

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on February 10, 2022 virtually via Zoom at 7:00 PM.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER / STATEMENT OF NOTICE

Chairperson Burd 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 Chairperson Burd.

ROLL CALL

Chairperson Burd-	Present
Vice-Chairperson Novak	Present
Secretary Jones-	Present
Treasurer Tomaro-	Present
Commissioner Agarwal	Present

MINUTES SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

Commissioner Agarwal moved and Vice-Chairperson Novak seconded to approve the regular session minutes from 1/27/22.

PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA)

Mr. Jon Edwards spoke to the Board about a second reading of a Hopewell Township Committee ordinance to approve payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) for new development on the west side of Scotch Road that would include thousands of market rate homes twice the size of Brandon Farms. He further stated that the PILOT payments would impact the fire and school districts if the Township were to approve them since both districts would not be receiving funding through taxes. He stated he sincerely hoped that the Hopewell Township Committee would meet our needs and that any verbal promise by this committee may not hold in the future. He also had a comment pleading that the Board of Fire Commissioners fight and attend the Township Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 22, 2022. He also asked whether the Hopewell Township Committee had contacted the Board of Fire Commissioners and what promise was made? Chairperson Burd stated that yes, they had been in contact and former Chairperson Malkiewicz had met with the Township Administrator and mayor last year. Chairperson also said that he has setting up a meeting next week to talk with the Administrator and Township Committee regarding the PILOT payments, the distributing of the federal American Recovery Act funds the township received for COVID supplies and personnel, as well as about the paying the significant cost of the fire hydrants to all Hopewell Township residents. Chairperson Burd stated the Board of Fire Commissioners are very much in progress with the development and Township Committee.

Mr. Harvey Lester also spoke at the meeting to describe how he was a proponent of good government and to further define what the PILOT payments are and the impact on the Hopewell Valley community and how the Township Committee was leaving out the fire and school districts. He stated the Valley development will bring 3,214 new homes and encouraged the Board of Fire Commissioners to watch the video on the Hopewell Township website entitled, “New Municipal Revenue Services for the New World”.

Mr. John Hart echoed the previous comments and that the one PILOT payment was made during his time on the Hopewell Township Committee. The current Committee is only one voice and the needs money into surplus. He further begged the Board of Fire Commissioners to attend the February 22, 2022 meeting and to speak.

Mr. Jon Edwards stated that Mr. Hart was correct and that there was no way this Township Committee could bind future committees for future funding to the Fire District.

Mr. Jim Burd spoke on how Hopewell Township is not a large city and the tax abatement was not advantageous for Hopewell Township or the Fire District.

Further discussion regarding PILOT payments.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2022-12

A RESOLUTION APPROVING REVISIONS TO THE HOPEWELL VALLEY EMERGENCY SERVICES RULES AND REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the Hopewell Township Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners to approve the Hopewell Valley Emergency Services Unit Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the current Rules and Regulations policies have been reviewed by counsel and revised; and

WHEREAS, the revised Rules and Regulations policy has been submitted to the Board for review.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1 hereby approve the revisions to the Hopewell Valley Emergency Services Rules and Regulations.

RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Novak		X	X			

Commissioner	Moved	Second	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Tomaro			X			
Jones	X		X			
Agarwal			X			
Burd			X			

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Tomaro read the summary of the Bills and Claims dated February 10, 2022 and was seconded by Commissioner Agarwal. Treasurer Tomaro reported on notable bills. A roll call vote was held and the following amounts were authorized:

Bill List:		\$40,467.94
Payroll Ending:	January 29, 2022	\$61,341.74
Total Disbursements:		\$101,809.68

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

STATION REPORTS

A. UNION FIRE COMPANY AND RESCUE SQUAD

Chief Pedersen thanked the firefighters who responded to a fire on Reed Road and Deputy Chief Tunncliffe for an ice rescue. Chief Pedersen mentioned about a meeting with Active Chiefs and stated there has been a recent dispatches and the way we have been spoken to by some dispatchers and the problem will be addressed. Chairperson Burd stated that the Fire Commissioners are looking to set up a meeting with the County Commissioners.

Chief Pedersen also thanked Chief Martin, the volunteers, and the career employees for everything that they and the Chief do for our community.

B. PENNINGTON FIRST AID SQUAD

Captain Muccioli reported on 111 calls in January with 30 mutual aid with most in Ewing second to Lawrence. Nothing else reported. Captain Muccioli also thanked Chief Martin for all his support he has given that is second to none.

C. HOPEWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL UNIT

Chief Galatro thanked the Union Fire Company and Board of Fire Commissioners for allowing them to borrow Tanker 53-1 while their tanker was out for repairs. It has returned from repairs. A lot of training being completed. Chief Galatro also reported on attempting to set up a meeting regarding County dispatch with the County Commissioners.

Chief Varrasse reported on behalf of the Emergency Medical Unit that had 23 calls last month with some issues on daytime response. She also reported on 2 new members attending EMT school and 2 members returning to ride.

D. PENNINGTON FIRE COMPANY

Chief Martin reported that Chief DeForte had training this evening but wanted to express his thanks for the assistance with the fire on Reed Road.

E. HOPEWELL VALLEY EMERGENCY SERVICES

Chief Martin expressed his sincere appreciation to the Commissioners, the Chiefs, paid staff, and volunteers throughout Hopewell Valley who responded for two years at the risk of their own safety to the COVID-19 crisis. Chief Martin thanked all who responded in cold weather to the fire on Reed Road, including the investigation team. In regards to the discussion about community development, he wanted to thank Fire Official Fosina and Valley Chiefs both career and volunteer who have worked hard on the site plans as they have come through and know our Commissioners and staff will work hard to get the revenue we need.

PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA)

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Fire Commissioners went into closed session at 7:47 pm and returned to open session at 8:52 pm.

RESOLUTION 2022-13

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. 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
Novak			X			
Tomaro		X	X			
Jones	X		X			
Agarwal			X			
Burd			X			

ADJOURNMENT

Treasurer Tomaro motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Agarwal at 8:52 PM. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Moore

Jonathan Moore
Lieutenant

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