

**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 January 13, 2026

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 William Hyncik, Michael Parise, Ricky Puleio Jr., Phil Adams and William Spohn.

Also present: Bookkeeper Lynn Franchino, Attorney Eric Perkins, Chief Rich Kennedy and Engineer Frank Wendling.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the December 9th, 2025 meeting were presented.

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 9th board meeting was made by Commissioner Adams; 2nd by Commissioner Spohn. Motion passed without objection.

Public Comment – None

Meeting Updates –

Emergency Services –No meeting last month.

Fire Prevention – No meeting.

Rescue Task Force- No report

Adoption of FY 2026 Temporary Budget

Chairman Spohn indicated that the first item for consideration would be the temporary budget. Ms. Franchino presented a budget that she had prepared according to the statutory requirements. Commissioner Hyncik moved the adoption of the temporary FY2026 budget as follows:

RESOLUTION 2026-01 Adoption of a Fire District Temporary Budget

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 14-78.17, a temporary budget in the amount of \$ \$99,669.08 representing 14% of the prior year budget exclusive of capital expenditures, is hereby adopted to provide for appropriations during the period between January 1, 2026 and final approval of the 2026 proposed budget by the voters on or about February 21, 2026.

Commissioner Adams seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION 2026-02 Amendment of 2026 Approved Budget

Commissioner Adams reported that the BOFC has received approval from the Division of Local Government Services to proceed to adopt the proposed budget after it has been amended. The amendment decreases the amount to be raised by taxation by \$13,300.00 and decreases the total budget by and identical amount before it can be considered for adoption. These changes required that the document be amended prior to adoption. He moved the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Fire District Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning on January 1, 2026 and ending on December 31, 2026 was introduced on the 9th day of December, 2025; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the 2026 budget was held on December 9th, 2025 as publicly advertised; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to amend certain line items in the 2026 Budget;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 1 the following amendments to the introduced 2026 Fire District Budget be made:

ANTICIPATED REVENUES

Schedule F-1

	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Amount to be raised by Taxation	\$ 1,008,600	\$ 995,300
Total Anticipated Revenues	\$ 1,522,380	\$ 1,509,080
Total Operations and Maintenance	\$ 595,580	\$ 582,280
Total Appropriations	\$ 1,522,380	\$1,509,080

BUDGETED APPROPRIATIONS

Schedule F-3:

	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Costs of Operations & Maintenance: Other	\$ 368,580	\$ 355,280
Total Operations and Maintenance	\$ 595,580	\$ 582,280
Total Appropriations	\$ 1,522,380	\$ 1,509,080

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that two certified copies of this Resolution shall be filed forthwith with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services for the certification of the 2026 Fire District Budget as so amended.

Commissioner Parise seconded the motion to amend and it was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 2026-03 Authorizing the 2026 Budget to be read by Title

N.J.S.A. 40A:14-78.2 provides that the approved budget may be read by title, provided that at least one week prior to the hearing a complete copy of the approved budget was posted in the Montgomery Township municipal offices and was made available to each person requesting a copy during the week prior to and during the public hearing. Attorney Perkins reported that the budget was posted and advertised as required so the Board has complied with the provisions of the statute.

Chairman Spohn made a motion to Authorize the reading of the Fy 2026 Budget by title. Commissioner Puleio seconded the motion which then passed without objection.

Public Hearing on the 2026 Budget

Chairman Spohn made a motion to open the meeting to the public for comment on the budget. No persons appeared to comment or object to the proposed budget. On a motion by Commissioner Hyncik, 2nd Commissioner Puleio, with unanimous consent the hearing was closed to the public

RESOLUTION 2026-04 ADOPTION OF FY 2026 BUDGET

Chairman Spohn made a motion to adopt the 2026 budget as amended. The proposed fire district budget for 2026 is in the amount of \$1,509,080.00, of which the sum of \$995,300.00 is to be raised by taxation, (synopsis appended to these minutes). The estimated tax rate will be \$0.0510 per \$100 assessed valuation, the same as 2025.

