

## Fire District #3 Minutes

1/18/2023

### **Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Larson- Absent

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Holtz- Present

Commissioner Chabak - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Vice Chairperson Commissioner Avin ran the meeting as Commissioner Larson is out with Covid. She advised that the certification of meeting notice was sent to the public and the public meeting law has been met.

Motion to accept the December minutes was made by Commissioner Holtz and Seconded by Commissioner Avin - all present voted to approve the December minutes.

Commissioner Holtz reported the financial reports and bills were sent to all of the commissioners. There was a short discussion regarding an outstanding \$30 invoice from I am Responding received by North Branch where by Commissioner Holtz advised he will look into it. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay the bills, Seconded by Commissioner Chabak - all present voted to approve the financial reports and to pay the bills.

#### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Jeff Taylor advised 58 calls last month with 27 in District 3, and 641 Year to Date. The rig is running well. Their service contract was given to Commissioner Milton.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Driscoll advised 35 calls for the month and 422 calls Year to Date. The new air bottles were put into service. The radio straps that were ordered have been received and that bill can be paid. Chief Driscoll discussed a property tax abatement incentive issue for all fire and EMS volunteers.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised 52 calls for the month and 442 calls year to date. 49-108 has a light out, a broken mud flap and a wheel chock that is broken. Chief asked a headcount for a CEVO drill and it was agreed this would be a district drill. A refresher video will be used for the annual Right to Know district drill.

Chief Russoniello brought up the disposal of the foam that is no longer used and that is in a container and must be disposed of. Chief Driscoll also has foam to be disposed of too. Both chiefs will work together to find a Hazmat contractor to dispose of the foam.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 36 calls for the month, and 385 calls Year to Date. The new Squad 24 is now at Fire & Safety.

Commissioner Avin asked the two other prospective commissioner candidates to introduce themselves.

Carol Holzer was asked by Chief Driscoll to run. She advised that she has a financial background but no emergency services experience. Pieter Scholte advised he is a member of North Branch Fire Dept for 15 years and has lots of emergency and fire service management experience working for the Phillips 66 petroleum company.

Commissioner Holtz discussed the ELEC website (<https://www.elec.nj.gov/>) that shows the requirements for running for a public office.

Commissioner Avin discussed her experience as a commissioner and thanked her fellow commissioners and Chiefs for all their help.

Commissioner Milton advised that the annual resolutions for 2023 were updated and sent to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Avin to adopt resolutions 1 through 15. It was seconded by Commissioner Holtz and was passed by a vote of the commissioners in attendance.

A separate vote was discussed for resolution 16, and a motion was made by Commissioner Avin and Seconded by Commissioner Chabak. It was passed by a vote of the commissioners in attendance.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Holtz is working on disposing of old Squad 24 and information was given to him. FINDERNE Fire has agreed to store it inside their facility. Commissioner Holtz will list it on a website that sells fire apparatus.

A discussion followed on the upcoming election and the filling of 2 seats by 3 candidates and the need to generate support within the voting community to support the budget. Information will be sent out to the public.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Holtz has advised that LOSAP for 2022 qualifiers will be \$1,217.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Holtz, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Chabak, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes 2/15/2023 7pm

### Roll Call:

Commissioner Laron – Present

Commissioner Avin – Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Chabak – Present

Commissioner Milton - Absent

Chairperson Larson advised that the certification of meeting notice was sent to the public and the public law has been met.

Motion to accept the January minutes was made by Commissioner Chabak second by Commissioner Holtz – All present voted to approve the January Minutes

Commission Holtz distributed the financial reports and bills to the commissioners and advised that 2 bills came in today and the report was revised to reflect such. Commissioner Chabak made a motion to pay the bills, second by Commissioner Avin – all present voted to approve the financial reports and to pay the bills.

### Chief Reports:

**Bradley Gardens:** Jeff Taylor reported, 45 calls for the month, 42 in district – The rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Driscoll reported, 29 calls for the month- tires on the tanker have been replaced. Sent out 4 SCBA to be repaired. Air compressor was repaired. Ordered struts and are due in, the funds came out of this year's budget. Tires on the tender and the repairs on the rescue and the frog meter. Green knoll requested to buy a deck gun for the tender using fine money, in the amount of \$2,950.00, this was unanimously approved. An insurance claim was submitted for a broken mirror that occurred on a call at the high school.

**North Branch:** Chief Russoniello reported, 35 calls for the month, 14 district 3 – Engine 498 repair the mud flap and check the engine light. – reservoir coolant is low, no obvious leaks per Seagrave. District drill is March 9<sup>th</sup> and approximately 75 are scheduled to attend. Chief brought up his request for new struts and airbags, no decision was made on the request in the amount of \$17,679.85.

**Country Hills:** Chief Dougherty - 39 calls in January - 11 were in district 3. New truck arrived, the emergency lights are not working. Fire and safety are coming out Monday to resolve the issue. Commissioner Holtz posted the old truck for sale for \$70,000 and there is some interest. Mike Jannone and Steve Spolarich from the FINDERNE fire company will make time to show the

vehicle. They requested that a member of Country Hills that's familiar with the vehicle be present when showing the truck to a potential buyer.

Commissioner Avin questioned the signing of the contracts between the district and the departments since they had not been completed. The chiefs replied that they signed the contract. Commissioner Larson reported that the revised contracts with the Chiefs are not yet completed nor agreed upon by the board.

Commissioner Avin Spoke with Wells Winegar from the township. The township is posting the election times and locations for all 4 districts on their Facebook page.

Chief Driscoll mentioned they have been a little light getting out the door. There was discussion regarding specific response to an incident in Bradley Gardens. May have been due to communication issues but the incident commander had no issues with Ladder 34's response.

Commissioner Chabak and Chief Driscoll had a long discussion regarding procedures pertaining to response time, calling closest company, dual dispatch, and communication. Chief Driscoll said he calls the closest company and if there are questions about manpower or response time he has all the records. Chief Russoniello reported he uses dual dispatch with Country Hills, especially during the day when the departments are light on available volunteers causing them to be unsure if a driver will be available. Commissioner Avin suggested a workshop to discuss and resolve these concerns along with further defining the interpretation of responsibilities set forth in Title 40 and The Board of Fire Commissioners regulations and Bylaws. Commissioner Larson suggested this take place after the new commission is elected on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Holtz looked into QuickBooks reporting for all departments and noted that interacting with the districts reporting system would not work.

