

TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
Board of Fire Commissioners
Fire District No. 2
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 14, 2018

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, Monroe Township, New Jersey for the Regular Meeting.

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order with a Salute to the Flag at 7:03 pm. Chairman Martin asked for a moment of silence for all firefighters, EMS, police and military, who have died in the performance of their duties. Commissioner McGee asked all to remember EMS Lynne Goff, who recently passed away.

UPON ROLL CALL made by Commissioner McGee, the following members of the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were present: Glenn Borsuk, Michael Frisch, Jason Martin and Robert McGee. Maurice Mahler was not present.

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

There was one career firefighter present: Chief Carbin

There were no volunteer/support firefighters present.

There were many members of the public present: Francis Farrell, Norm Osborne, Alan Tannenbaum, Sandra Stark, Michael Kamlet, Steven Birnbaum, Joel Greenberg, Candy Watchell, Marty Watchell, and others that came in during meeting.

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

MINUTES

Chairman Martin asked for a review of the minutes.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Mike Fritsch, the minutes of the January 10, 2018 meeting was approved, as amended.

ROLL CALL: Aye Borsuk
Aye Frisch
Aye Martin
Aye McGee

CLAIMS AGAINST THE BOARD & TREASURERS REPORT

Chairman Martin asked the board to review the claims against the board and for the treasurer's report.

Commissioner Frisch read the report:

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| General Operating Claims Total | \$250,624.58 |
| Net Payroll Claims Total | \$78,601.73 |
| Total Claims Against the Board | \$329,226.31 |

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Period ending February 14, 2018

M&T Bank:

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|--------------------|----------------|
| Undesignated Funds | \$1,088,825.52 |
| Designated Funds | \$198,789.33 |
| Total Balance | \$1,287,614.85 |

UPON MOTION MADE by Robert McGee and seconded by Glenn Borsuk, claims against the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were approved in the amount of \$329,226.31.

ROLL CALL: Aye Borsuk
Aye Frisch
Aye Martin
Aye McGee

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU REPORT

Chairman Martin asked for a report from Fire Prevention.

Chief Carbin reported:

- Training has been completed, including volunteers
- 536 Smoke detector test
- Incident run log
- Monthly totals - volunteers
- Yearly totals - volunteers
- Monthly career totals
- Apparatus, equipment and repairs
- 44 new businesses coming in mid-March to April
- 54 applicants have applied for test; 11 have returned them so far. If 60 or less, testing will be done here. If more than 60, testing will be done at the school.
- May commissioner meeting should be firefighter appointment – Chief explained to public the need for hiring
- 2/26 is a Fire Extinguisher presentation at Stonebridge – the Chief is open to going to other communities/group meetings

APPLEGARTH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Chairman Martin conveyed his thanks and appreciation for the invite to the Installation dinner on Saturday at Knob Hill.

Commissioner Borsuk reported that one firefighter completed Fire Fighter 1 and one will be beginning fire school.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Chairman Martin stated that the Fire district Election is this Saturday, 2/17, from 2-9pm. Absentee ballots can go to Middlesex County Clerk until this Friday. Provisional ballots will be counted, since they are validated by county.

Chairman Martin advised that he did an individual poll with each board member to write a rebuttal letter to a letter that had been sent out to voters by Commissioner Mahler.

Chairman Martin read a letter written by Commissioner Mahler on Fire District letter head explaining the upcoming election and “hope for a vote” on his behalf. A second letter was sent by Commissioner Mahler regarding the commissioners on the board and the change to voting at Firehouse. Every community received these letters, except Stonebridge. Neither letter had board approval to be sent.

Chairman Martin did write a rebuttal letter, on District letterhead, with agreement by board prior to sending. Chairman Martin read the letter, and explained the reasoning for one polling location, to keep it fair to all residents, which was voted on and approved by the entire board in 2016. The letter further explained, regardless of where a commissioner lives, the residents interests are in mind, and the commissioners are also taxpayers. This letter can be found on the website, www.station57.org.

Chairman Martin stated there were additional letters with inaccuracies and not sent with board approval by Commissioner Mahler. There was another posting of the letter on something called “nextdoor” with additional inaccuracies. Some residential replies felt they were more care tactics rather than positive reinforcement for fire prevention, and misuse of fire department letterhead. The posting on the website was not on district letter.

Attorney Shaklee supported the need to correct the situation when something is sent out erroneously on letterhead. Only the majority of the board can authorize something going out to the public.

Alan Tannenbaum, who is the candidate mentioned in the letter, stated the last few weeks have been disconcerting. No residents in Stonebridge received the letter, so they wouldn’t know what was being mailed or said on district letter. Discrimination and tax dollars were in bold print in the letters. Mr. Tannenbaum said when residents read the letter, they were thinking they may not get the same service if there is favoritism in Stonebridge. Insulates well being was at risk in the letter. Mr. Tannenbaum had concerns with the letter being written on fire district stationary, and felt it was tampering with the election, and unethical, and the damage has been done, regardless of rebuttal letter.

Chairman Martin stated the board wants the election to be clean and a factual election. The board can’t control how he runs his campaign, but when he speaks, representing the board, it must be factual information.

A member of the public asked if once the election is done, is there any action that can be taken. Attorney Shaklee stated that there is an ethics code that is in state statute. The board is not an enforcement agency for that code.

Commissioner Frisch was bothered that the letter, and negative light it put on the candidate.

Mr. Tannenbaum mentioned that people that have spoken to him about the election don’t know what the board does, and that is part of the damage. He said it sounds like the board supported his candidacy in the letter written.

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Public asked how was first letter distributed. Chairman Martin thinks it was mailed and there was an email blast.

Sandra Stark lives in Clearbrook and she received the letter in a \$6.40 priority mailing with absentee ballots and postage on the ballots. She was curious as to why she received it, and it was on Fire department letterhead. She knows Dr. Tannenbaum and made him aware of the letter.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Martin asked if there was any correspondence. No correspondence to report on.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Martin stated there was no need to have an executive session.

ADJOURN

Chairman Martin asked for a motion to adjourn.

UPON MOTION MADE by Robert McGee and seconded by Mike Frisch, the meeting was adjourned.

ROLL CALL: Aye Borsuk
Aye Frisch
Aye Mahler
Aye Martin
Aye McGee

ROBERT McGEE
Board Secretary

JASON MARTIN
Chairman

NOTE: Appendixes can be obtained upon request from the Board Secretary.

PREPARED BY: Val Cier