

TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
Board of Fire Commissioners
Fire District No. 2
Minutes of the Agenda and Regular Meetings
Wednesday, September 15, 2010

The Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 met at the Monroe Township Fire District #2 & EMS building, 10 Halsey Reed Road, corner of Applegarth Road, Monroe Township, New Jersey for an Agenda Meeting.

Chairman Mahler called the meeting to order with a Salute to the Flag at 7:10 pm. Chairman Mahler asked for a moment of silence for all firefighters and military who have died in the performance of their duties.

UPON ROLL CALL made by Commissioner Martin Berkowitz, the following members of the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were present: Martin Berkowitz, Glenn Borsuk, Maurice Mahler, Edward Mitnowsky and Lawrence Reisch.

ALSO PRESENT: Board Attorney Richard J. Shaklee, Esquire, and Val Cier, Recording Secretary.

There were four career firefighters present: Firefighter Grande, Firefighter Cackowski, Firefighter Nuber and Lt. Volkmann

There was one volunteer firefighter present: Dave Lesser.

There were no members of the public present.

Chairman Mahler announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, having been published in the April 9, 2010 newspaper, posted on the bulletin board of the Office of the Township Clerk, and notices sent to those requesting such.

AGENDA MEETING

Chairman Mahler stated the August 11, 2010 minutes will be tabled until the October meeting.

Chairman Mahler asked the board to review the Claims against the Board. Commissioner Mitnowsky stated lights and doors are left open and the staff needs to be cognizant of keeping the lights on. The electric bill was close to \$3000.00. Chairman Mahler stressed the staff needs to turn lights and TV's off. Firefighter Cackowski mentioned that some rooms have lights on that cannot be turned off.

Chairman Mahler stated that there will not be a closed session tonight. Brian Valentine from Patriot Consulting will be here tonight. Commissioner Berkowitz has one letter to read at the regular meeting. Commissioner Borsuk will do fire prevention report. Dave Lesser will have a report for the volunteers.

Chairman Mahler stated the mural should be up before the dedication. Invitations for the dedication have been sent out. Firefighter Cackowski mailed out to Congressman, Freeholders, various community leaders, and League of Women Voters. Parking will need to be done on the shoulder of the road. Chairman Mahler asked Lt. Volkmann to notify police for traffic control and send invitation to the Police Chief.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Lawrence Reisch, the agenda meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Mahler called the regular meeting to order with a Salute to the Flag at 7:37 pm.

Chairman Mahler asked for a moment of silence for all firefighters and military who have died in the performance of their duties.

UPON ROLL CALL made by Commissioner Martin Berkowitz, the following members of the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were present: Martin Berkowitz, Glenn Borsuk, Maurice Mahler, Edward Mitnowsky and Lawrence Reisch.

ALSO PRESENT: Board Attorney Richard J. Shaklee, Esquire, and Val Cier, Recording Secretary.

There were four career firefighters present: Firefighter Grande, Firefighter Cackowski, Firefighter Nuber and Lt. Volkmann

There was one volunteer firefighter present: Dave Lesser.

There was one member of the public present: Brian Valentino, Patriot Consulting Group.

Chairman Mahler announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, having been published in the April 9, 2010 newspaper, posted on the bulletin board of the Office of the Township Clerk, and notices sent to those requesting such.

MINUTES

Chairman Mahler stated the August 11, 2010 minutes have been tabled until the October meeting.

CLAIMS AGAINST THE BOARD

Commissioner Reisch reported:

General Operating Claims Total	\$126,072.02
Capital Project Claims Total	\$207,392.10
Net Payroll Claims Total	\$101,204.19
Total Claims Against the Board	\$434,668.31

August 12, 2010 - September 17, 2010

UPON MOTION MADE by Lawrence Reisch and seconded by Glenn Borsuk, claims against the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were approved in the amount of \$434,668.31.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz

Aye Borsuk

Aye Mahler

Aye Mitnowsky

Aye Reisch

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairman Mahler asked for the treasurer's report.

Commissioner Reisch reported the following as of September 17, 2010:

Hudson City Savings Bank:

Unrestricted Funds	\$157,772.60
Restricted Funds	\$404,296.13
Capital Projects	\$259,133.71
Cash on Hand	\$170.00
Total Balance	\$821,372.44

Commissioner Reisch reported that the quarterly check from the township was received and it will go into the general fund, not capital projects. The amount was \$724,062.50, which will increase the unrestricted funds.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Mahler asked for correspondence to be read.

