

EVESHAM TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1
BOARD OF FIRE COMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
November 12, 2024
MINUTES

Vice President Rowe called the regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Evesham Township Fire District No. 1 to order at 7:01 PM at Station 221. Vice President Rowe 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 Administrator 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 8, 2023, 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: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe. Also, present: Chief Carl Bittenbender, DC Ryan Donnelly, DC Scott Freedman, Business Administrator Maureen Mitchell, and Solicitor Susan Hodges. ABSENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETINGS

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve the minutes from October 15, 2024, Regular Meeting. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Baugh, Guerrini, Powers and Rowe; NAYS, None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The following report for the month of October 2024 was read for acceptance by Treasurer Baugh:

Treasurer's Report for the period ended:

October 31, 2024

Beginning Cash Balance	\$11,220,756.51
Cash Receipts	3,195,685.43
Cash Disbursements	<u>(689,099.58)</u>
Ending Cash Balance	<u><u>\$13,727,342.36</u></u>

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion accepting the Treasurer's Report as presented. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Baugh, Guerrini, Powers and Rowe; NAYS, None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

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APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

BILL LIST

November 12, 2024

M&T P-Card	\$	10,951.78
Heartland	\$	699.77
Payroll #21 & #22	\$	490,392.23
Payroll Deductions Payable	\$	33,490.95
NJ Pension & Benefits – SHBP	\$	66,445.12
NJ Pension & Benefits – Pension	\$	49,428.28
Bill List Dated: 11/12/24	\$	110,367.94
PSE&G	\$	1,305.75

TOTAL PAYMENTS THIS PERIOD

\$ 763,081.82

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the payment of bills as presented. Commissioner Baugh seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the motion produced the following result: AYES, Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS, none; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

Commissioner Powers asked for a list of recurring bills. Administrator Mitchell informed him it was in the Commissioner folder on the drive. Commissioner Powers requested it be attached to each bill list. Administrator Mitchell indicated she would attach it going forward.

CHIEF'S REPORT

The Chief started his report by reviewing the operations summary for the month of October. He touched on the fires that occurred in the last few weeks. The forest fire on 10/30, the house fire on 11/2, the Bethany Run Fire on 11/7 and 11/8. He expressed his pride in all of the District's members for their efforts and extended his thanks. He stated that the presentation for the 2025 Budget would be done at the meeting tonight.

Vice President Rowe asked about the Holiday Light Parade. The Chief responded that he just had a meeting with the Township, and they are going to have festivities as well as the parade. The Fire Department will handle the parade, and the Township will handle the festivities. The plan is for the event to be from 4p-7p and with the parade to start around 6. Last year's parade was a great success, and we are hoping for great weather.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Hodges stated that she is finalizing the DEP project and working out the details in the deed notice the District will need to file. She also expressed her thanks, as a resident, to the members for keeping everyone safe during the recent fires.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Administrator Mitchell gave a verbal summary of her report that was previously provided to the Board.

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2025 BUDGET PRESENTATION – Chief Bittenbender presented the PowerPoint presentation detailing the proposed 2025 Budget up for adoption this evening. Business Administrator Mitchell indicated that the average household would see an increase of \$27.89 per year which is less than 2.50 per month, for the proposed increased service coverage.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY – None

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2024 – 50 Authorizing the Budget to be Read by Title Only

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 50. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

Resolution No. 2024 – 51 Resolution to Adopt 2025 Budget

Business Administrator Mitchell read the Budget by title indicating that the Annual Budget as presented for adoption reflects Total Revenues of \$15,501,109.14 which includes amount to be raised by taxation of \$12,007,261.14, and Total Appropriations of \$15,501,109.14.

Vice President Rowe opened the Public Hearing on the Budget, seeing no public comment he closed the Public Hearing on the budget.

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 51. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET – None

Resolution No. 2024 – 52 Resolution Amending Professional Service Contract for General and Labor Counsel

Commissioner Baugh made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 52. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

Resolution No. 2024 – 53 Resolution Authorizing the Hiring of Per Diem EMT

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 53. Commissioner Baugh seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

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Resolution No. 2024 – 54 Resolution Authorizing Certain Budgetary Transfers

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 54. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

Resolution No. 2024 – 55 Resolution Authorizing the Donation of Surplus Fire Hose

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 55. Commissioner Baugh seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: Guerrini; ABSENT: None

Resolution No. 2024 – 56 Resolution Authorizing Refund of EMS Overpayment

Commissioner Baugh made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 56. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

Resolution No. 2024 – 57 Resolution Authorizing payment of Excess Time

Commissioner Guerrini made a motion to table Resolution Number 2024 – 57. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion to table produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Commissioner Powers made a motion that all Chiefs and the Administrator time off to exceed 1 day, the employee must notify all 5 Board members.