Commissioner Adams seconded the motion to adopt the 2026 fire district budget and to submit same to the state for certification. The budget was unanimously adopted on a roll call vote. In favor: Adams, Hyncik, Parise, Puleio and Spohn. Opposed: none

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: Office Expense(2025): \$610.00

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION: (2025) \$610.00

Operations: General Operating Expense/Other: \$375.94; Rental Charges/Apparatus Housing: \$13,619.00; Utilities: \$441.75; Insurance: \$17,261.00; General Operating Expense/Other(2025): \$989.75; General Operating/Medical(2025): \$2,883.00; Utilities(2025): \$2,875.40; Insurance(2025): \$391.00; Supplies(2025): \$142.81; SFS Grant(2025): \$1,779.50; MEMS(2025): \$2,984.43; Turn Out Gear(2025): \$14,550.00; Training(2025): \$75.00.

TOTAL OPERATIONS: (2026) \$31,697.69 and (2025) \$26,670.89

TOTAL ADMINISTRATION and OPERATIONS: (2026) \$31,697.69; (2025) \$27,280.89

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

RESOLUTION 2026-05 Payment of Bills

Upon certification that there are sufficient encumbered and unencumbered funds in the FY2025 and proposed 2026 budgets 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 FY 2025 and FY2026 Encumbered Check Detail, allocated to the various administration, operating and capital accounts. Total bills to be paid in the amount of \$58,978.58.

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

Commissioner Hyncik moved the transfer of \$75,000.00 from the investment account to the checking account. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parise and approved by a unanimous vote.

The fire company share of the insurance premium in the amount of \$10,225.00 was received and deposited. Montgomery Township has not yet provided the fire tax monies for the second half of the 2025 year.

Ms. Franchino noted that she has voided the payment to ESI for the tool services plan as it was agreed that the plan was not necessary.

The BOFC has received a credit from Grainger which will be applied to a 2026 purchase.

The refund in the amount of \$705.00 from Veolia for the foam removal overpayment remains outstanding.

RESOLUTION 2026-06 Establishing a Schedule of Open Public Meetings

Pursuant to the provisions of the N.J. Open Public Meetings statute, N.J.S.A 10:4-18, the Board of Fire Commissioners, Montgomery Township Fire District 1, establishes the following meeting dates for the 2026 calendar year and January 2027.

All meetings will commence at 7:30 p.m. and will be held at the Montgomery Township Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 Firehouse at 35 Griggstown Road in Belle Mead, New Jersey. Meeting agendas may be viewed at www.Montgomerybofc1.org Official action may take place at any meeting on the dates set forth below.

Meetings will be held on the following dates:

January 13, 2026	July 14, 2026
February 10, 2026	August 11, 2026
March 10, 2026	September 8, 2026
April 14, 2026	October 13, 2026
May 12, 2026	November 10, 2026
June 9, 2026	December 8, 2026

January 12, 2027

Commissioner Adams moved adoption of the 2026 schedule of meetings. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Puleio and unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION 2026-07 Adopting a Cash Management Plan

The Board hereby adopts a Cash Management Plan in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14 and the N.J. Local Finance Board guidelines designating PNC Bank and the Royal Bank of Canada as official depositories of the fire district, and authorizing additions to or deletions from these designations as long as the institutions are GUDPA participating and authorized by law as a public

depository. Disbursements from such accounts shall be by official check, signed by two commissioners. Investments are as authorized by N.J.S.A. 40:5-15.1 are permissible by Resolution of the Board. A report summarizing all investments made or redeemed shall be included in a monthly report by the Treasurer. The plan shall be subject to the annual financial audit of the fire district.