Commissioner Berkowitz read a letter from Eagle River Day Camp dated 8/9/10, thanking the department for attending American hero day activities with the campers.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU REPORT

Chairman Mahler asked Commissioner Borsuk to review the Monthly Fire Prevention Report.

Commissioner Borsuk highlighted some incidents:

- Dumpster fire
- MVA near Bentley Road - 2 people flown out
- Tanker call into W.Windsor - cancelled en-route
- Elevator rescue
- Kitchen fire

Commissioner Borsuk stated Chief Carbin has some items for the building, which he will cover in Building committee report.

- Tower bids were opened on Thursday
Needs a resolution for \$22,626.00 for the conversion of the command vehicle to PL Custom (2 other quotes were above bid threshold). It will take 2 months for completion.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Martin Berkowitz, to approve the resolution awarding the contract to PL Custom for conversion of the command vehicle in the amount of \$22,626.00.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

APPLEGARTH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Chairman Mahler asked for the Applegarth Volunteer's report.

Dave Lesser stated President Davis could not attend tonight due to illness.

Three new members joined - 1 junior and 2 experienced firefighters. Commissioner Reisch questioned if a volunteer came on board that cannot drive. Commissioner Borsuk state the volunteer would not drive the equipment. Chief Carbin will see what the insurance says about it. It will be reviewed and handled accordingly.

Commissioner Reisch asked how the firehouse being used. Dave Lesser stated the firehouse is locked when no one is present. Volunteers respond from that building.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Chairman Mahler stated the sound system is insufficient in the new building. Firefighter Cackowski reported some of the problems with the sound system:

- Microphones (mics) need to be in front of you
- Speakers should be in back of room - mics were put too close to speaker
- Small portable recorder will Records for hours and can be burned to CD
- CD with sound system goes 80 minutes only-need to go through process to finalize recorded CD and it's located in another room
- For system to work properly, everyone needs microphone
- Mics just don't work
- Sensitivity on mics and the audio is the problem
- Need to have lapel mics

Chairman Mahler requested the need to contact the company to put in a better system.

Chairman Mahler stated that John from Santorini is involved with building open items. John had a meeting with Chief Carbin and Chairman Mahler to review open items and resolution. The board has a year with Santorini to correct anything problematic. Firefighters have been making their own punch list as well.

Chairman Mahler stated that Fat Spaniel Technologies monitor the solar panels and work with the IT the board hires. They are going to monitor the solar kiosk for \$262 for the year. Board has to hire IT to install kiosk for solar. Students will be able to plug into the website to see solar.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Ed Mitnowsky, to approve signing the contract with Fat Spaniel Technologies in the amount of \$262.50 for one year of monitoring the solar panel.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

Jason Martin arrived at 8pm.

Chairman Mahler stated the door from the EMS to the main bay is still a problem. Corrections are being worked on. Chairman Mahler asked Attorney Shaklee to draft a letter on who is to blame for the design of the door (Spiezle designed door).

Commissioner Borsuk reviewed list from Chief Carbin:

- Key fob system will begin 9/20
- Kitchen table was delivered, but refused due to damage
- More Training tables are on order
- Mural is underway
- Delivered paperwork to township for them to process the \$41,896.00 due to district
- Invitations for dedication went out
- Food being handled for dedication
- Concrete pads poured this week or early next week
- Website needs work and needs updated

Chairman Mahler reported there is approximately \$45,435.10 contingency left. Commissioner Reisch stated there is approximately \$147,000 in outstanding bills. Don't see the concrete pads listed. There should be \$100,000 held back for Santorini. Chairman Mahler stated they will need to speak to Chief Carbin for clarification.

Chairman Mahler asked Attorney Shaklee to read building resolutions, as a consent agenda.

Attorney Shaklee read the resolution, by title, resolution authorizing change order GC60 and GC61 for the construction of Halsey Reed Road Fire House/Emergency Medical Services Facility:

- GC60 - in the amount of \$11173 for exterior address lettering and additional interior door sign
- GC61 - in the amount of \$620 for furnishing for the HVAC unit coil guards.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Martin Berkowitz, to approve the consent agenda resolutions GC60 and GC61, as presented.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz

Aye Borsuk

Aye Mahler

Aye Mitnowsky

Aye Reisch

Attorney Shaklee read the resolution authorization for an application to the local finance board, which gives the local finance board knowledge and can review the proposed project for lease purchase agreement for 1 million dollars, for the better of the community.

