



**MONROE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF FIRE
COMMISSIONERS
DISTRICT 2**

10 HALSEY REED ROAD MONROE TOWNSHIP NJ 08831
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STATION57.ORG

JASON MARTIN, CHAIRMAN | GLENN BORSUK, VICE CHAIRMAN | ROBERT MCGEE, SECRETARY
MICHAEL FRISCH, TREASURER | ALAN TANNENBAUM, DEPUTY SECRETARY/TREASURER

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 12, 2023**

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 7:00 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.

UPON ROLL CALL made by Commissioner Jason Martin, the following members of the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were present: Glenn Borsuk, Michael Frisch, Jason Martin, Robert McGee and Alan Tannenbaum.

ALSO PRESENT: Board Attorney Richard J. Shaklee, Esquire, and Lindsay Lesser, Recording Secretary.

There were four career firefighters present: Chief Volkmann, Captain Patel and Firefighters Gillette & DePasquale

There were three members of the volunteer department present: Assistant Chief Jennifer Awad, Patricia O'Conner & Tyler Rizzi

There were no members of the public present.

Chairman Martin announced that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, having been published newspaper, posted on the bulletin board of the Office of the Township Clerk, Fire District #2 website @www.station57.org, and notices sent to those requesting such.

MINUTES

Chairman Martin asked for a review of the June 14, 2023 minutes.

UPON MOTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Alan Tannenbaum, to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting.

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

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:

General Operating Claims Total	\$382,656.15
Net Payroll Claims Total	\$117,710.53
Total Claims Against the Board	\$500,366.68
Period ending July 12, 2023	

Amboy Bank:

Undesignated Funds	\$2,354,013.61
Petty Cash	\$170.00
Designated Funds	\$198,789.33
Total Balance	\$2,552,972.94

Notable evens during this period & subsequently – Bond Principal of \$180,000 and Bond Interest of \$41,950 we paid during this period.

UPON MOTION MADE by Robert McGee and seconded by Alan Tannenbaum, claims against the Monroe Township Board of Fire Commissioners of District No. 2 were approved in the amount of \$500,366.68

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

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Martin asked if the board had any old business to discuss. There was no old business to review.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU REPORT

Chairman Martin asked for the Fire Prevention Report.

Chief Volkmann reported on the following:

- Behind on smoke detector tests, and current on collecting fees
- Review of Incident Run Log
- Review of June Training
- Volunteers live burn is tentatively scheduled for October 19th at the Monmouth Fire Academy

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Martin asked if the board had any new business to discuss.

Commissioner Frisch proposed a change for the housing of rigs, equipment and records currently located at the Applegarth Co#1 firehouse on Applegarth Road to the firehouse on Halsey Reed Road. This change shall be completed on or before August 1st 2023.

This change would require the volunteer members to respond to the Halsey Reed Road station.

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This change would provide additional supervision and increase both camaraderie and training opportunities.

Chairman Martin asked if Commissioner Frisch could provide matrix on how this change would improve circumstances or how success would be measured. Results of this change cannot be objective or subjective, success measurement needs to be defined beforehand.

Commissioner Frisch stated that matrix would be an increase in response and knowing the details of who is responding and when. As for the duration of the program, Commissioner Frisch stated that the program would be monitored for six months and reevaluated in February during the reorganization meeting. Commissioner Frisch did not offer specific measurement matrix details.

Commissioner Borsuk stated that his concern about moving the trucks is that it will increase the distance the volunteers have to travel to respond. This move would not improve the actual member response.

Chairman Martin stated that as an administrative board, the decision had previously been made that allows the Chief to determine the organization of the stations working structure and equipment. Commissioner Frisch agreed, but stated that the current volunteer program is not working and a change needs to be made.

Commissioner Frisch asked Board Attorney Shaklee if the board has the right to enforce this change. Board Attorney Shaklee confirmed the commissioners have oversight and the right to control and supervise the firefighting function.

