

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1
THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on January 26, 2023 in person and via Zoom at 7:00 PM.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER / STATEMENT OF NOTICE

Commissioner Novak called the meeting to order and stated that the notice of the meeting had been posted on the Hopewell Township Municipal Bulletin Board and forwarded to the Hopewell Valley News and Times of Trenton, and had been posted on the Hopewell Township Fire District Web-Site in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Novak.

ROLL CALL

Chairperson Burd-	Absent
Vice-Chairperson Novak-	Present
Secretary Jones-	Present
Treasurer Tomaro-	Present
Commissioner Rodriguez-	Present

MINUTES SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

Regular and Executive Session Meeting Minutes for 1/12/2023 attended by all Commissioners were submitted and approved. Commissioner Tomaro made the motion and Commissioner Rodriguez, Jr. seconded.

PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA) Chief Pedersen gave an update on Tanker 53-1.

TREASURER’S REPORT

BILLS & CLAIMS

January 26, 2023

Authorized cash disbursements requiring approval for payment of bills in the following amounts:

Bill List		\$25,457.68
Pay Date	January 19, 2023	\$78,281.88
Total Disbursements:		\$103,739.56

Commissioner Tomaro mentioned the notable bills.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro	X		X			
Jones		X	X			
Rodriguez			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

UNFINISHED BUSINESS | WORK SESSION | SUB COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

- A. Volunteer Recruitment: Commissioner Jones will assist Commissioner Novak on this subcommittee, no progress
- B. EMS Billing & Department of Health Licensing: Agreement has been signed with EMS billing company, working on configuring billing with company. Licensing is continuing to be worked on.
- C. EMS – Hopewell Valley: Brief meeting was held prior to Commissioners Meeting with all squads and Commissioners. Spoke about Capital Health contract and contributions from the Boroughs.
- D. Development in Hopewell Valley: Fire Marshall Fosina remains involved in the new developments. Discussed other future development as well as the new park coming to the Trap Rock Quarry on Route 29.
- E. Shared Services Agreements: Commissioners Jones and Tomaro will be meeting with Boroughs soon to discuss.
- F. Future Tax Referendum: Working with The Canning Group, State requires Referendum to be held in February, Chief Martin is in talks with the state about the costs of holding a special election.
- G. American Recovery Act Funds | Funding from Hopewell Township: Chairperson Burd is in contact with Deputy Mayor Peters-Manning.
- H. TS-53 Replacement | Vehicle Replacement: The Board of Fire Commissioners would like to work toward a solution to replace Telesquirt 53. Chief Pedersen has started investigating used telesquirts that could become available for purchase in the near future,
- I. Tanker 53-1: Chief Pedersen has contacted Chief Chipowsky regarding the donation on Tanker 53-1 to the Fire Museum.
- J. Fire Safety Trailer: To be discussed at next Commissioners meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2023-20

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT FOR FIRE INSPECTION SERVICES WITH THE BOROUGH OF PENNINGTON

WHEREAS, the Borough of Pennington (the “Borough”), is responsible for certain fire inspection services pursuant to the Uniform Fire Safety Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-195, et. Seq.) (the “Fire Safety Act”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Uniform Shared Services and Consolidation Act (N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1, et. Seq.), the Borough desires to contract with the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 (the “Board”) for the provision of fire inspection services and other certain services required by the Fire Safety Act from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Borough and the Board are both “local units” and the fire inspection services and other certain services required by The Fire Safety Act are “shared services” within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 40A:65-3.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board Chairman is hereby authorized and directed to execute a Shared Services Agreement between the Borough of Pennington and the Board for the provision of fire inspection services and other certain services required by The Fire Safety Act, substantially in the form annexed hereto (the “Agreement”).