A copy of the proposed lease purchase agreement will need to be provided before their next meeting October 13th. Chairman Mahler stated that Commissioner Mitnowsky will attend the local finance board meeting.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Martin Berkowitz, to adopt the resolution for the application to the location finance board on the lease purchase agreement for the new truck, as read by Attorney Shaklee.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

Attorney Shaklee briefly reviewed the Fat Spaniel contract and feels there needs to be changes before the Chairman Mahler signs it. Chairman Mahler asked Attorney Shaklee to call the representative of Fat Spaniel to discuss.

Chairman Mahler stated the fire department website needs to be updated and has a quote to design the website. Each page is a certain amount of money. Currently there are 9 pages on the existing website and he received a quote for \$250/page. The person this was discussed with would be the web master. Jason Martin asked if Chairman Mahler knows the person being considered and he does. Mr. Martin feels the quote is very pricy since he is in the same line of business. He charges a \$200 setup fee and can provide a quote to the board as well.

MEETING OPEN TO THE BOARD

Chairman Mahler opened the meeting to the board and introduced Brian Valentino of Patriot Consulting.

Commissioner Reisch questioned if there is a problem hiring a consultant when it comes to consolidation. Attorney Shaklee stated the board can hire anyone within the realm of your public responsibility, how it impact assets, employee relations, finances, so yes, you can hire a consultant. Keep in mind, the way the board drew out resolution is based on bid. If you go into a contract and go over \$3900.00, you have to go out for bid.

Commissioner Reisch stated the board knows the township is hiring consultant and this board wants to make sure everything is above board.

Mr. Valentino stated Patriot is a municipal consulting firm. The bulk of the work has been done in police departments and consolidation. Very few fire districts have been reviewed. They will advise on operations of consolidation. They approach it in 3 phases:

- First phase - Unknown phase
- Second phase - facts, figures, recommendations from consultant >bulk of the work will come when the township consultant feasibility study is done so Patriot can talk specific recommendations
- Third phase - most townships have public comments section and they can continue to be involved.

As operation consultant, opinion is one of seven possibilities can come out of report:

- No change
- 2 districts be consolidated into 1 district
- Fully consolidate
- Redraw district lines

- Devolve district back to municipal department
- Regionalize with this district or others
- Outsource to other municipalities/vendors

Of the seven, Mr. Valentino feels it could be probably partial or full consolidation or back to municipal department. Information will be based on consultant township uses.

Patriot would help the board get the word out on the board's position and how the district operates; best tax rate-service provided for money paid; would like to share with board how to get the information out.

Chairman Mahler stated the people in this area think the fire truck comes from the township, they don't realize there are districts (3) and self entities. There is an education process needed to the public. This district is unique since there is a volunteer organization that supplements career staff.

Commissioner Berkowitz questioned Mr. Valentino how we tell the public who we are - the 5 commissioners composing the board are just as important as the truck that comes to their door. Mr. Valentino stated that is a piece of the bigger picture -what makes the district unique, decision made by the board, services at a fair tax base, why that has happened, and the bigger picture story needs to be told. Commissioner Berkowitz questioned when something hits the paper, should board respond or wait on Patriot. Mr. Valentino stated there needs to be cohesion of the message; speak over and over and speak in one voice. Commissioner Berkowitz will send Mr. Valentino ideas he has and copy the board.

Chairman Mahler stated there were 3 paid men in district 1 let go, lowering their tax rate. If there is a consolidation, district 1 tax rate goes up. District 2 tax rate would go up too.

Mr. Valentino mentioned that Commissioner Reisch explained to staff of Patriot on how the figures came to be. Commissioner Reisch stated he was on a conference call for 40 minutes to explain the differences between districts 1, 2 and 3 - the number of firefighter and number of calls. The major problem that exists is that no one talks to the board. There are many ways to correct tax disparities without consolidation and work through inter-local agreements.

Commissioner Reisch feels the best venues would be for district press release; letter to the editor; community papers publish same letters; send letter to every person in our district; write opinion piece; and compose the letter with boards ideas.

Mr. Valentino stated that's what Patriot plans on doing. Chairman Mahler thinks the board should take out an advertisement that shows power and intention that we care about the people in the district and the board doesn't want taxes to go up. Commissioner Borsuk stated the benefits of the advertisement are based on the timing of placing it.