Foam Containers will be picked up on Thursday by Veolia hazardous waste co. The date for foam to be removed from engine 24, 34-1 and 34-9 is TBD.

Chief Dougherty asked if the audits need to be certified. The difference in certified and non-certified is close to \$3,500. Commissioner Larson will find out and let him know.

Commissioner Holtz reported Country Hills new engine has been registered.

Commissioner Holtz gave Commissioner Avin some feedback regarding the Commissions monthly calendar she is creating for the commission.

**Open to the public.** – No comments.

**Meeting Adjourned 8:50pm** - Commissioner Avin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Holtz second it and all were in favor.

Fire District #3 Minutes

3/15/2023

**Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

**Roll Call:**

Commissioner Larson- Present

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Holtz- Present

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin ran the meeting and advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met.

Commissioner Avin discussed the commission reorganization and each commissioner agreed to serve in each position as follows:

Chairman - Commissioner Avin

Vice Chairman - Commissioner Holzer

Treasurer - Commissioner Holtz

Secretary - Commissioner Milton

At Large - Commissioner Larson

Motion to accept the positions and to be put into a resolution was made by Commissioner Holtz and Seconded by Commissioner Larson - all present voted to approve the motion.

A motion was made to accept the February minutes by Commissioner Holtz and Seconded by Commissioner Larson - all present voted to approve the motion.

Commissioner Holtz reported the financial reports and bills were sent to all of the commissioners. Commissioner Holtz advised that there were a couple of additional bills to be paid. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay the bills, Seconded by Commissioner Larson - all present voted to approve the financial reports and to pay the bills.

**CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Jeff Taylor advised 42 calls last month with 19 in District 3. The rig and power stretcher are good.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Driscoll advised 30 calls for the month, 29 in District. Engine 9 mirror was replaced. The tower is out for preventative maintenance, and the winch on the rescue was replaced. He advised that the LOSAP report for 2022 was sent in. Slow down stickers are available. He provided a report about the calls that were brought up at the last meeting regarding manpower.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised 18 calls for the and 10 in District 3. 49-108 has a coolant issue. He advised there is an upcoming swiftwater drill and that the new building that will be constructed will house the swiftwater boats. Physicals were done on the members as they had a company come in. Members can also have their Drs submit a note for those that didn't get the physicals, and that Branchburg Township paid for the Drs to come in and the bill was approximately \$6,000. An issue was brought up on a defective battery on one of the new radios received and that it will be addressed with M & W.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 20 calls for the month, 6 in District 3 and 68 calls Year to Date. The new Squad 24 is on the road and all issues have been resolved. A discussion followed on the cost to install radios in the new engine. Commissioner Larson made a motion to pay the bill for the radio installation, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and passed by all in attendance.

Commissioner Avin started a discussion to acknowledge new fire fighters who attend commission meetings. This was followed by a discussion on North Branch's request for \$17,679.85 for rescue equipment. Chief Russoniello advised that their airbags are over 20 years old and suffer from dry rot and the struts need to be upgraded to handle heavier loads that may be encountered. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay \$17,679.85 for the rescue equipment shown on the quote, seconded by Commissioner Avin. All voted yes except for Commissioner Holtz who voted no, and motion passed 4-1.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

A discussion followed regarding the removal old foam. Chief Driscoll advised that all barrels of foam were disposed of, but the engines that have old foam have not been done yet.

Commissioner Holtz reported on a meeting regarding radios that was attended by other Bridgewater Fire Districts. A future meeting will be arranged to meet with the Somerset County OEM Coordinator.

Commissioner Holtz discussed the Motorola quote of \$297,836.65 for new radios. The voters approved the budget which included \$300,000 for new radios. Commissioner Larson explained the process to make capital purchases and the new radios can be purchased this year.

Commissioner Holtz discussed the possible sale of the old squad 24 as a community college in North Carolina is interested in buying it. Representatives from the college are flying in next week to see the engine. The asking price is \$70,000 and the value of comparable apparatus is in the range of \$50-80K.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Holtz clarified that audits are always certified by the accountants. It was agreed that all District 3 fire departments supply Form 990's to the Fire District as they send to the IRS.

Chief Russoniello discussed the bill for attorney Richard Braslow's services for his deposition regarding the fatal car crash on Garretson Road that he responded to.

Commissioner Larson advised that all Losap reports were received. Commissioner Milton made a motion to fund LOSAP for 2022, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all in attendance voted yes.

Commissioner Milton started a discussion of insurance coverages that cover all District 3 firefighters, officers and the fire commission. A representative from VFIS will attend the Fire District 3 meeting scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>. The presentation on insurance may take anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour and is dependent upon questions the representative receives. Commissioner Milton recommended to the Chiefs that their members attend the insurance presentation.

Commissioner Avin discussed the contracts to be done with the fire departments. The Contracts must run Jan.1 to Dec. 31, and there is no term limit to the contracts. The new contracts will start January 1, 2024.

Captain Jimmy Driscoll, who has been handling the new radio purchase, advised that the quote he provided was for 35 portable radios, 2 dual head radios, and 2 single head radios. Chief Russoniello advised that Branchburg is also buying radios. The Chiefs will let us know how to allocate the radios.

Commissioner Milton made a motion to purchase radios in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 for the radio purchase, seconded by Commissioner Holtz. All present voted to approve the motion.

Commissioner Larson initiated a discussion on how other fire districts deal with fire departments that cover areas when fire departments are not physically within a the fire district they cover.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Chief Driscoll provided a quote for \$13,511.85 for struts he would like purchased for Green Knoll's rescue truck. Commissioner Milton advised this was never discussed or requested at prior meetings. A motion was made by Commissioner Larson to pay \$13,511.85 for the equipment, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all voted yes with the exception of Commissioner Milton abstaining from the vote.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Larson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Holtz, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

4/19/2023

### **Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Larson- Present

Commissioner Avin – Not Present

Commissioner Holtz- Present

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Holzer, as Vice Chairman, ran the meeting and advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met.

A motion was made to accept the March minutes by Commissioner Larson and Seconded by Commissioner Holtz - all present voted to approve the motion.

Commissioner Holtz reported the financial reports and bills were sent to all of the commissioners. There were two late additions that included payments for web hosting and a LOSAP payment of \$57,199. Bridgewater Township's first quarter payment has not been received, but there was enough money to issue the quarterly payments to the fire departments and rescue squad. The old squad 24 apparatus was sold and will be moved shortly. The apparatus was sold for \$60,000 and a resolution for disposal was provided.

Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay the bills, Seconded by Commissioner Larson - all present voted to approve the financial reports and to pay the bills.

#### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Jeff Taylor advised 53 calls last month with 19 in District 3. The rig is running good.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 37 calls for the month, 33 in District 3 and 4 outside of the district. Engine 34-1 was having starting and fuel pressure issues and was repaired. Engine 34-9's pump water level gauge and been replaced and the cab lift/lower pump has been repaired.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised 30 calls for the month and 12 in District 3. Seagrave was out on Monday and fixed 4 small leaks on engine 49-8. There is a fundraising golf tournament on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 19 calls for the month, 8 in District 3 and 11 out of District 3. The new Squad 24 is running well.



**OLD BUSINESS:**

A discussion followed regarding the removal old foam. Chief Driscoll advised that foam removal has not yet been completed.

Doug Rue gave a comprehensive radio report. There was a recent problem that Green Knoll reported with the repeater system. M & W came out and did repairs, ran tests and all is ok. Doug Rue believes that there may be interference issues from two TV stations that run 500K watts of output in the 500 MHz band which is another reason we need to change over to the 700 MHz band. The tower we use is located at the Merck facility. The A/C unit needs replacing and the cost is estimated at \$250. Also a bird got into the room and died and it needs to be cleaned out. Doug also advised he has been in the fire service for 55 years and wants to retire. He will find a replacement to cover radio issues. Commissioner Larson made a motion not to exceed \$300 to replace the A/C unit, Commissioner Milton seconded the motion, and all present voted yes to approve the motion.

Chief Driscoll mentioned that there are repeaters to help boost signals to the eastern portion of Bridgewater. Doug Rue explained that Bridgewater Township switched to Somerset County's dispatch system, but we kept the existing radio system which works well.

A discussion followed about the existing contracts with the fire departments and rescue squad. Commissioners Milton and Holzer will work together in preparing the 2024 contract.

Commissioner Holtz advised that the ESO invoice was settled and paid.

The requested quarterly reports from the fire departments have been received.

All Commissioners reported that the individual Financial Disclosure Statements were sent in and we are in compliance with the State of NJ.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Chief Doherty advised that he had \$8,000 left over from last year's budget and plans to purchase two sets of fire fighter gear.

Chief Russoniello will get a report submitted for the damage to 49-108. Chief Driscoll will send in a damage report for 34-1. A discussion followed on whether police reports are needed for minor accidents and that will be left up to the Chiefs to determine if it's needed. Commissioner Holtz advised our insurance coverage has a \$1,000 deductible on damage.

Commissioner Milton advised that a representative from VFIS will be at our next meeting to discuss insurance, and will reconfirm this with VFIS.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Chief Driscoll advised that Ralph Amatucci, a long time active member of Green Knoll Fire has passed away and will send out funeral information in an email.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Milton, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Holtz, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

5/17/2023

### Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin

#### Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met.

Brian Wilson of VFIS was asked to give a presentation regarding the insurance coverages they provide to our fire departments. His presentation was very informative and answered many questions that were presented. He did provide booklets that showed the coverages and information.

His presentation also mentioned that VFIS offers driving classes, training information, and limits of the following:

1. Medical expenses up to \$100,000.
2. Mental health professional help involving post traumatic incidents.
3. Off duty accident coverage that includes a \$500,000 death benefit.
4. Building coverage for Green Knoll's Station #1 of \$2.9 million and \$990k for the building at Station #2.
5. Crime coverage for the Fire Commission Treasurer of up to \$2 million and \$1.75 million for Treasurers of each fire department.
6. For portable equipment, coverage is replacement value less \$250 deductible.
7. 6. Boats are also covered so long as they are under 100 HP.
8. 12 vehicles owned by the fire commission are also covered per a schedule provided. Commissioner Holtz advised that one of the vehicles, Squad 24, was sold and VFIS will remove that vehicle from the schedule.
9. Vehicle damage coverage has a \$500 deductible.
10. There is a 70% threshold as far as being made whole for any vehicle suffering major damage. Any vehicle damage over 70%, will be paid for per agreed value.
11. Hall rentals within the fire departments need additional insurance of alcohol is served. While the VFIS policies include liquor liability for usage by the fire department members, it does not cover hall rentals. It was recommended that hall renters must supply a certificate of liability from their homeowner's policy OR provide a one day policy that the renter can take out from their own insurance company.
12. Liability coverage for officers is \$1 million per incident and \$3 million aggregate.

13. A sexual harassment policy is available as some fire departments do not have it and we should look into “master coverage” for this.

14. VFIS University is part of VFIS and offers classes for training and including harassment issues.

A motion was made to accept the April minutes by Commissioner Holtz and Seconded by Commissioner Larson – Commissioner Avin abstained. All others present voted to approve the motion.

Commissioner Holtz reported the financial reports and bills were sent to all of the commissioners.

Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay the bills, Seconded by Commissioner Avin - all present voted to approve the financial reports and to pay the bills.

### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 41 calls for the month, 39 in District 3 and 2 outside of the district. Engine 34-1 had tires replaced and the crew door actuator was replaced. Engine 9 needs to be replaced. Quotes for fabrication on the rescue were given. A ground ladder was damaged and will submit a cost for replacement to VFIS.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 35 calls for the month, 15 in District 3 and 113 year to date. The new Squad 24 is running well. Boat registrations are up for renewal at the end of the month.

Update on the repeater at Merck tower: a new A/C unit was installed and it works. The auxiliary generator needs service. The chief was instructed by the commissioners to take it for repairs. M & W has keys and the code to access the repeater. The keys will go in a Knox box. Chip from M & W will be contacted to discuss a new repeater and will be asked to see what our options are for a new repeater.

**North Branch:** No report as they were out on a fire call

**Bradley Gardens:** No report

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

Chief Driscoll advised that foam removal has been completed from the Green Knoll fire engines Commissioner Larson will get foam information from 49-104.

The new radios order was placed. Jim Driscoll advised that delivery of the radios will be around Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Holtz advised that the sale of the old squad 24 went through for \$60,000 with \$6,000 paid to the broker and some additional legal expenses were deducted paid as well for the sale.

Commissioner Avin thanked Chief Driscoll for honoring Ralph Amatucci, a long time active member of Green Knoll Fire who passed away. His family was very grateful.

