson
Treasurer – Steven Funkhouser
Secretary – George Flinn
Commissioner – Derek Grier
Administrative Clerk – Renee Evans
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.

Open Session: George Brown

Comm. Brown: We will dispense with the awards first so everyone can get out of here.

Chief Brezee: Tonight Commissioners, we're going to do our plaques and awards from 2020 that we weren't able to do due to Covid. We have some achievements and we have our 2020 winners so we wanted to present those tonight. We're also tonight going to swear-in Ff. Schoonmaker into a Lieutenants position tonight. We'll start off with the achievement plaques. There were a couple fellows that couldn't make it, I will mention them before we finish:

Ff. Andrew Colligan could come up – his plaque which is in recognition of completing his probationary period. Andrew did his Junior time with us as well as his probationary time which is no small feat. 190 hours in the Fire Academy plus the training we put him through here in the fire house. So tonight we're going to present him with both of his shields and congratulations. (applause)

Ff. Austin Reynolds is another one of our firefighters who made the same achievement, he is working tonight.

Ff. Christopher Fegley and **Ff. Dave Horner** were also to receive their plaques tonight but they were stuck working and couldn't get out. We will get to the big awards.

Ff. Joe Fisona - If Joe Fisona could please come up to me. Just to give you a little background, Joe doesn't live in Gloucester Township, correct?

Ff. Fisona: No.

Chief Brezee: What was your Fire Company before here?

Ff. Fisona: Elkton, Maryland.

Chief Brezee: He moved up here from Maryland, retired, and wanted to know about a Fire Department and asked around. He came to us. The Deputy Chief came to me and said I think we have an Administrative position if he's interested. He took the position and he's been awesome. He helps us out with a lot of paperwork. A lot of stuff around the Station he gets done for us, and you never see him most of the time but all this work gets done. So we're very happy to have you Joe, and for 2020 we made you our **Member of the Year**. (applause)

Ff. Joe Blevins - And then for our **Firefighter of the Year**, a big trophy for a big man, Joe Blevins. If any of you haven't met Joe yet, Joe has been a great, great addition to our fire department. He can't get enough training, can't get enough time here, he loves it, we love having him. He's a little shy, we're getting him to open up a little bit, and it's working. So for all your hard work Joe, don't think we don't notice it. We know you're here all the time, we see what you do, we're very proud of how far you've come in a very short time. We all know it takes time to get guys qualified on apparatus, driving and operating them...Joe has excelled through the program. He's a

Open Session: George Brown

natural born driver and operator and has done a great job. That’s why for 2020, we’ve made him Firefighter of the Year. (applause)

Chief Brezee: That’s pretty much the awards we have for tonight and achievements, now for the big one. Robert (Schoonmaker), if you’d like to step up front. I’m going to ask the Solicitor to swear you in as a Lieutenant and take your oath. We’ll have the Solicitor swear you in and then Mom will put your new badge on, and I’ll present you with your shield.

Sol.Carlamere swore Robert Schoonmaker in as Lieutenant. Congratulations. (applause)

Comm. Brown: Thank you everyone for coming out tonight, you can leave if you want to.

Chief Brezee: There are some cupcakes back here. If you guys want to mingle around the Station, take more pictures, go to the kitchen where all the good talks happen. If anybody wants to stay and listen, you’re more than welcome. Thank you for your time.

Regular Meeting: George Brown

Comm. Brown: OK, let’s do a roll call again now that the award ceremony is over.

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. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Grier. Roll call vote, all yes.

Correspondence – Renee Evans

Adm.Cl.Evans: They’ve all been distributed.

Treasurer’s Report – Steven Funkhouser

William Penn General Account	2,034,106.70
William Penn Payroll Account	24,797.79
Expenditures 05/27/21	86,136.00
TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL	86,136.00

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson to approve the Treasurer’s Report as read.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Just so I have the agenda order for tonight, we will do Closed Session issues at the end of the Committee Reports.

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, but a background check and abstract has been submitted for a new member.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson

No report.

Personnel / Administration – Brian Robinson

No report.

Personnel / Operations – Brian Robinson

Comm. Robinson: I'll speak briefly, I believe everybody in the room knows Adam (Craig) fell at the Training Academy while attending Firefighter 2 two weeks ago on Saturday morning. He injured his back so he's out a minimum 3 months. He's in a turtle brace and feels so-so, and on pain meds. They're hoping for the best in three months, but we don't know.