Mr. Valentino wants to consider all facets of communication because you don't know what will click with the public. You don't want it all done in letter writing, you need a variety of communications with various key points - consolidation will raise taxes; not safe; politicians play with public safety; etc. Commissioner Berkowitz stated that Clearbrook sensors what goes in their paper.

Commissioner Reisch asked Mr. Valentino about the cost. Mr. Valentino feels the total cost of this project will exceed the threshold. No other firm has the experience his firm has.

Chairman Mahler stated the townships 5 year master plan should be done in December. The consultant is just for this component. Commissioner Borsuk asked if the township put out when they want results from consultants. Mr. Valentino would assume the primary motivation is next year's budget, and they want a plan in place.

9:02 pm Mr. Valentino left the meeting.

Commissioner Reisch mentioned the fire ladder truck. He was on the phone with Michelle Zitco of Oshkosh Capital and she hasn't heard from the Attorney (Drew) at Attorney Shaklee's firm since July. Commissioner Reisch got some numbers and told her they came in at \$982,000.00 on the bid price. Commissioner Reisch stated she needs the credit application completed, and needs a copy of the 2008 and 2009 audit. The meeting should be October 13th in Trenton at the Local Finance Board. Commissioner Reisch would like the contract filled out with Osh Kosh, it takes 48 hours. As far as the interest rate, it's down to 3.79%. The annual interest payment would \$119,809.00. Oshkosh will pay Piecrce immediately and they will be a discount of approximately \$24,000. That would bring the interest down to \$116,881.00. They change their interest rate bi-monthly, so the next interest rate will change October 1st. Commissioner Reisch wants everything ready upon approval of the local finance board.

Commissioner Reisch asked what protection the board has if a person wants to run for office of board and they are a snowbird. What protection does the board have if he is away 5 months. Attorney Shaklee would need to go on case law, because there is nothing in statutes. Commissioner Reisch wanted to put in something for commissioner to be available 10 months out of the year. Since there is nothing in state statues that prevents this, can restrictions be put in. It was suggested to go to State Assemblywoman or State Senator or contact local DCA to give board some protection. Attorney Shaklee stated the board can go to legislation.

Chairman Mahler asked Attorney Shaklee to file letter to Linda Greenstein; State Senator Goodwin, to express the unique circumstance of this board. Commissioner Berkowitz asked if they run for the board and they say they will attend all meetings and they are not running for re-election and decide not to attend.

Mr. Martin questioned if a commissioner is not doing what is expected, what is the course of action. Attorney Shaklee stated there are certain statues that govern certain meetings; fire district doesn't fall under that. It can go to court for those certain circumstances to fill a vacancy. Attorney Shaklee will write a letter regarding qualifications to be a board member. Commissioner Berkowitz suggested it be requirements of a board member. Commissioner Borsuk questioned how we certify if person is available. Attorney Shaklee stated it would be based on attendance.

Commissioner Borsuk state you can't put on the application about attendance. It does say perform the duties, but you can't put on there that you can miss a number of meetings. Mr. Martin mentioned to restrict anyone from running for office is difficult. Commissioner Reisch stated if it doesn't come up this year it will come up next year.

Commissioner Reisch brought up the inter-local agreement between the township and board. Commissioner Reisch read a draft of what the board has to pay for in the building and that the township will pass gas and electric. Commissioner Reisch and Attorney Shaklee discussed getting paid 1/3 of the electric monthly and Commissioner Reisch asked quarterly.

The board is paying everything for the building and the township is not paying for anything. Commissioner Reisch asked how it changed. Attorney Shaklee sent the draft stating what board would pay. Township had said this board will do what district 3 contract does. Commissioner Reisch would like the board's approval to go back to the township to adjust the inter-local agreement draft. Attorney Shaklee will need to look at his file.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chairman Mahler opened the meeting to the public. There were no comments from the public.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Mahler announced the need to hold an executive session on contract negotiations.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Martin Berkowitz, an executive session was held for the purpose of contract negotiations.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

ADJOURN

Chairman Mahler asked for a motion to adjourn.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Martin Berkowitz, the meeting was adjourned.

ROLL CALL: Aye Berkowitz
Aye Borsuk
Aye Mahler
Aye Mitnowsky
Aye Reisch

MARTIN BERKOWITZ
Board Secretary
MAURICE MAHLER
Chairman

NOTE: Appendixes can be obtained upon request from the Board Secretary.
PREPARED BY: Val Cier