

EVESHAM TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
December 7, 2023
MINUTES

Commissioner Benjamin Guerrini called the re-organization meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Evesham Township Fire District No. 1 to order at 6:30 PM. Commissioner Guerrini welcomed all in attendance. He opened the meeting with a flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance and a traditional moment of silence for those that have gone before us. The following statement of compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was given by Business Manager Maureen Mitchell: "This meeting is being held in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was transmitted to the Burlington County Times and Central Record on December 12, 2022, filed with the Township Clerk of the Township of Evesham, posted on the bulletin board in the Fire Administration Office that is customarily used for the posting of such notices and mailed to all persons requesting that they receive such notice."

ROLL CALL - The following individuals were present at the roll call, Commissioners: Behnke, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe. Also present were: Chief Carl Bittenbender, Deputy Chief Freedman, Deputy Chief Donnelly, and Business Manager Maureen Mitchell. ABSENT: Baugh

Prior to the election of officers, President Guerrini read a statement thanking the Board, Chief Bittenbender, Deputy Chiefs Donnelly and Freedman, Business Manager Maureen Mitchell, Bonnie and Caiti in the Administration Office and the entire organization for the past year as President of the Board and their continued service to the District. He stated that he was glad that he had held the office but would not be seeking re-election.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commissioner Guerrini called for nominations for the Office of President from Members of the Board. Commissioner Rowe nominated John Behnke for the Office of President. Commissioner Powers seconded the nomination. There being no further nominations for the Office of President being made, Commissioner Guerrini asked for a roll call and the nomination was approved on a unanimous roll call vote of the members present. Commissioner Guerrini declared Commissioner Behnke President and passed chairmanship of the meeting to him, to which President Behnke continued with the election of officers by next calling for nominations for the office of Vice President of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Commissioner Guerrini nominated Commissioner Brian Rowe for Vice President. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Behnke. There being no further nominations being made, President Behnke asked for a roll call and the nomination was approved on a unanimous roll call vote of the members present. President Behnke declared Commissioner Rowe elected as Vice President.

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President Behnke called for nominations for the office of Secretary. President Behnke nominated Commissioner Michael Powers. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rowe. There being no further nominations being made, President Behnke asked for a roll call and the nomination was approved on a unanimous roll call vote of the members present. President Behnke declared Commissioner Powers elected as Secretary.

President Behnke called for nominations for the office of Treasurer. Commissioner Guerrini nominated Commissioner Elizabeth Baugh. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Powers. There being no further nominations being made, President Behnke asked for a roll call and the nomination was approved on a unanimous roll call vote of the members present. President Behnke declared Commissioner Baugh elected as Treasurer.

Firefighter/EMT Devon Lyman was sworn in by President Behnke. FF/EMT Lyman was then pinned by his father.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

Commissioner Rowe made a motion that the minutes of the October 12, 2023 Executive Session, November 6, 2023 Special Meeting, November 9, 2023 Regular Meeting and November 20, 2023 Special Meeting be approved. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Guerrini (10/12 & 11/20), Behnke, and Rowe (10/12, 11/6 & 11/9); NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: Guerrini (11/6 & 11/9), Powers all, Rowe (11/20); ABSENT, Baugh.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The following report for the month of November 2023 was submitted by the Treasurer for approval and read by Manager Mitchell:

Treasurer's Report for the period ended:
November 30, 2023

Beginning Cash Balance	10,583,509.81
Cash Receipts	191,947.53
Cash Disbursements	<u>(1,072,786.58)</u>
Ending Cash Balance	<u><u>9,702,670.76</u></u>

Commissioner Powers made a motion accepting the Treasurer's Report as presented. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a unanimous roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

The following bill list was submitted for approval and read by Manager Mitchell:

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BILL LIST
December 7, 2023

ELAN (P-CARD)	\$ 13,255.02
Heartland	\$ 1,410.61
Payroll #23 & #24	\$ 703,320.27
Payroll Deductions Payable	\$ 30,048.28
NJ Pension & Benefits - SHBP	\$ 69,951.04
NJ Pension & Benefits – Pension Deductions	\$ 44,872.91
Bill List Dated: 12/07/23	\$ 140,607.68

TOTAL PAYMENTS THIS PERIOD \$ 1,003,465.81

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve the payment of bills as contained in the Bill List Report and read by Ms. Mitchell. Commissioner Rowe seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a unanimous roll call vote.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Bittenbender gave a verbal summary of his report that was previously provided to the Board of Fire Commissioners. He focused on the upcoming Holiday Light Parade, stating that it was coming together nicely, and he was looking forward to it. He then stated that the 4th ambulance remount was coming along, and that the 5th ambulance remount will be ready to go soon and that will complete the project. The Chief addressed an ongoing issue at 223 with the bay doors. He explained that there have been a lot of problems with the openers and the springs, and the repair has been on the radar of the facilities assessment. The current doors are fully custom, so it is difficult to replace like with like.

Commissioner Rowe asked if there are plans to replace the doors at 221 and the Chief responded to him that they are on the radar, but they are more expensive as there are more bays.

BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Mitchell gave a verbal summary of her report that was previously provided to the Board of Fire Commissioners. Ms. Mitchell explained that a formal resolution for the DCA Grant application is on the agenda for tonight as it is a requirement for the DCA.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

President Behnke opened the Public Comment section for the agenda items only.

There were no comments from any members of the public, so President Behnke closed the public portion on agenda items only.

CONSENT AGENDA – RESOLUTIONS 2023-79 to 2023-91
Resolution No. 2023 - 79 Designating Official Newspapers

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- Resolution No. 2023 - 80 Designating 2024 Meeting Schedule
- Resolution No. 2023 - 81 Establishing Date, Time and Place for the Annual Reorganization Meeting
- Resolution No. 2023 - 82 Appointment of Auditor
- Resolution No. 2023 - 83 Appointment of Architect
- Resolution No. 2023 - 84 Appointment of Labor Counsel
- Resolution No. 2023 - 85 Appointment of Engineer
- Resolution No. 2023 – 86 Resolution Authorizing the Application to DCA for Fire Grant
- Resolution No. 2023 – 87 Appointing A Fire Official
- Resolution No. 2023 – 88 Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Per Diem EMT
- Resolution No. 2023 – 89 A Resolution Authorizing an Employment Agreement with Caitlyn Wilson
- Resolution No. 2023 – 90 A Resolution Authorizing an Employment Agreement with Bonnie Cherry
- Resolution No. 2023 – 91 A Resolution Authorizing an Employment Agreement with Gregory Mullen

President Behnke asked the board members if there was anything on the Consent Agenda that needed to be removed. Commissioner Guerrini requested that Resolution 2023-80 (Designating 2024 Meeting Schedule) and Resolution 2023-84 (Appointment of Labor Counsel) be removed from Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of 2023-80 and 2023-84. Commissioner Rowe seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Guerrini, Powers (2023-79 to 2023-88) and Rowe; NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: Powers (2023-89, 2023-90, 2023-91); ABSENT, Baugh.

- Resolution No. 2023 - 80 Designating 2024 Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2023 - 80. Commissioner Rowe seconded the motion. Commissioner Guerini stated that in the past the meetings have gone late into the night which is why he is not in favor of moving the meeting time back. President Behnke indicated that the time and day change was made to accommodate Commissioner Powers' schedule. There being no further questions a

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roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS, Guerrini; ABSTAINED: none; ABSENT, Baugh.

Resolution No. 2023 - 84 Appointment of Labor Counsel

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2023 - 84. President Behnke seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS, Guerrini; ABSTAINED: none; ABSENT, Baugh.

Resolution No. 2023 - 92 Resolution to Award State Contract for Bay Doors

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2023 - 92. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: none; ABSENT, Baugh.

Resolution No. 2023 - 93 A Resolution Authorizing Certain Budgetary Transfers

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2023 - 93. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: none; ABSENT, Baugh.

NEW BUSINESS – None

OLD BUSINESS – President Behnke read the title of each Lexipol policy and its coordinating number. He stated that these policies are online and within the guidelines of the JIF. He also stated that the policies were vetted through the prior solicitor.

President Behnke made a motion to approve the policies. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Behnke, Guerrini, and Rowe; NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: Powers; ABSENT, Baugh.

MEMBERSHIP – Volunteer EMT Chloe Blackmon

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the membership; Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the resignation produced the following result: AYES: Behnke, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: Baugh.

GOOD & WELFARE – Commissioner Rowe stated that he is still a Per Diem EMT with Virtua and during a recent call he worked alongside crew members from 223. He stated that the service was outstanding, and he was proud of the members on staff serving the district.

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President Behnke welcomed Commissioner Powers and thanks Commissioner Guerrini for the past year as president. He wished everyone happy holidays on behalf of the board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Nick Palumbo addressed the board with questions regarding response times to the south end of town. He told of an incident over Memorial Day weekend where a motor vehicle accident took place in front of his house, and it took approximately 17 minutes for a response crew to arrive. He did explain that it was a golf cart accident with an ejection and that may not have been relayed, however, neighbors stated that they didn't understand why such a delay when a fire house located nearby. He continued to inform of a pedestrian/MVA incident just last week and tonight as well there was an MVA on Hopewell Rd. He said that there are still emergencies on the south end of town even if the population density may reflect otherwise. He asked if there is a plan to staff 225, and he acknowledged as a volunteer in another town, he understands that people don't have time to volunteer.

President Behnke responded to Mr. Palumbo stating that there has been significant conversation about reopening 225 in our most recent budget workshop and that he understands his concerns.

Mr. Palumbo then asked about the standard of cover and in-house duty crew staffing model.

The Chief replied that since the adoption of the Standard of Cover the Board took action to provide in house duty crew at 221 and 223 to move toward compliance with the standard of cover adopted.

President Behnke stated that if Mr. Palumbo will write down his number the Chief will reach out, to which the Chief agreed.

2. Anthony Cappetta addressed the Chief, stating that he had a proposal for the Santa Run 2024. He said that the volunteers will take over if they would like them to do it, although it is too late for 2023 they will do anything to bring it back in 2024.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Guerrini motioned to adjourn, and Commissioner Powers seconded it. All were in favor. President Behnke adjourned the meeting at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Mitchell
Business Manager