Chief Brezee: I did get an update from him today. He saw the ortho Doctor again and wanted to take a second xray to make sure there was no movement. The appointment went well and is still on the original treatment. That's all I have until Closed Session.

Comm. Brown: In case something happens between now and the next meeting, can you recognize Mr. Gomez?

Comm. Robinson: I'd love to recognize Mr. Gomez. Ff. Gomez just put in for an intergovernmental transfer to the Pennsauken Fire Department. The Board supports it. I was just talking to Chief Palumbo again for an update between the two of us, time frames. And we wish you the best, we just need to work out some logistics at this point. So we're going to talk tonight. We finally got a little feedback from Civil Service today and it kind of helps us out in our thought process. I confirmed it with the Chief tonight and finally got on the same page.

Ff. Gomez: Thank you. I appreciate it very much.

Comm. Brown: Thank you for your service.

Comm. Funkhouser: Good luck.

Comm. Brown: Yes, good luck Brian.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: There is not much to report, I'll refer to the Chief's report in regards to the building. We have a consultant engineer for the roof to give us a quote, and from what I'm reading here, it's a lot more than what we budgeted for, he gave us prevailing rates on this also. They would be in charge of the job itself.

Chief Brezee: For the most part, yes. They oversee the job kind of like a project manager and make sure the roof proposal of what the construction is, is followed to a T. It's like 4 hours a day that they would have someone on sight watching and consulting with the roofers.

Comm. Funkhouser: There was also a section in there in regards to someone from the fire department, I guess that would be either me or you or who we appoint.

Chief Brezee: It would be a contact. He said they would include us in the construction meetings and updates.

Comm. Funkhouser: We budgeted \$200,000 and the total he's come up with is \$319,385.00 which falls a lot short of what we budgeted for. So at this point, I'm not really sure where I can go with this other than we can call this other consultant company that's available and see if there is any other prices there that...

Comm. Flinn: I agree.

Comm. Funkhouser: Where could I find another \$119,000 in my budget that I didn't budget for. So right now I think we're at a stale mate on this portion of it getting a consultant engineer. He did a great job on his report, but the price is rather high.

Comm. Robinson: Would it be hard to bring in a second opinion from Remington?

Chief Brezee: No, I would do the same thing. I willing to go meet with Remington and tell them we got one report and it's way too high.

Comm. Flinn: Mike, if you're going to go to Remington, you have quotes already on the roof. Remington can talk to that guy and say OK, could you...

Building Maintenance & Grounds – continued

Chief Brezee: One of the things I learned is that this engineering firm works with these roofers, and this engineer firm works with these roofers, and I think the discussion we had prior to the meeting, the best thing to do at this point is to at least get a second opinion and that could cost us nothing but time.

Comm. Flinn: There is a big difference between the quotes you got from roofers to an engineer's quote. And the quotes you got from the roofer is at prevailing rate.

Chief Brezee: I understand the Covid uptick and things like that.

Comm. Flinn: Material is up 30-35%.

Chief Brezee: I was a little taken back, in the meeting I got one number and when that report arrived it was a bigger number.

Comm. Flinn: A lot bigger.

Comm. Brown: I have a question. Does this have to go out for bids?

Sol.Carlamere: For the professionals? No, you don't.

Comm. Brown: OK, so we're clear on that point.

Comm. Robinson: That was a no?

Sol.Carlamere: No you do not, professional, licensed. You can, some governmental entities do that.

Chief Brezee: You're talking just about the professional service, right? That's what I read.

Sol.Carlamere: For the job, you have to go out on it. Whoever gets the contract you have to do that, but for the licensed engineer, you can get proposals, etc. whichever one you're happy with is the way you go.

Comm. Robinson: I still think we needed the engineer though.

Comm. Brown: Absolutely.

Chief Brezee: They handle the whole bidding process.

Comm. Robinson: We didn't realize in the beginning the materials, how many layers blah blah blah.

Chief Brezee: If you read section 2 where he wants to cut corners. He mentions to see how many roofs. I told him look, I was here the day they laid the roof. There's one roof on there, and he still talks about we need to hire a roofing company to come in and see exactly how many roofs are there. I was here that day.