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

RESOLUTION 2023-21

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1 TO EXECUTE A SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

WHEREAS, a need exists to enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the Township of Hopewell to allow for the reimbursement of funds paid by the Township for motor vehicle fuel, motor vehicle parts, postage, and the cleaning of uniforms; and,

WHEREAS, the Township Mayor authorized and executed the Shared Services Agreement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1, Board of Fire Commissioners hereby authorizes the Chairperson and Secretary to execute a Shared Services Agreement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:65-1 et. seq., with the Township of Hopewell, in substantially the same form as the agreement annexed hereto.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro			X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.		X	X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

RESOLUTION 2023-22

A RESOLUTION THANKING FIRE CHIEF JAMES DEFORTE

WHEREAS, Chief James Deforte began his career with the Pennington Fire Company, Mercer County, New Jersey in 1981, was promoted through the ranks and ultimately served as Deputy Fire Chief from 2007-2011, 2018-2019, and as Fire Chief from 2012-2017 and 2020-2022; and,

WHEREAS, Chief James Deforte served as Fire Chief for nine years; and,

WHEREAS, Chief James Deforte’s service and devotion to Hopewell Township and its fire suppression operations have proven to be an enormous benefit to Hopewell Township and its residents and have contributed to Hopewell Township having contributed to the overall public safety; and,

WHEREAS, the Hopewell Township Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners believes that it is in the best interest of the Township and its residents to recognize, honor, and thank Chief James Deforte for his years of devoted service to Hopewell Township,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on the 26th day of January 2023 by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No.1:

The Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1 Board of Fire Commissioners along with all of the other Fire District employees extend our sincerest gratitude and thanks for his many years of dedicated service to the Hopewell Township community and wish him well in all future endeavors.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

RESOLUTION 2023-23

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CERTIFIED LIST OF ELIGIBLE VOLUNTEERS FROM THE UNION FIRE COMPANY AND RESCUE SQUAD FOR THE LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1 (the Board) is in receipt of a Certified List of Eligible Volunteers from the Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad for the Length of Service Award Program for the calendar year 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds the list acceptable and approves the list to be posted for 30-days; and

WHEREAS, after said 30-day posting has been completed, contributions to individual eligible volunteer accounts shall be deposited.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1, Mercer County, that the Certified List of Eligible Volunteers of the Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad is accepted and approved.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro			X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.		X	X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

RESOLUTION 2023-24

A RESOLUTION THANKING CHIEF HEATHER VARRASSE

WHEREAS, in 2022, Mercer County and Hopewell Valley lost Chief Heather Varrasse who was a dedicated and loyal public servant for many years. Chief Varrasse graduated from the Hopewell Valley Central High School with honors as part of the National Honor Society in 1999 and received her bachelor’s degree in Science from Thomas Edison State College in 2003; and,

WHEREAS, Chief Varrasse began her emergency services career with the Pennington First Aid Squad in 1997 and obtained her license as an Emergency Medical Technician; and,

WHEREAS, Chief Varrasse became a member of the Hopewell Fire Department and Emergency Medical Unit where she served many administrative offices and operational offices including Firefighter/EMT and rising through the ranks of the department as EMS Lieutenant, EMS Deputy Chief, and EMS Chief; and,

WHEREAS, Chief Varrasse was employed by the Hopewell Valley Emergency Services Unit in 2003 as a per diem Firefighter/EMT and was employed by the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 from 2006-2008 as an Administrative Assistant and Purchasing Agent; and,

WHEREAS, Chief Varrasse was employed in 2003 by Capital Health Systems Lifecomm as a dispatcher and transitioned to the Mercer County Emergency Services Communication Center rising through the ranks to Lead Dispatcher and Supervisor; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on the 26th day of January 2023 by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 along with all of the other Fire District employees and Hopewell Valley volunteers believe it necessary to recognize, honor, and thank Chief Heather Varrasse for her many years of devoted service, tireless dedication, and continuous noble acts of selflessness to the residents of Hopewell Valley. Chief Varrasse you will be missed.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

Commissioner mentioned memories of Chief Varrassee, she was a valuable volunteer to the community and will be missed.