Commissioner Guerrini said that this should be run by the solicitor first to ensure we aren't in violation of any contractual agreements. Commissioner Powers said he would. Solicitor Hodges stated that she would need to look at all the contracts before confirming.

2. Commissioner Powers made a motion to conduct exit interviews on departing personnel. He stated that we could work with the Township's HR Department. Solicitor Hodges said that she was not sure that could be done. Commissioner Powers then stated that he wanted to make a motion to establish a policy to adopt exit interviews.

Commissioner Powers made a motion to establish a policy to conduct exit interviews. Vice President Rowe seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

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3. Commissioner Powers made a motion to establish a formal EMS Division, with an EMS Captain. Commissioner Powers stated that there is a \$5 million dollar cost differential between a Firefighter/EMT and an EMT and we should be staffing our EMS units with EMTs. He indicated he would work with the Chief to fit it into an organizational chart.

Commissioner Guerrini said that it seems as if putting the cart before the horse and that he would like to see a game plan before we establish a division.

Commissioner Powers made a motion to establish an EMS Division by name. Commissioner Baugh seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: Guerrini; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Policy Approval: 319 Driver's License Requirements

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Policy 319. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None

MEMBERSHIP

1. New Members:
 - A) Shaquille Lattie – volunteer firefighter
 - B) Ryan Nguyen – Junior Auxiliary Members
 - C) Joyce Abd – EMT recruit
2. Terminate:

Alissa Hough and Joseph Hough

Commissioner Powers asked about the nature of the terminations and the Chief indicated that it was due to lack of activity.

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

GOOD & WELFARE

Commissioner Powers shared that the Hale was used at Somerdale's ceremony. It was driven 14 miles there and back. It was used to recreate a photo that Somerdale had in their firehouse.

Commissioner Baugh wanted to thank the Fire Prevention Office for their efforts during Fire Prevention Month going to all the schools in the District. It is much appreciated.

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Regarding the forest fires, it is nice to hear that there were no injuries and that there was such a quick response. She wanted to congratulate the new elected Board Members, Bruce Albright and Bradford McIntyre and lastly, she wanted to tell Vice President Rowe that it has been a pleasure and an honor to serve with you. She mentioned that Commissioner Rowe treated her with respect and left the District in a better place.

Vice President Rowe stood to address the Board. He expressed his thanks to them and read a prepared statement reflecting on his years serving as a Commissioner. He thanked Administrator Mitchell for answering his questions regarding finances and he thanked Chief Bittenbender, Chief Officers, the line officers, firefighters, EMTs, administrative staff and all members of the district for their support and trust in him.

He spoke on the just adopted 2025 Budget which calls for expansion of staffing to provide overnight coverage to Station 225. He spoke of the Hub and Spoke model and hopes the expansion plans takes into account the impact on staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT –

1. Bruce Albright just wanted to say thank you to everyone. I live in the area which is less than a quarter of a mile from the recent fires. He also wanted to thank Commissioner Rowe for his service.
2. John Behnke stated that he is a former Commissioner and wanted to take a quick minute to thank Commissioner Rowe for his services. Brian was the VP when I was President over the last year. We had a great collaboration, and I appreciated your support and all your service. On another note, we spoke of the service delivery method to provide cover, thrilled to see what you have done with a budget that expands coverage without needing to go out for a referendum.

ADJOURNMENT TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution No. 2024 – 58 Executive Session – Pending or anticipated litigation in which the public body is, or may become a party.

Vice President Rowe indicated that the Board anticipates going into executive session for approximately 30 minutes. The board will not take action when we reconvene in public session.

Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2024 – 58. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. A roll call vote on the foregoing motion produced the following result: AYES: Baugh, Guerrini, Powers, and Rowe; NAYS: None; ABSTAINED: None; ABSENT: None.

Vice President Rowe adjourned the meeting to executive session at 8:28 pm.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Powers made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Guerrini seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a unanimous roll call vote of the members present.

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Vice President Rowe adjourned the meeting at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Mitchell
Business Administrator