The discussion of By-Laws and the fire department contracts will be postponed to next month’s meeting. Commissioner Larson advised that notice needs to be placed by May 28<sup>th</sup> to see if a vote

can be done if we agree to the By-Law changes. Commissioners Milton and Holzer will work on the fire department contracts.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Larson brought up the budget for 2024 and suggested a cap waiver above a 2% increase. He advised that some districts have increased their budgets above 2%. Commissioner Larson will head a new subcommittee on this with Commissioner Holzer. As needed, Commissioner Larson will contact Richard Braslow.

A workshop meeting was agreed to be held on Monday, July 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss the budget. Commissioner Milton will handle publicizing the meeting.

Commissioner Holtz discussed the need for an inventory system. Emergency Reporting has a system to do this and Country Hills and Green Knoll FDs do this.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Milton, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Larson, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

6/21/2023

### Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin

#### Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Holtz- Present

Commissioner Holzer-Present

Commissioner Larson- Present

Commissioner Milton – Absent

Commissioner Avin presided over the meeting and advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met.

A motion was made to accept the May minutes as amended by a motion from Commissioner Larson and Seconded by Commissioner Holtz - all present voted to approve the motion.

Motion was made by Commissioner Larson to pay the bills seconded by Commissioner Holzer-all present voted to approve the motion.

#### CHIEF'S REPORTS

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Taylor advised 40 total calls for the month 24 in District #3, 2 of those not in BGRS territory. Our rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Driscoll reported 25 total calls, 2 out of district. Engine 1 had repairs done to the cab step and the rear passenger side door. Rescue 34 modifications for rescue tools is in the fabrication phase. Tanker modifications are done to facilitate tanker shuttle operations. Tanker shuttle drill with area departments on June 20<sup>th</sup> went well. Approximately 67,000 gallons of water were delivered by tankers averaging approximately 800 GPM. The new spreader is on order.

**North branch:** Chief Russoniello reported 29 total calls, 13 in district 3. Engine 498 coolant sensor repair has been delayed and is currently scheduled for June 22 or 23<sup>rd</sup>. If this repair does not remedy the problem, it may need to go to the engine manufacturer's repair facility for repair. The driver's seat may need repair, it is very bouncy, and drivers report it makes driving more difficult and dangerous. This will be addressed at the same time as the above repair.

**Country Hills:** Chief Doherty advised 27 total calls, 10 in district and Squad 24 is working well. Swift-water Ops training for new members is scheduled for this weekend.

**Old Business:** Foam still needs to be removed from the engines that had it on-board. The capacity of North Branch Engine 104 was found to be 50 gallons. We are awaiting an estimate and a date for the foam to be removed and the systems flushed from all engines.

Commissioner Holzer reported that update of annual contracts with the companies are progressing but not complete.

Chiefs were advised by Commissioner Avin that we need copies of their District #3 inventory of tools and equipment.

Radio report from Captain Jim Driscoll:

*Awaiting an update on the status of our radio order.*

*"I spoke to Chip from M&W over the past couple weeks. The current antenna at Merck is good however, the repeater is on its last leg and needs to be replaced as soon as possible. The current antenna sits at 80 feet on the tower which is 120 feet tall and there is space at the top to raise the antenna which could improve communications. I feel we need to move forward in getting a new antenna as soon as possible and get it to the top of the tower and see what this does for our radio coverage.*

*Also, I have been in contact with the radio division from NJ state police. They have offered free space to us on the tower at the Somerville barracks on 22 which is 180 feet tall and they have room for us at top. I have a meeting next week to discuss that further.*

*Lastly, in conversation with Chip if we move forward with the tower at state police, we could keep both repeaters and spend the money needed to simulcast both towers, so the radios hit off the closest tower. This would be expensive but will help in both towns that district companies cover. It's estimated \$35,000 a site."*

Commissioner Larson read through *all* of the proposed changes and several additional suggestions were made. Commissioner Avin requested that he work to include these suggestions and share that version with the board. With timely feedback on these changes, we will be able to move on the updates at our July meeting.

Commissioner Avin reported that Commissioner Milton requested in writing that the commission investigate the response by the Green Knoll Fire Company to a call on May 24<sup>th</sup> because he was concerned with the response. He distributed a recording of the radio transmissions with his assessment of the response.

To thoroughly investigate this matter, Commissioner Avin and Commissioner Holzer met with Chief Driscoll from Green Knoll Fire about this call. After listening to the recordings of the call, both Commissioners, Avin and Holzer found that Commissioner Milton's portrayal of what happened was inaccurate. Commissioners Avin and Holzer concluded that Commissioner Milton's concerns regarding Green Knoll's response time were unfounded. Through this investigation Commissioners Holzer and Avin found there were communication issues which need to be addressed.

Chief Driscoll requested the floor to read an email he had sent to Commissioners Avin and Holzer to those in attendance. That email and his response records for about 2 months are part of these published minutes. His manpower average was 7.5 persons/call. He also mentioned that he requires his members to sign in at the firehouse at the time of the call to get credit. If they respond to Station 2 the sign-in sheet is faxed to Station 1 at the time of the call. He does not give credit per the response app.

After Chief Driscoll read his email there was open discussion and Chief Russoniello stated that Commissioner Milton does not represent the North Branch Fire Company, the chief does. He further added that he is not perpetuating these inquiries. Commissioner Avin requested that in the future if

there are areas of concern, that the concern should be shared with those involved. Often this can result in reaching common ground or at least a mutual understanding of the views of both sides.

**Open to the Public: No comments from the public**

**Motion to Adjourn:** Commissioner Larson, 2nd by Commissioner Holtz, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

## Fire District #3 Minutes

7/19/2023

### Meeting called to order 7:05 pm by Commissioner Avin

#### Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Absent

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Avin discussed Chief Driscoll's letter of complaint and sent to Commissioners Avin and Holzer that he wanted included in the June minutes. Commissioner Milton objected inasmuch as he wasn't in attendance to the meeting to respond Chief's Driscoll's allegations concerning Commissioner Milton. In fact, once it was viewed by Commissioner Milton, a responding letter was sent to all the Commissioners prior to this meeting and that it too be included in the July minutes. It was discussed that Chief Driscoll's letter would be available upon request. Commissioner Larson suggested that approval of the June minutes be tabled until the August meeting.

The bills were sent to the Commissioners by Commissioner Holtz and a motion to pay the bills was made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all present voted in favor to pay the bills.