RESOLUTION 2023-25

A RESOLUTION THANKING CHARLES VAN HISE FOR HIS SERVICE

WHEREAS, Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad life member Charles Van Hise recently passed away; and,

WHEREAS, Firefighter Van Hise joined the Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad in 1969 as a junior member and then a senior member in 1971; and,

WHEREAS, Firefighter Van Hise joined and served in the United States Air Force from 1972 to 1986; and,

WHEREAS, Firefighter Van Hise after military service returned and road with both the Fire Company and the Rescue Squad; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED on the 26th day of January 2023 by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 along with all of the other Fire District employees and Hopewell Valley volunteers believe it necessary to recognize, honor, and thank Firefighter Charles Van Hise for his many years of service to the United States and Hopewell Valley.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro			X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.		X	X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

Chief Pedersen announced the recent passing of Life Member to the Union Fire Company & Rescue Squad, Anna Kintzel and a moment of silence was observed.

RESOLUTION 2023-26

RESOLUTION OF THE HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1, COUNTY OF MERCER, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF HUMAN RESOURCES TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT CONSULTANT SERVICES THROUGH THE COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING PROCESS

WHEREAS, the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 (DISTRICT) has a desire to provide Human Resources Temporary Employment Consultant Services as an efficient outsourced service for its human resources function; and

WHEREAS, such services are currently available to be provided through the competitive contracting process under the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1(b)(3).; and

WHEREAS, the District desires to evaluate such offerings from Vendors within the procedures as set forth in the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law (N.J.S.A.40A:11-4.1 et. seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:34-4 et. Seq.); and

WHEREAS, the District desires to enter into a contract for up to five (5) years that will satisfy the needs of the District; and

WHEREAS, as per statute the process will be administered by the Qualified Purchasing Agent;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The Qualified Purchasing Agent is hereby authorized to commence the competitive contract/ procurement as allowable under the New Jersey Local Publics Contract Law allowing for a minimum of 20 days’ notice after advertisement to receive responses, per Local Publics Contract Law.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro			X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.		X	X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

RESOLUTION 2023-27

A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING A PUBLIC AGENCY COMPLIANCE OFFICER (P.A.C.O.)

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.2 et seq., each public agency shall annually designate an officer or employee to serve as its Public Agency Compliance Officer (P.A.C.O); and,

WHEREAS, the individual designated as the Public Agency Compliance Officer will be the point of contact for all matters concerning implementation and administration of the legal requirements of the Equal Employment Opportunity Monitoring Program; and,

WHEREAS, the Public Agency Compliance Officer is also responsible for administering contracting procedures pertaining to equal employment regarding both the public agency and its service providers; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-3.3, each public agency shall notify the State of New Jersey, Department of the Treasury, Division of Purchase & Property, Contract Compliance Audit Unit, EEO Monitoring Program of its designation; and,

WHEREAS, the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 wishes to designate Chief Matthew Martin to serve as its Public Agency Compliance Officer for the calendar year 2023; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Hopewell Township Fire District No.1 that Chief Matthew Martin is hereby designated to serve as its Public Agency Compliance Officer for the calendar year 2023.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

PUBLIC COMMNET (NON AGENDA): Squad coverages were discussed and availability of 159 staff to cover. Chief Reed gave an update on the Volunteer Recruitment Hopewell Borough EMS was conducting including Career Day at HVCHS, advertising in the Catholic Communities bulletin, Adopt a Highway and looking into other outreach events with Rider University and TCNJ.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Fire Commissioners went into closed session at 7:54 pm.

**RESOLUTION 2023-28
EXECUTIVE SESSION**

WHEREAS the Open Public Meetings Act permits the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1 to exclude the public from a portion of the meeting in order to discuss matters requiring confidentiality per N.J.S.A. 10:4-12; and

WHEREAS, the Board is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Commissioners of Fire District No. 1 in the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer as follows:

1. The Board intends to discuss certain matters which are deemed confidential pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 in Executive Session.
2. The scope of the aforesaid executive session will be limited to the following:
 - A. EMS Contracts
3. Minutes of the Executive Session will be disclosed to the public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Rodriguez, Jr.			X			
Novak			X			
Burd						X

ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Fire Commissioners returned to open session at 9:10 pm after checking the vestibule and virtual waiting room for meeting attendees. Commissioner Tomaro motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Jones at 9:11 pm. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Randi Malkiewicz
Admin Clerk

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02 / 16 / 2023
18:17:30 UTC

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