

The Board of Fire Commissioners
In The Township of South Brunswick
Regular Monthly Meeting
November 9, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire District No. 1, in the Township of South Brunswick, was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Orchard, in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call:

Members present: Commissioners Josephson, Luterzo, Orchard and Olson.

Members absent: Commissioner Berezansky

Flag Salute: completed

Agenda Changes: Presentation by Attorneys Richard and Neil Braslow, regarding the Fire District Yearly Election.

Mr. Braslow opened this presentation by stating that there had been a huge debate about holding the Election the third week in February, citing low voter turnout. He stated that he participated in negotiating a bill to allow, on a Permissive basis, the Election to be held in November at the General Election. He noted that it is up to each Fire District, if they want to make the change.

Mr. Braslow stated that one of the pre-cursors to switch is the ability for either the election districts in a Township aligned with the Fire District boundaries or the ability to alter that, which means that the County Board of Elections can amend the election districts or Fire Districts could amend their boundaries. He noted that there are several advantages to switching to the November General Election.

1. The County Board of Elections and County Clerk would be responsible for all the Elections costs, as well as publications. The only notice the District would be responsible for publishing would be to indicate how many seats are open and that petitions are available through the County Clerk's office.
2. The District budget would not get voted on, however, the budget would still need to be introduced, a hearing held and then adopted. All of the timeframes have not changed and a Temporary Budget would not be necessary.
3. If the District decides to move to November and can undertake a Capital Project with cash, it would only require only a public hearing, not a vote. If financing is involved, at this moment, voter approval is necessary. This point is still being worked on.

Mr. Braslow stated there were a number of issues, should the District decide to switch to November.

1. Commissioners' terms would expire the first Tuesday in December, not in February. Should a Commissioner's term were to expire in February, it would be extended to December.
2. If the District was to exceed the Cap, an election would still be held in February.
3. One concern that the change to November was that the District election would become political. Based on the Districts that have switched, this concern has been unfounded.
4. Should the District switch to December, it cannot switch back to February.
5. The cost of not switching to December, could greatly increase the District's budget.
6. Another concern, should the Election turn into a mail-in ballot only, any budget may not pass.

Questions from the Commissioners:

Mr. Orchard stated that he felt the District was being forced into moving to November because of the cost. Mr. Braslow stated that he did not believe the District has enough time for switch, as the three districts in the Township are still working on aligning their coverage areas with the election districts. He suggested that the District include a sizeable amount of money for the February Election process and he noted that there is work going on to get funding to help out all the districts.

Mr. Orchard asked when the District must make their decision for next November's election. Mr. Braslow responded that the resolution to switch should be done prior to the next budget election cycle, which is December.

Mr. Perez will work on getting the costs for the election together to include in the budget. In addition, the work needs to be done on getting the districts aligned.

Address from the Public: none

Approval of October Regular Meeting Minutes: Mr. Olson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Mr. Luterzo seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Reports:

Line Activities – Chief Perez presented the following report (file copy attached):

1. Stats for month of October: 262 fire calls; 27 training; 22 work details.
2. The Company has been attending training drills with Princeton and Plainsboro (mutual aid partners).
3. The new engine is being worked on and should be at the firehouse the week of Thanksgiving. Hopefully, it will be in service by the end of the year.

President's Report – nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report/Voucher List – (file copy attached). After review of the List, Mr. Olson made a motion to approve it, as presented; Mr. Josephson seconded the motion. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Secretary's Report – Mr. Olson had nothing to report.

Fire Coordinator's Report- Mr. Perez reported that a life insurance company has been found that would keep the benefit of \$25K whole after 70. A quote should be received this week. All other insurance policies have been renewed.

Chairman – Mr. Orchard has nothing to report.

Standing Committee Reports:

Fire Company Liaison – nothing to report

Rescue Squad Liaison – nothing to report

Public Relations – everything is fine.

State Association – nothing has been received.

Insurance – all policies renewed and paid.

Unfinished Business: 2021 Election/Budget Decision: previously discussed with Mr. Braslow.

New Business: 2021 Budget and LOSAP Resolution:

LOSAP: Members must attend 40 fire calls; 15 drills; 10 work details; 5 business meetings, for a total of 70 points to qualify for 2020. Mr. Perez read into the record Resolution 20—14 (file copy attached). Mr. Olson made a motion to approve the resolution and Mr. Luterzo seconded it. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Josephson-yes; Mr. Orchard-yes; Mr. Luterzo-yes; Mr. Olson-yes; Ms. Berezansky was absent. The Resolution passed unanimously.

Mr. Perez reported that the contract with the Fire Company, which has the incentive in it, also follows that scheduled. The Board agreed to amend the contract to match the 70 point schedule.

Mr. Perez informed the Board that the 1996 Fire Safety Trailer has fallen into disrepair and is not road worthy. Districts 1 and 3 have already passed a resolution to get rid of surplus equipment, so Mr. Perez presented Resolution 20-13 (file copy attached). Mr. Luterzo made a motion to approve and Mr. Olson seconded. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Josephson-yes; Mr. Orchard-yes; Mr. Luterzo-yes; Mr. Olson-yes; Ms. Berezansky was absent. The resolution passed unanimously.

The contract with the Township to supplement the Deputy Fire Marshall at a cost of \$30K, was brought up. Mr. Luterzo made a motion to approve the Resolution 20-15 and Mr. Josephson seconded it. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Josephson-yes; Mr. Orchard-yes; Mr. Luterzo-yes; Mr. Olson-yes; Ms. Berezansky was absent. The resolution passed unanimously.

Executive Session: none

Address from the Public: none

Adjournment: As there was no further business to discuss, Mr. Olson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Josephson seconded it. A vote was taken and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bonnie R. L. Knigge

Filename: mr110920