#### CHIEF REPORTS

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Taylor advised that there were 45 total calls for the month with 23 in District 3. The rig is running well but a damaged windshield needs to be replaced. The Rescue Squad will pay that bill.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 73 calls for the month, 72 in District 3 and 1 outside of the district. Engine 34-1 had the door step was repaired again and had two tires replaced. Rescue 34 has had repairs made. The ladder truck will have the ladder checked to make sure all is ok. His recent request for crosslay work on two engines was discussed and Chief Driscoll said that Green Knoll will pay for this work.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised there were 49 total calls for the month, 21 in District 3 and 23 in Branchburg. The coolant issue on 49-108 was fixed. He mentioned that the driver seat on 108 needs replacement or repair. Commissioner Larson, when asked by Chief Russoniello his opinion of the seat when he recently drove it, advised, "The seat was not ideal nor optimal". Chief Russoniello will contact Seagrave on this issue. The boats that North Branch has will be lettered.



**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 51 calls for the month, 22 in District 3, and 29 out of district, and 209 year to date. 15 of his members are taking a swift water rescue class and the boat is running well.

Commissioner Larson advised that nothing new to report on leftover foam removal. Captain Driscoll will follow up with contractors.

A discussion about a new replacement repeater followed. A motion to order a new repeater at a cost not to exceed \$11,000. was made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Commissioner Holzer, and all present voted yes. Captain Driscoll will place the order.

Commissioner Avin brought up the contracts with the fire departments, and Commissioners Milton and Holzer will meet this week to work on them.

Bylaws were discussed and Commissioner Larson will prepare a draft and it will be sent to Richard Braslow for review.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Milton discussed his rebuttal letter to Chief Driscoll's letter of complaint.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Milton requested IRS form 990's from the fire departments for the August meeting. This is in lieu of audited financial reports.

Commissioner Larson advised he will be out of town for the August meeting.

Commissioner Avin wants to conform to the monthly guidelines for the next meeting. Commissioner Avin also requested quarterly financial from the fire departments reports for next month's meeting.

Commissioner Milton brought up Green Knoll's recent response to the serious motor vehicle accident (MVA) on 287 within District 3 where there were 5 victims that included a deceased victim. Commissioner Milton wanted to know why no other District 3 companies were dispatched. Chief Driscoll offered an explanation why he uses single dispatch to MVAs and also explained why he stopped doing dual dispatches on motor vehicle accidents with entrapment preferring to use outside of district fire companies that are closer.

Commissioner Milton advised all the Chiefs that when responding to County's radio dispatch, they are must mention crew size as stated in the District 3 bylaws. All Chiefs agreed to call in crew sizes. Commissioner Milton also pointed out that all of the District 3 fire companies and all nearby fire companies are on the I am Responding system, except Green Knoll. A further discussion on this matter was agreed to be taken up at a future date.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Larson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Holzer, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

8/16/2023

### Meeting called to order 7:05 pm by Commissioner Avin

#### Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Absent

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Avin discussed the June minutes. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the June Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all present voted yes to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Avin discussed the July minutes. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the July Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all present voted yes to approve the minutes.

#### CHIEF REPORTS

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Taylor advised that there were 47 total calls for the month with 31 in District 3. The damaged windshield will be replaced.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 39 calls for the month, 37 in District 3. Fabrication work has started on the rescue. New spreaders have been ordered. He asked if fine money was available and no was the response. He advised that manpower was good.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised there were 44 total calls for the month, 18 in District 3. Seagrave has agreed to fix the driver seat on 108 and the intake gauge will be fixed. He advised that the Branchburg engine will respond first into Branchburg and the Bridgewater engine will respond into Bridgewater. Manpower is good.

**Country Hills:** Assistant Chief Mark Colantini reported 46 calls for the month, 15 in District 3, and 231 year to date. The CAFS system will be fixed on the engine. Manpower is good.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Chief Driscoll requested that Commissioner Milton read his July 19th rebuttal letter in response to his letter of complaint. A motion was made to include both letters in the August minutes, Commissioner Holzer seconded the motion and all present voted yes. Commissioner Milton advised that links will be included in the minutes to see the letters.

[LINK to Chief Driscoll's Letter](#)

[LINK to Commissioner Milton's Letter](#)

## **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Commissioner Milton discussed the income categories shown on the report, and Commissioner Holtz will combine those income categories from Bridgewater. Commissioner Milton made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills, Commissioner Holzer seconded and all present voted yes to approve the motion.

## **OLD BUSINESS (continued):**

Commissioner Avin brought up the status foam removal and a schedule will be provided by Jim Driscoll.

Commissioner Avin started a discussion on radios and Jim Driscoll will discuss with Chip from M & W on the new system being operational. Commissioner Avin mentioned that Chris Ireland sent an email advising a zoom meeting on August 23 from 3 to 4pm was being scheduled with Somerset County. It was discussed that Somerset County will not be paying for any new equipment. Commissioner Avin will send information on the Zoom meeting and encourages everyone to attend.

Commissioner Avin brought up the contracts with the fire departments, and Commissioners Milton and Holzer advised they will meet on Monday August 21 to work on them.

Bylaws were discussed and Commissioner Holzer will prepare a draft and wants all comments sent in by the Commissioners by August 26<sup>th</sup>. It will then be sent to Richard Braslow for review, and then sent to the Chiefs.

Commissioner Milton mentioned that the IRS Form 990's have been received from North Branch and Country Hills. Chief Driscoll advised that they have not yet filed their 2022 IRS Form 990 yet Commissioner Avin will ask Chief Taylor for the 990 for the rescue squad.

A discussion followed on the district repeater as a motion was made last month for a cost not to exceed \$11,000.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

A discussion followed of backing up data as well as paying ESO bills. A discussion of the audit submission followed and was advised that Suplee Clooney handles that. Commissioner Avin wants the contact information for Suplee Clooney.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Holtz, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Milton, and all present voted to approve the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

9/20/2023

### **Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer - Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Avin discussed the July special Budget/Bylaws meeting minutes. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the Budget/Bylaws meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all voted yes to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Avin discussed the August monthly minutes. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the July Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all voted yes to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Holtz made his Treasurers report. He is waiting for the accountants to get back to him on data he sent them. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay the bills and seconded by Commissioner Larson and all voted yes to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Holtz asked Chief Russoniello about the ESO bills. Chief Russoniello advised that all is up and running and the software includes lots of good features.

#### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Jeff Taylor advised that there were 57 total calls for the month with 41 in District 3. The rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 45 calls for the month, 32 in District 3 and 2 for mutual aid. There was a discussion of paying for the strut mounts on the rescue vehicle in the amount of \$4,196.06. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay that bill, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and all voted yes to pay the bill for strut mounts.

Chief Driscoll discussed a bill for the utility vehicle that needed a new catalytic converter and coil which totaled \$2,653. Commissioner Milton made a motion to pay that bill, seconded by Commissioner Holzer, and all voted yes to pay that bill.

Chief Driscoll discussed a bill for new tires for Engine 34-1 which totaled \$4521. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to pay that bill, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all voted yes to pay that bill.

Chief Driscoll then had the commissioners come and view the crosslay hose issue on Engine 34-9 and to discuss the modifications he wants done to the crosslay hose beds on two engines. Chief Driscoll shared estimates for the work. Commissioner Holzer made a motion to have that work done, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all voted yes for the work not to exceed \$14,000 in having the work done.

Chief Driscoll advised that the accident damage to Engine 34-1 is being repaired and the engine will be back in service in a week.

Chief Driscoll requested to have a closed meeting about the letters regarding the issues Commissioner Milton have brought up be discussed. There was a discussion about having Richard Braslow, the District 3 attorney, be a part of that session. All was tabled to be discussed at the end of the meeting.

**North Branch:** Chief Dan Russoniello advised there were 41 total calls for the month and 19 in District 3. He advised there is 3 months left on the warranty from Seagrave for Engine 49-8. Seagrave has agreed to fix the driver seat on the Engine 49-8 and check for all other possible issues. The seat bounces too much and will send parts to fix it. There will be an Octoberfest on 10/14 that will benefit the FD.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 26 calls for the month, 6 in District 3, and 295 year to date. Squad 24 had a small electrical problem. Deputy Chief Mark Colontini discussed having a Tesla Fire District drill where the cost would be \$1,000 per 75 people. He would like to schedule a weekend before Thanksgiving and the course is about 2 hours long. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to pay for the drill and food, seconded by commissioner Holzer, and all voted yes.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Avin asked if there were any new members and the answer was No. Commissioner Avin asked the Chiefs if all was good with manpower and all said Yes. Commissioner Avin discussed that Covid was on the rise and that we should be prepared with PPE on all apparatus.

Commissioner Holtz asked if there is a color coded hydrant system within the district and the answer was No.

Commissioner Avin asked Chief Driscoll about providing IRS Form 990's and he responded he will have his Treasurer take care of it.

Commissioner Avin asked about the status of foam removal and Commissioner Holtz responded that he had an estimate for \$14,000 for all the fire departments. Commissioner Holtz made a motion not to exceed \$14,000 to be spent for all foam removal, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all voted yes.

Commissioner Avin asked for a radio update and Captain Jim Driscoll advised that all of the radios ordered have been delivered. He is also looking to move the repeater located at Ethicon to a new location. Commissioner Holtz and Captain Driscoll will follow up on this. The NJ State police will allow use of their tower for our equipment.

Doug Rue gave a radio report and advised that there are new people taking over from M&W. M&W always did a good job for us. Doug Rue advised he is available to help despite no longer going on fire

calls. He prepared a two page sheet to help guide us on what needs to be done. He mentioned that nobody uses the low band channel and advises not to renew the license as that will save \$1,200. Commissioner Holtz apologized for not including Doug Rue on all radio discussions and will utilize his expertise going forward.

Commissioner Holzer commented that she was on the call meeting to discuss communications with Districts 2, 3 and 4 and Somerset County officials Dr. Terry Clancy, Colleen Mahr, Joe DeMarco and Dave Fraunheim who is in charge of the 911 system. The goal of the county is to phase out in 3 years all users in the 470-502 Mhz range, and plan to include funding with grants and from other sources to help pay for the new equipment. A committee will be established to handle the 700 Mz band and to coordinate transitioning to the new platform. Doug Rue asked about the District 3 repeater being maintained by Somerset County. Not all fire districts are being represented on the committee and there is no District 3 representative on the committee. It's up to the Fire Chiefs to try to get on the committee. Chief Driscoll advised the District 3 is on Region 2 and its crowded and adding 3 more companies will make radio traffic worse. Commissioner Holzer has more detailed notes on the meeting and will provide a copy.

It is believed that Dave Fraunheim has retired and has been replaced.

It was discussed that all of the current pagers used will need to be replaced in 3 years.

Commissioner Avin brought up Bylaws and they will be tabled for next meeting.

Commissioner Avin initiated a discussion on the contracts as they are being reviewed by Braslow. It was discussed that budget amounts need to be added to the contracts. Commissioner Avin would like 2% increases. Commissioners Holzer and Milton agreed that the second to last sentence in the contract, #5 regarding audit, will be removed.

Commissioner Avin asked Chief Driscoll for his inventory report and he advised it was provided.

Commissioner Avin asked Commissioner Holtz about the audit information being sent to the accountants and all has been sent to them.

Commissioner Avin stated that everyone needs to communicate properly and with respect for each other. She requested that calls within the district and requests for mutual aid come within the district.

Commissioner Milton asked the Chiefs about air pack bottle needs and Chief Russoniello that 7 additional bottles are needed for North Branch and Chief Driscoll 5-6 additional bottles for an additional estimated increase of \$25,000 to be added to Capital purchases. Commissioner Holtz advised we should add a Chief's vehicle for Green Knoll and Commissioner Milton stated that we should budget \$100,000 for that that fully outfitted. Commissioner Larson advised that the budget should, be set for the October meeting. Commissioner Holtz asked Chief Driscoll to provide a quote for a new Chief's vehicle.

A discussion followed on the number of new pagers that will be needed with the new frequency. It was estimated that approximately 100 pagers will be needed at a cost of approximately \$500/each. A discussion followed on raising the cap waiver.

Commissioner Avin asked the Chiefs for next year's budget and 5 year plan to be provided by October 11<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Milton advised that the notice for the agreed upon Budget Workshop meeting for 6 pm on October 18<sup>th</sup> would be sent to the newspapers as required.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

A closed meeting followed and included Chief Driscoll and his deputy Chief. Minutes were to be taken by Commissioner Holzer.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** None

## Fire District #3 Budget Meeting Minutes

10/18/2023

### **Meeting called to order 6:02 pm by Commissioner Avin**

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer – Not Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin discussed the budget. Commissioner Holtz advised that the current capital account balance is \$373,000 of which \$292,000 will be for new radios. Commissioner Avin advised that we have a total of \$506,000.

