

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1  
35 Belle Mead-Griggstown Road, P.O. Box 130  
Belle Mead, N.J. 08502**

**Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2025**

**Call to Order** – The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was called to order at the firehouse at 7:30 p.m. by Commissioner Spohn, following proof of publication in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. The Annual Meeting Notice was published in the Courier News (official newspaper of the district) and provided to the Montgomery News and Packet Publications, filed with the municipal clerk, posted at the Montgomery Township municipal building, the Board's website, offices and provided to any person requesting same prior to the meeting.

**Roll Call** – Upon Roll Call the following commissioners were present: Commissioners Phil Adams, Ricky Puleio Jr., Michael Parise and William Spohn. Absent: Commissioners William Hyncik.

Also present: Chief Kevin Schroeck, Bookkeeper Lynn Franchino, Engineer Frank Wendling III and Attorney Eric Perkins

**Certification of FY 2025 Election Results and Budget Referendum**

Chairman Spohn noted that 85 votes were cast in favor of the FY 2025 budget and that 30 votes were cast against the budget. Mr. Spohn received 101 votes for re-election to the Board. Mr. Adams received 104 votes.

Commissioner Parise made a motion to certify the results of the election. Commissioner Puleio seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted.

Attorney Eric Perkins administered the oath of office to Mr. Spohn and Mr. Adams for three-year terms expiring in March 2028.

**Election of Board Officers**

Commissioner Spohn proposed the following slate of officers for 2025

William Spohn, Chair  
Michael Parise, Vice Chair  
William Hyncik, Treasurer  
Philip Adams, Secretary  
Rick Puleio, EEOC

Commissioner Parise seconded the motion, and the positions were confirmed by a unanimous single vote.

Chairman Spohn indicated that he will change the BOFC email addresses to reflect the new officers. Commissioner Adams assumes responsibility for postings and maintenance of the BOFC website.

Chairman Spohn made the following appointments:

William Hyncik, CFO  
Michael Parise, LOSAP administrator  
William Spohn, Emergency Services Representative  
Ricky Puleio, EEOC coordinator  
Phil Adams, Public Access Compliance Officer  
Phil Adams, Public Records Officer/ BOFC Web officer  
Michael Parise, Fire Company Liaison  
Phil Adams, Fire Prevention Bureau Liaison

#### **Resolution 2025-10 Appointment of Fire District Attorney**

Eric M. Perkins, Esq. of Skillman, New Jersey is hereby appointed as BOFC attorney for a term beginning March 11th, 2025 and ending on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at an annual contract fee of \$17,500.00 plus expenses, and to prepare Board minutes at a contract fee not to exceed \$2,600.00. This contract is awarded as a professional service under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A: 11-5(1)(a) and is on file and available for public inspection at the fire district offices.

#### **Resolution 2025-11 Appointment of Fire District Auditors**

Solitario & Tierney, CPA's of Spotswood, New Jersey are retained as BOFC Auditors for the fiscal and LOSAP years ended December 31, 2024, and for financial review services, at a cost not to exceed \$12,000.00. This contract is awarded as a professional service under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a) and is on file and available for public inspection at the fire district offices.

#### **Resolution 2025-12 Appointment of Fire District Bookkeeper**

Lynn Franchino of Neshanic Station, New Jersey, is appointed as BOFC Bookkeeper for a term beginning March 11th, 2025 and ending on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at an annual contract fee of \$9,000.00 plus reimbursement for the annual Quickbooks subscription and other expenses. This contract is on file and available for public inspection at the fire district offices

## **RESOLUTION 2025-13 Appointment of Fire District Insurance Broker**

The fire district requires the services of knowledgeable insurance professionals to obtain insurance coverages necessary to support fire district operations and Nottingham Agency of Hamilton Square, New Jersey, a licensed broker, has demonstrated a professional relationship with specialized carriers necessary to provide the coverages required. Accordingly, Nottingham Agency is appointed broker of record for a term beginning March 11th, 2025 and ending March 10, 2026, to provide insurance services to the fire district relative to all insurance coverages required in the course of fire district business. Compensation under this contract will be based on commission for services. This contract is awarded as an Extraordinary Unspecified Service pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a), 40A:11-5(1)(m) and the New Jersey Pay to Play regulations and is on file and available for public inspection at the fire district offices.