Motion to approve by: Hyncik; 2nd by Parise. *The Motion passed unanimously.*

RESOLUTION 2026-08 Appointing a LOSAP Administrator

Commissioner Parise moved a resolution designating Corebridge Financial as the designated investment institution and administrator for the LOSAP program. The resolution was seconded by Chairman Spohn and adopted by a unanimous vote.

Attorney Perkins noted that a new law goes into effect on March 1st which removes the legal newspaper publication process and replaces it with website notices. There is no need to appoint a legal newspaper this year.

ICS Class: Chair Spohn noted that the BOFC members were required to take an ICS class designed for elected officials. The class will be offered at SCESTA on February 18th and March 5th. All members of the BOFC should register and attend the class.

OLD BUSINESS

Training Facility: Commissioner Puleio reported on a quote in the amount of \$17,000 that he has obtained from Kevin Mears to replace the roof and the outside siding on the building. The roof is leaking and repair should be done as soon as possible to avoid damage to the structure. He is also working with a committee of Matt Fedun, Rich Karsay and Tom Karsay of the fire company to plan additional improvements. Commissioner Puleio moved a resolution to contract with Kevin Mears in the amount of \$17,000.00 to install a new roof and siding on the building. Chairman Spohn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Additional construction phases and funding will continue to be discussed.

New Apparatus: No update.

Generator Replacement: No update.

LOSAP – Commissioner Parise reported that he has compiled the list of the responders who qualified and proposed payments pursuant to the program. He made a motion to post the LOSAP list at the firehouse for one month in accordance with the law to allow responders to review and confirm their participation numbers. Chairman Spohn seconded the motion, and it was unanimously adopted.

Gym Equipment – Items ordered. No report

NEW BUSINESS

FY 2026 Commissioner Election:

The deadline for filing a petition for the election is Friday, January 23rd. The announcement of the open position has been published in the Courier as required. Commissioner Puleio is the only person who has requested a petition as of this date. Chairman Spohn proposed Artie and Anna Marie Crawford to be poll watchers at the election. Each poll worker will be paid \$300.00 for the service.

CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Kennedy noted that there were 33 calls for service in the month of December. Training activities included the monthly business meeting, truck checks and a search and rescue air pack drill.

The Chief noted that the district was establishing its own account with the Knox Box company so that it can control passwords and access. The fee for five Knox boxes will be \$723.00 annually. Access has previously been through the office of the fire marshal. Knox Box has changed its access rules.

Chief Kennedy noted that there are a number of purchases required to complete the outfitting of the new command vehicle including a lift kit at a cost of \$300.00, lettering at a cost of \$800.00 and a Knox Box at a cost of \$1,500.00. These items will all be purchased out of the insurance proceeds received from the destruction of the prior apparatus. He estimated the cost of a rear cabinet for the apparatus to be up to \$5,000.00. The final items will be the lights/siren/console and the radio installation for which he did not presently have estimates. Chairman Spohn made a motion to approve the lift kit, lettering and Knox Box as well as up to \$5,000.00 for the rear cabinet. A portion of these costs will be paid from the insurance settlement proceeds. Commissioner Puleio seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

The Chief also requested approval to purchase four helmet shields in the amount of \$80.00 each from N.J. Fire Equipment for new members. There are a number of small purchases of truck soap, fire and CO detectors, a key box and batteries all of which can be purchased from Grainger. The BOFC approved the purchase of these items.

Chief Kennedy noted that early registration was open for the FDIC convention. He requested to book airfare and register five persons. Commissioner Hyncik moved approval in the amount of \$ 8,000.00 for registration and airfare. Chairman Spohn seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The following items previously approved and ordered have not been delivered;

Engineers Report

Engineer Frank Wendling III reported that engine 45-3, T45 and R 45 were all found to have low coolant levels during a routine inspection. Coolant was added to each apparatus to the recommended level. He requested all members to notify him if the coolant warning light comes on or any leaks are noted beneath the apparatus in the engine bays.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, February 10th, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.