It was discussed that \$100,000 is needed for radios; \$100,000 for a new Chiefs vehicle for Green Knoll FD; \$200,000 is needed for SCBA, bottles and masks.

Commissioner Larson discussed budget items shown as \$165,000 should be for equipment maintenance and repair, \$75,000 for maintenance and repair, and \$5,000 for physicals.

Commissioner Holtz advised that the \$54,000 received for the sale of Squad 24. That money can go to the operation budget or for future capital purchases.

Commissioner Larson advised that we can raise our operating budget only by taxation if its 2% or less.

Commissioner Larson made a motion was made per statute to ask the voters at a date to be determined to spend \$100,000 on a Command Vehicle; \$200,000 for Respiratory Protection; \$100,000 for Radios, to be placed on the 2024 ballot to be spent in 2024. Commissioner Holtz seconded the motion and all present voted to pass the motion. Commissioner Milton was tasked to check with attorney Richard Braslow on the wording and timing of the motion.

It was agreed that a special meeting with a vote on the above motion would be held on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Made by Commissioner Milton and seconded by Commissioner Holtz. present voted to adjourn.



## Fire District #3 Minutes

10/18/2023

### **Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer – Not Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Milton advised that the September minutes were sent out, but Commissioner Holzer had not sent out the closed meeting portion of the minutes which she was to write up.

Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all in attendance voted to approve the minutes. It was agreed that the closed minutes would be tabled to the next meeting.

Commissioner Holtz gave his Treasurer's report and advised that \$388,000 was received from Bridgewater Township. The quarterly checks were given to the respective chiefs and that a check was issued for \$292,000 to Motorola for the radio purchase. An insurance payment check was received from VFIS for Green Knoll FD.

Commissioner Milton made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and to pay the bills, seconded by Commissioner Larson and passed by all in attendance.

#### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Jeff Taylor advised that there were 34 total calls for the month with 19 in District 3. The rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 43 calls for the month, 42 in District 3. Chief Driscoll advised that fabrication on the rescue has started and repairs done on an engine. The crosslay work on one of the engines was done. Commissioner Larson requested LOSAP information on members who are not vested to see if they have not received LOSAP for the past 4 years, then that money can be returned. Chief Driscoll discussed bills for the utility vehicle and for tires. He wants to do detailing and rustproofing for apparatus but was advised that is part of their annual maintenance budget. He also advised that another bill is coming for struts.

**North Branch:** Captain Keith Schroeder advised 49 calls for the month with 16 in District 3 and 33 outside the district. He advised that engine 48-108 is good and manpower has been good.

**Country Hills:** Chief Pat Doherty reported 45 calls for the month, 11 in District 3, 34 calls out of district and 340 year to date. Squad 24 is good. The Tesla training course will be Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> at RVCC. There was no formal quote for the hose but estimates that 2,000 of hose failed testing. He estimates that he needs to replace 400 feet of 1 ¾" and 400 feet of 2 ½" which will cost \$5,747.00. Commissioner Milton made a motion to purchase hose in an amount not to exceed \$6,000; seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and passed by all in attendance.

Commissioner Milton asked the Chiefs if all of the radios ordered have been received, programmed and distributed. All responded yes except for Chief Doherty who is waiting to have radios programmed.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Avin asked about the status of foam removal. Commissioner Milton received paperwork from Jim Driscoll showing that all the foam has been removed.

Commissioner Avin asked Jim Driscoll about new radios to be ordered that and was advised that mobile radios now cost \$12-14,000 each and portable radios cost \$9,000 each. The status of the repeaters is status quo.

Commissioner Avin advised that Commissioner Holzer is away so the fire department contracts will be tabled until the next meeting.

Commissioner Avin discussed the By Laws and Commissioner Larson advised he spoke with attorney Richard Braslow who advised that changes are needed. In particular, the Rules & Policies should not be a part of the By Laws. Commissioner Larson will prepare an edited version of the By Laws back to Braslow. Braslow advised that a Drug & Workplace policy should not be a part the By Laws and that he will send Commissioner Larson sample text.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Avin gave a reminder about having mutual respect between the companies and to call for mutual aid within the district when needed. Commissioner Avin advised that budget questions were answered. She advised that the Handbook from 2006 needs to be updated and will include the By Laws, but that will not happen until next year.

Commissioner Larson will handle LOSAP information.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Nothing

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all passed by those in attendance

## Fire District #3 Minutes

11/15/2023

### **Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin**

#### **Roll Call:**

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer –Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Holtz made a motion to approve the October minutes, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all in attendance voted to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Holtz gave his Treasurer's report and Commissioner Milton made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and to pay the bills, seconded by Commissioner Larson and passed by all in attendance.

#### **CHIEF REPORTS**

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Jeff Taylor advised that there were 46 total calls for the month with 23 in District 3. The rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Kevin Driscoll advised 43 calls for the month and all in District 3. Chief Driscoll advised that ceramic paint treatments were done and preventative maintenance completed. Crosslay modification was done on engine 341 and will be done on engine 349 in December. Rescue fabrication work is almost done. The tower is out of service due to a broken latch on the bucket. The extension ladder is back in service and manpower has been good.

**North Branch:** Captain Dan Russoniello advised 34 calls for the month with 14 in District. He advised that the struts and airbags have been received and he will have them mounted in the rescue vehicle. The Seagrave seat parts came in for engine 498 and Seagrave will have a technician come in to go over the engine to make sure all is ok for any warranty work.

A discussion followed regarding how the struts mounting costs would be paid for and that Richard Braslow will be contacted for his advice. Chief Russoniello advised that manpower has been good.

**Country Hills:** Deputy Chief Mark Colantoni reported 39 calls for the month, 12 in District 3, and 347 year to date. He advised that manpower has been good.

Regarding radios Jim Driscoll advised that the new repeater went in and works well.

Commissioner Avin distributed drafts of the department contracts to the respective Chiefs. Commissioner Milton advised that the annual dollar amounts given to each department will be determined once the upcoming budget is determined.

Commissioner Avin advised that all of the IRS 990's have been received from the departments. They will be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting.

Commissioner Avin initiated a discussion on the upcoming budget which includes a 2% increase and an additional \$500,000 earmarked for capital expenditures. Commissioner Milton made a motion to increase the budget by 2% and to add an additional \$500,000 for capital restricted funds. Commissioner Holtz seconded the motion and it was passed by a roll call vote by all in attendance.