Commissioner Adams moved Resolutions 2025-10, 11, 12 and 13. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Puleio. The Board adopted the listed resolutions by a unanimous vote.

**Approval of Minutes** – The minutes of the February 11<sup>th</sup> 2025 meeting were presented.

*Motion to approve the minutes of the February 11<sup>th</sup> board meeting was made by Chairman Spohn; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Parise. Motion passed without objection.*

**Public Comment** – None

### **Meeting Updates** –

Emergency Services –No meeting last month.

Fire Prevention – No meeting.

Rescue Task Force- Planning is underway for a drill at a date to be established.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Monthly Bills/ Financial Statement Review** – A copy of the Treasurer's report, attached hereto and incorporated as part of these minutes, was made available to each Commissioner with a listing and description of bills to be paid.

*Administration: Advertising: \$147.50 (2025); Elections: \$3,177.45 (2025); Bookkeeping \$1,981.25 (2025); Office Expense-Other: \$766.35 (2025); Professional Services-Legal: \$4,250.00 (2025).*

**TOTAL ADMINISTRATION: \$10,322.55 (2025)**

*Operations: General Operating Expenses/Medical: \$1,081.00 (2025); General Operating Expenses/Other: \$1,760.42(2025); Insurance: \$35,603.00(2025); Rental Charges/Apparatus Housing: \$13,352.00 (2025); General Operating Expenses/Maintenance and Repairs: \$588.30 (2025); Supplies: \$428.81 (2025); Training and Education: \$400.00 (2025); Utilities: \$3,291.29 (2025).  
TOTAL OPERATIONS: \$56,504.82 (2025)*

*TOTAL ADMINISTRATION and OPERATIONS: \$66,827.37*

*(Additional detail regarding accounts charged and vendors is contained in the Treasurers Report)*

### **RESOLUTION 2025-10 Payment of Bills**

*Upon certification that there are sufficient encumbered and unencumbered funds in the FY 2025 budget to pay the bills as presented and having designated the accounts to which each should be charged, authorization is granted to pay the bills as set forth in the Treasurer's report and FY2025 Encumbered Check Detail, allocated to the various administration, operating and capital accounts. Total bills to be paid in the amount of \$66,827.37.*

*Motion to approve accept the Treasurer's report and approve payment of the bills by Commissioner Parise, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Puleio. Resolution Ayes: Parise, Adams, Puleio and Spohn. Nays: None*

Chairman Spohn moved the transfer of \$75,000 from the investment account to the checking account. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Adams and approved by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Spohn noted that the issue of who is responsible for paying for snow plowing was discussed last month. The Board requested a copy of the contract with Weingart Landscaping, LLC. Chief Schroeck agreed to obtain a copy of the contract for the Board. Discussion followed as to whether snow plowing was an obligation of the fire company under the terms of the agreement between the fire company and the BOFC. The issue was not resolved. It was agreed that the BOFC would pay the outstanding invoice in the amount of \$1,500.00 and seek reimbursement from the fire company if necessary.

Commissioner Adams questioned why the Board has four accounts with American Water. The matter will be researched and discussed again next month.

Commissioner Adams also questioned the cost of trash removal. Ms. Franchino noted that the BOFC had an extra charge on an almost weekly basis as the trash overflowed the container. It was noted that a camera has been installed to attempt

to determine if non-fire company trash was being placed in the container. Mr. Adams agreed to research prices from competitors and report back to the Board.

Ms. Franchino noted that the Board has yet to receive an invoice from Montgomery Emergency Services for the item ordered under the 2024 budget.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Training Facility:** Commissioner Puleio reported that he has spoken with the contractor. Work will begin as soon as the weather warms sufficiently. He will share a schedule as soon as it is developed by the contractor.