Comm. Flinn: If he's an engineer and knows what type of roof it is. He knows it's only a foam roof with rubber over top. There's only one.

Chief Brezee: If you walk up on the roof, you can tell where the foam needs to be replaced, those areas are crushing in, and he wants testing in several places to make sure the foam is still good. I don't know if that's normal or not, but...

Comm. Brown: I think if we want to go through the proposal to see what's relevant and what's not, we should probably do that during a workshop rather than tonight, that's my opinion. A lot of what I see in the proposal especially for somebody who's been writing contracts and proposals for 42 years, a lot of it is what I call copy and paste. And I think the good thing about having this done is it should serve as a reminder that there is a lot of tests that have to be done by somebody and that was my point of getting an engineer to sit here and say hey Mike, can you supervise the replacement of the roof, and you can say oh yeah, it's just a roof.

Chief Brezee: I can tell you they're working all day, I can't tell you they're doing it all right.

Comm. Brown: Exactly. And there are all these other administrative tasks going out for bids, and permits, and all that sort of stuff. I think we do need some engineering services. I don't think roofing is one of our certified expertise things. The other question I have is, does anybody remember what was the cost per square foot when we had the architect?

Chief Brezee: Back in 1995?

Comm. Flinn: That was a long time ago.

Comm. Brown: But what was the cost per square foot.

Chief Brezee: I don't know.

Comm. Funkhouser: There's probably blue prints somewhere around.

Chief Brezee: When he started off with \$14-\$16 a square foot, I thought that doesn't sound bad. Well I'm a little slow at math.

Comm. Brown: There is no hourly rate for skills that would be required not in the proposal, so they're all estimated. Again, I don't want to take up everybody's time but this is not what I would want to do. And we should ask whoever else is going to come in what kind of a thing are they going to give us, is it going to be boiler plate or is it going to be relevant to what we're doing.

Comm. Grier: Is there an immediate need for a fix right now?

Building Maintenance & Grounds – continued

Chief Brezee: Yes. That hole wasn't there last month.

Comm. Funkhouser: The roofs leaking terribly. Take a walk around.

Chief Brezee: And after this weekend with the rain they say we're getting, you'll see a couple more.

Comm. Brown: But let's not forget we could buy a lot of ceiling tiles for \$320,000. OK, so what are we asking the Chief to do specifically at this point?

Comm. Funkhouser: Get another quote from another consulting company like Remington.

Comm. Flinn: I'd play that card though Mike. I got three bids, and this guy is a prevailing rate.

Comm. Funkhouser: Can you do that?

Comm. Flinn: Absolutely, it's legal.

Chief Brezee: Sharpen your pencil.

Comm. Brown: OK, we all clear?

Comm. Funkhouser: The roof is a work in progress, 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.

Insurance – George Flinn

No report.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Apparatus – Derek Grier

Comm. Grier: No, I think the Chief has put into his report the condition of the Squad that they're working on.

Fire Department Equipment – Derek Grier

No report.

Fire Department Operations – Derek Grier

No report.

Training – Derek Grier

No report.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Chief Brezee: My report has been submitted. The only add I have is what I sent to you, I forgot to let the rest of you guys know that I started talking to Lowes, and right now the rules he has, we would be able to do the Fire Prevention night at Lowes. He was going to start talking to his bosses making sure we're good to go in October. Talking to all the other Fire Officials in town, I believe 4 out of the other 5 are like yes, we're going to go for it, so I think we're back on track for Fire Prevention night.

Comm. Brown: OK, and the night again so everybody can put it on their calendar?

Chief – continued

Chief Brezee: I want to say the 7th of October, it's a Thursday. I already got a commitment from Blackwood Fire Company who will be allowing us to use their refurbished smoke trailer. We don't have to worry about that because the Red Cross one is not in good shape. Thursday, October 7th.

Comm. Brown: Anything else Chief?

Chief Brezee: No, I believe that was the only other thing.

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

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: Nothing to report.

Resolutions – Renee Evans

Adm.Cl.Evans: None.

Old Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Has the 1099 issue been resolved?

Adm.Cl.Evans: Yes.

Comm. Brown: The Computer room project is still ongoing.