Commissioner Avin requested that the department contracts be reviewed by the respective companies for the December meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Commissioner Avin initiated a discussion on the 2024 capital budget. Chief Russoniello asked about when the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter checks would be distributed and was told by Commissioner Holtz that they will be probably distributed after New Year's day.

Commissioner Larson discussed LOSAP information and the requirement for a District 3 drill.

A resolution below for commissioner compensation was discussed and Commissioner Larson made a motion to pass it, seconded by Commissioner Holtz and it was passed by a roll call vote by all the commissioners in attendance.

THE COMMISSIONERS OF FIRE DISTRICT No. 3 IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER, COUNTY OF SOMERSET Resolution #2023-19 Establishing the Compensation for Members of the Board of Fire Commissioners WHEREAS, NJS.A. 40A:14-88 provides that each member of the Board of Fire Commissioners shall receive as compensation such amounts as the Board shall fix; and WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:14-88 further provides that the compensation so fixed shall be subject to review by the governing body wherein the Fire District is located; and WHEREAS, the compensation for members of the Board is set forth in the resolution. NOW THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED by the Commissioners of Fire District No. 3 in the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, as follows: (1) Each Commissioner shall receive compensation in the amount of four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) per year, subject to review by the governing body of the municipality. (2) A copy of this resolution shall be forwarded to the governing body of the municipality upon adoption.

It was agreed that a copy of the passed resolution would be sent to Linda Doyle, Bridgewater Township Clerk.

Commissioner Holtz asked Chief Driscoll about the paying off of the mortgage they hold for insurance purposes.

Commissioner Holtz discussed ordering two commissioner badges. Commissioner Holtz made a motion to order and pay for two badges, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and was approved by all commissioners in attendance.

Commissioner Holtz thanked all for the turnout at the Stella Drive fire.

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** Chief Driscoll advised there was an email issue as not all of his emails are being received by the Commissioners. Commissioner Milton advised he will look into it.

A discussion of bills from Coordinated Fire for \$2621.05 followed for Green Knoll Fire was brought up and a motion to pay was made by Commissioner Holtz, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and was approved by all commissioners in attendance.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all passed by those in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

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Following the meeting, the tally of the 11/15/23 ballot questions for capital equipment commenced and the results follow:

Question 1: Shall the Commissioners of Fire District No. 3, in the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset be authorized to expend not in excess of \$100,000 relative to the purchase of a command vehicle? 43 YES 6 NO

Question 2: Shall the Commissioners of Fire District No. 3, in the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset be authorized to expend not in excess of \$200,000 relative to the purchase of respiratory protection fire equipment? 46 YES 3 NO

Question 3: Shall the Commissioners of Fire District No. 3, in the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset be authorized to expend not in excess of \$100,000 relative to the purchase of radios? 48 YES 1 NO

In attendance of the counting of votes was Commissioner Holtz, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Avin and Commissioner Milton and the counting was completed at 9:10 pm.

## Fire District #3 Minutes

12/18/2023

### Meeting called to order 7:00 pm by Commissioner Avin

#### Roll Call:

Commissioner Avin - Present

Commissioner Larson - Present

Commissioner Holtz - Present

Commissioner Holzer –Present

Commissioner Milton - Present

Commissioner Avin advised that the certification of the public meeting law was met and confirmed by Commissioner Milton.

Commissioner Larson made a motion to approve the November minutes, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all in attendance voted to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Holtz gave his Treasurer's report and Commissioner Milton made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and to pay the bills, seconded by Commissioner Holzer and passed by all in attendance. Fourth quarter checks were given to the departments.

Commissioner Avin congratulated Jim Driscoll as he is now the Chief of Green Knoll FD.

#### CHIEF REPORTS

**Bradley Gardens:** Chief Jeff Taylor advised that there were 38 total calls for the month with 515 year to date. The rig is running well.

**Green Knoll:** Chief Jim Driscoll advised 35 calls for the month and 438 year to date.

**North Branch:** Captain Dan Russoniello advised 38 calls for the month with 30 in District 3, and 400 year to date. He advised the seat was fixed by Seagrave in engine 49-8 and that the new struts and airbags are in. North Branch did 6 water rescues today from the storm. The Bridgewater Hyatt is now set for Section 8 housing and there are currently 20 people living there now while they renovate. The Fire Official didn't let the Fire Departments know the status at this location.

**Country Hills:** Captain Ryan Sullivan reported 35 calls for the month, 29 in District 3, and 400 year to date. He advised that manpower has been good and that the radio programming has been completed.

Jim Driscoll advised that all radio work has been completed.

Commissioner Holtz advised that the audit report has been completed.

Commissioner Avin discussed the budget and a draft was sent to all the commissioners. A discussion of the budget was discussed and it was agreed that \$7,000 would be moved from the LOSAP line item to Insurance, and that \$10,000 would be moved from Maintenance to Insurance. Insurance

budgeted would be \$127,000, \$65,000 for LOSAP, and \$212,000 would be for Equipment & Maintenance.

The overall budget for 2024 would be \$1,699,734 which includes \$500,000 for the Capital account for future purchases. The operating budget will be \$1,199,734. Commissioner Milton made a motion to approve the budget, seconded by Commissioner Larson, and all present voted yes to approve the budget.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Contracts were distributed and are to be signed. Only North Branch's contract was returned signed. Country Hills and Green Knoll advised they will get their respective contracts signed. Jeff Taylor wants changes made to the rescue squad's contract.

Commissioner Holtz ordered two commissioner badges for Commissioners Holzer and Milton.

Commissioner Larson advised that LOSAP will have a cost of living increase once that amount is known.

Chief Russoniello requested reimbursement for the radio install by Wireless. He was advised that the requested cost of new foam would be paid directly to the vendor.

Commissioner Avin went over the timeline and all items for the budget and other required documents can be approved at the January 17, 2024 meeting.

Commissioner Larson advised that the mail-in ballot information must be published by the end of December. Commissioner Milton advised he will take care of the submission.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**OPEN TO PUBLIC:** None

Commissioner Holtz advised he will run again for commission in February, and requested the Chiefs to let their members know if they want to run for Commissioner. Commissioner Milton advised he will prepare the Candidate Petition for the Chiefs.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Commissioner Holtz, and all passed by those in attendance. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.