**LOSAP** Commissioner Parise indicated that the LOSAP awards for service in 2024 have been posted at the firehouse for 30 days as required by law. No member has objected to the posting within the allotted time frame. Chairman Spohn made a motion to transmit the 2024 awards in the amount of \$55,666.00 to Corebridge Financial for allocation to the various member accounts. Commissioner Adams seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted. Ms. Franchino will prepare the check and forward it to Commissioner Parise to transmit it to Corebridge.

**Insurance Audit:** The recommendations from the report need to be addressed. The insurance company has requested an in-person audit under the workers comp policy. Ms. Franchino will respond and submit the requested documentation to Crest Financial.

**New Apparatus:** No update.

**Generator Replacement:** No update.

**Hamlet Court Tank** – No update.

**Gym Equipment** – Items ordered awaiting delivery.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Insurance:** Chairman Spohn reported that he has spoken with Nottingham about the renewal premiums on the various policies. He noted that premiums were projected to increase by \$6,500.00 in the coming year. The current policies have very low deductibles, and the proposed increase can be reduced if the deductibles are increased. He suggested increasing the property/casualty deductible from \$250.00 to \$1,000.00; The crime and auto deductibles would be increased from \$100.00 and \$250.00 respectively to \$2,000.00. The portable equipment deductible will be increased from \$150.00 to \$1,000.00. Increasing the deductibles will reduce the premium increase to \$2,900.00. The Board unanimously approved the proposed increase in deductibles as suggested.

**Brush Truck:** Chairman Spohn noted that Joe Olenic will chair the brush truck replacement committee. Commissioner Parise will be the BOFC liaison on the committee.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT**

Chief Schroeck reported that there were 7 calls for service in the month of February. Drills included truck checks, an electrical safety class and a pump and tower drill.

The Chief requested approval to purchase three thermal imaging cameras at a cost of \$3,597.00 from NJFE; two chiefs jackets at a cost not to exceed \$809.00 from First Tactical and two Vulcan stream lights for the brush truck in the amount of \$428.81 from the Firestore. Commissioner Puleio moved to approve the requested purchases. Commissioner Parise seconded the motion which then passed unanimously.

The grant radios have been delivered and assigned. An inventory will be provided to the BOFC.

The Chief noted the lack of communication regarding grant purchases and indicated that he will attempt to provide information to the BOFC in a timelier manner.

The two MSA Altair 5X multigas meters were delivered and found to be unsuitable for the purposes of the fire company. They will be returned and MSA Altair 4Xs will replace them. Payment of the invoice to Witmer Fire Store will be held pending the exchange.

The orders for PPE and helmet shields have not been delivered as of this date.

Five registrations have been made for the FDIC convention totaling \$8,500.00. The Chief requested approval to add a sixth person and the Board approved the request. After discussion it was determined that each attendee would receive a per diem expense allowance of \$75.00 for meals subject to the submission of receipts after returning from the conference.

The township fire marshal has retired but no replacement has been appointed at this time.

Discussions continue but no proposal for the re-purposing the old Board meeting room has been developed.

### **Engineers Report**

Engineer Frank Wendling electronically submitted a written report to the Board.

E45- 3 The PM was completed. Awaiting quote from F&SS for new brakes, a new muffler and repair of an oil leak at the input shaft seal for the transfer case. The apparatus remains in service.

Tanker 45: The primary air supply issue has been resolved at Bergey's and an invoice for the repair forwarded to the bookkeeper. The apparatus broke down at a fire scene and had to be towed to Bergey's. While at Bergey's the apparatus was stored outside and 3 valves on the driver's side of the pump cracked. Fire and Safety Services has ordered the parts and will hopefully be able to make repairs on March 12<sup>th</sup>. Truck is in limited service for tanker shuttle operations only. Estimated repair cost \$5,888.00.

R45: The passenger side LDH discharge control panel has been replaced.

Tower 45: PM was completed this month.

Command Vehicles; Awaiting parts to upgrade suspension.

Asst. 45: At Belle Mead Garage for persistent check engine light issue.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, April 8th, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.