Volunteer Assistant Chief Awad stated that she cannot force volunteers to respond to calls. Currently, many volunteer members are traveling out of the country and are not available to respond. Volunteers have families and work and that as volunteers, the fire department is not their full-time job. She feels that this change will reduce morale, camaraderie and the volunteer's interest since it's seen as a lack of trust. In addition, this plan appears as though the commissioners are looking to disband the volunteers. Commissioner Frisch stated that was not the case since the volunteers are incorporated and cannot be disbanded. Ms. Awad stated this change will not work in the commissioners favor to gain the results they are seeking.

Patricia O'Conner stated that by pulling the trucks from the volunteer station is a slap in the volunteers face and will make response and training more difficult. It takes away their independence by forcing them to report to the Halsey Reed station to pick up their equipment to drill. This change is an insult to the volunteers.

Commissioner Borsuk said that if end goal is to disband the volunteers, then the commissions should not delay the inevitable and make the appropriate decision today, it is not worth waiting until February. Commissioner Borsuk does not feel that this change will improve the numbers of engaged volunteers nor will it improve volunteer response but also that he does not have an alternate solution. The volunteers will perceive this a putative step that demonstrates a lack of trust which is a larger issue than actual membership response.

Tyler Rizzi, stated that this seems like a membership issue and if that is the case it makes more sense to hold a membership drive to expand the department.

Commissioner McGee asked when the volunteers who are traveling will be back in the country

and that perhaps a compromising would be to wait until they are back to begin the six-month trial period. Ms. Awad stated they will be back the end of August; however, she does not believe waiting will make an impact.

Chairman Martin restated that there is a need to define success with a detailed matrix. He does not understand how moving the equipment will change volunteer response. Any decisions made need to be what is best for the entire district. He also noted that since the Chief has operational control to decide where the equipment should be housed, by not consulting with the Chief first, this decision will overstep his authority.

UPON MOTION MADE by Michael Frisch and seconded by Alan Tannenbaum, to bring the rigs and equipment currently housed Applegarth Road station to the Halsey Reed Road station for a period of six months in an effort to improve the response from the volunteers.

ROLL CALL: Recuse Borsuk
Aye Frisch
No Martin
Aye McGee
Aye Tannenbaum

Chief Volkmann is seeking approval from the board for an entry level hiring test to be advertised before August and for the test to be held in September.

UPON RESOLUTION MADE by Glenn Borsuk and seconded by Jason Martin, to authorize Chief Volkmann to advertise in any means he sees fit to establish an entry level hiring test.

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

Chief Volkmann discussed that the Monroe Police Department is looking to replace the existing CAD system. The Police Department have invited the fire department to participate in the meetings to ensure the system will work for all emergency services departments within Monroe. This is the first time the fire department has been included with these discussions which is a big step forward.

Chief Volkmann sent the Commissioners and email regarding the driveway apron repair. There is currently an agreement in place that the township will pay for one third of the repair costs. The agreement is written dictates that the township cannot take the liberty to begin the bidding process since the fire department is the major stake holder in the project. The township would like to amend the agreement that will allow the township to contract directly with an inhouse engineer. The engineers design cost would then be deducted from the townships one third payment amount. The cost for utilizing this engineer would be minimal compared to the cost if the fire department went to bid on their own. The amendment would be reviewed by Board Attorney Shaklee and if approved will be signed. The commissions agreed this was a favorable resolution and determined a resolution would be made at next months commissions meeting.

Chief Volkmann has established a truck committee to replace the ladder truck. The committee is comprised of both more experienced firefighters as well as newer ones. Chief will provide updates as they become available.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Martin asked if the board had any correspondence to discuss. There was not any correspondence to review.

APPLEGARTH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Chairman Martin asked if there was anything to report from the volunteers. There were no additional comments from the volunteers.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Martin stated there was no need for an executive session.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

ADJOURN

UPON MOTION MADE by Jason Martin and seconded by Michael Frisch, the meeting was adjourned.

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

ROBERT McGEE
Board Secretary
JASON MARTIN
Chairman

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

PREPARED BY: Lindsay Lesser