The Clerk working from home, we have that set up for Fridays. She can remotely connect to our network now and can continue for the foreseeable future working from home on line, so we can take that off. The Administrative work schedule has been resolved. We should probably drop Jan a thank you note, but we won't need her for the rest of this year, and Kathy's back to doing minutes once a month so we're pretty much back to the staffing that we had prior to Renee's additions.

The Blood drive is closed.

What to do with Engine 869 is still up in the air I believe?

Chief Brezee: I haven't had any conversation with anybody.

Comm. Brown: The District 2 proposal?

Chief Brezee: We're still waiting to receive something. I actually received a call today asking if I received anything yet and I said no, but I know that the guy who is drafting that has been away at a truck final inspection.

Old Business List – George Brown

Comm. Brown: OK. So what we have left open is:

- 1) CPA issue with 1099's - even though they've been printed.
- 2) Computer Room Project – hiring for electrical and computer install
- 3) What to do with Engine 869
- 4) To review District 2 proposal to hire other District's firefighters in case of illness, injury etc.

New Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Any New Business?

Comm. Robinson: I'd like to discuss if we can briefly, switching our office hours to 8:30am to 4:30pm. If nobody has a problem...that works with you, correct?

Adm.Cl.Evans: Yes.

Comm. Brown: OK.

Comm. Robinson: We don't have it written anywhere that we could find. Renee, myself and Kathy were looking yesterday. If anybody finds it, let us know and we'll make the adjustment. It's not on the door or anywhere, so if nobody has a problem with it, I don't think it's a big deal.

Comm. Brown: Is there anything on the answering machine about what our hours are?

Chief Brezee: I don't believe so.

Comm. Brown: OK. Do we want a resolution on that for the record?

Sol.Carlamere: You can do a motion so you know everyone is in agreement.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Brown to change the Office Hours Monday thru Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm. Roll call vote, all yes.

Public Portion – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Public Portion? (hearing none)

Closed Session – George Brown

Comm. Brown: We'd like to go into Closed Session to discuss Personnel and I don't know what else.

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

Comm. Brown: Let the record show we've come out of Closed Session at 8:00pm.
Roll call Commissioners, all present.

Comm. Brown: While we were in Closed Session, we made some decisions regarding the Personnel situation. The Board has approved Brian (Gomez) going to Pennsauken, which was our intention all along, it was just working out some things with them. Comm. Robinson has spoken to the Chief there to get a new date. It's not going to be on the date on the original paperwork because we need to get some things done. You absolutely have our blessings going, we're just in a jam right now with Adam being out on top of it. So we're going to authorize the Chief, we got a list today, 10 people got their notices for the position. As soon as we get some responses on that which will be in 5 days, we'll know whether or not we have any candidates on that list that are eligible. There may or may not be. At that point, we'll decide whether or not we need another week from Pennsauken or the two weeks tentatively that you agreed to tonight is good so we can keep you advised as well.

Comm. Robinson: Tentatively it's two weeks. We'll talk to the Chief first thing tomorrow morning.

Comm. Brown: From the date which they put on the paper which I think was June 7th, so it's two weeks after June 7th, tentatively. And if we get somebody we can hire tonight at the local bar, you can go on the 7th.

So that's one. Number two is, the Chief's got to run a list. If we can get people that are back and it's going to expedite the interviews to get somebody that he thinks is who we're looking for, he's going to work that out with Comm. Robinson and Comm. Grier saying here's my guy, and those two guys will say OK, we're not going to wait for another Board meeting. They can make an offer and run with that. The other thing is, we're going to need some fill-ins. There's a problem the Chief pointed out in July for a 3 week period where it's doubtful we'd have enough fill-ins, so we're going to pass a resolution authorizing the Chief to contact the other Chief's letting them know we're looking for fill-ins, and they'll have to provide their gear because we don't have enough gear to supply them.

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

Comm. Brown: And I want to point out that his authorization is, we're looking for two fill-ins, one for Brian and one for Adam.

Chief Brezee: Yeah, we'd like to maintain our four man...

Comm. Brown: OK, but I didn't include that.

Chief Brezee: And it would be open to our own volunteers first.

Comm. Brown: And there are some limits financially in terms of how long we can use someone. We're going to double check that just so we got that right, and off we'll go.

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 8:03pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Thank you everyone for coming out.