

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING  
HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO.1  
THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners was held on May 12, 2022 in person and 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 arrived at 7:06pm

**MINUTES SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL**

Regular Session Meeting Minutes from April 28, 2022 were submitted and approved. Motion was made by Commissioner Agarwal and Seconded by Secretary Jones. Motion carries with 3 yes votes, Vice Chairperson Novak and Treasurer Tomaro abstained.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (AGENDA)**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

Chairperson Burd along with Vice Chairperson Novak to set up a meeting discuss Shared Services Agreements.

Chief Martin received approval from the State of New Jersey to begin billing for Shared Services even though agreement is not yet finalized.

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1**

**RESOLUTION 2022-29**

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE TO AMEND THE BUDGET  
CAP LAW TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR INCREASING INSURANCE COSTS**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.45, et al, a fire district is required to limit any increase in its property tax levy to two percent (2.0%) over the previous year's amount to be raised by taxation, subject to certain exceptions and additions; and

**WHEREAS**, all local public entities, including participating fire districts in the Municipal Excess Liability Joint Insurance Fund (MEL), have incurred an estimated \$50 million in COVID related worker's compensation claims and it is anticipated that these costs will continue to increase as a result of long-term COVID cases; and

**WHEREAS**, a 2021 New Jersey Department of Labor decision regarding worker's compensation funding has generated increased costs to the members of the MEL by over 10% in order to cover claims that were previously funded by the State pension system; and

**WHEREAS**, a recent amendment to the sexual molestation statute of limitations will increase total liability costs for members of the MEL system by an estimated amount of 6% in 2023; and

**WHEREAS**, the frequency of weather-related catastrophic claims and corresponding impacts are anticipated to increase property insurance costs by over 10% per year; and

**WHEREAS**, cyber liability events throughout the country have resulted in twice the amount of premium costs in 2022 and such costs are expected to accelerate at a pace far greater than the rate of inflation; and

**WHEREAS**, these increasing costs, regulations, policy decisions and environmental impacts are occurring when many other items and costs in fire district budgets are also increasing at a greater rate than two percent (2%).

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1, urges the New Jersey Legislature to amend N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45 to provide that appropriations in the first three years after the effective date of said amendment for liability insurance, worker's compensation insurance, cyber insurance, and property insurance, be exempt from the property tax levy cap pursuant to 40A:4-45 et al, treating these costs as a waiver of extraordinary costs for amounts above the two percent (2%) allowable increase.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the New Jersey Legislative representative for the Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1.

**RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE**

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

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1**

**RESOLUTION 2022-30**

**A RESOLUTION APPOINTING AN ALTERNATE FUND COMMISSIONER TO THE FIRST RESPONDER JOINT INSURANCE FUND**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Hopewell Township Fire District No. 1 that it hereby appoints Chief Matthew Martin as the Fund Commissioner and Lieutenant Joshua Wilson as the Alternate Fund Commissioner for the First Responder Joint Insurance Fund; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to the following:

1. Matthew Martin  
(Fund Commissioner)
2. Joshua Wilson  
(Alternate Fund Commissioner)
3. First Responder Joint Insurance Fund

**RECORD OF BOARD VOTE ON PASSAGE**

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

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Tanker 53-1 status of repairs, schedule, insurance and costs were discussed.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Treasurer Tomaro read the summary of the Bills and Claims dated May 12, 2022 and was seconded by Vice Chairperson Novak. Treasurer Tomaro reported on notable bills. A roll call vote was held and the following amounts were authorized:

Bill List:		\$34,344.68
Payroll Ending:	May 7, 2022	\$61,013.28
Total Disbursements:		\$95,357.96

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

**STATION REPORTS**

- A. UNION FIRE COMPANY AND RESCUE SQUAD REPORT: Chief Pedersen asked the board for an acknowledgement of the loss of Ted Warwick. Chairperson Burd led the room in a moment of silence for Mr. Warwick. Chief Pedersen reported on the call volume and out of Hopewell Valley cover assignments. The status of the new telesquirt was discussed.
- B. PENNINGTON FIRST AID SQUAD REPORT: Discussed call volume and staffing.
- C. HOPEWELL FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMU REPORT: Chief Galatro discussed joint drills with valley companies, gave an update on the fire reporting system, volunteer firefighter status and equipment. Discussed staffing for EMU and newly qualified EMT's. EMS week is celebrated starting Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. State licensing application is moving along. Hopewell Borough Memorial Day parade is on Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup>.
- D. PENNINGTON FIRE COMPANY REPORT: report was submitted to the board.
- E. HOPEWELL VALLEY EMERGENCY SERVICES UNIT REPORT: report was sent to the board for review. Included in the report was information regarding JIF and Litigation Cases. FM Fosina was approved to send new fee schedule to the Hopewell Township Committee for approval.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA)**

None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION 2022-20**

The Board of Fire Commissioners went into closed session at 7:52 pm and returned to open session at 8:48 pm.

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS**

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1**

**RESOLUTION 2022-31**

**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. Contract Negotiations

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			
Jones	x		X			
Agarwal			X			
Burd		x	X			

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Tomaro motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Vice Chairperson Novak at 8:48 PM. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Randi Knechel  
Admin Clerk

---

<b>TITLE</b>	Regular Session Minutes 5/12/22
<b>FILE NAME</b>	Regular Board Mee...utes 05-12-22.pdf
<b>DOCUMENT ID</b>	82040ffa4f2c35d76f8ee5815e1fe72bdc519a92
<b>AUDIT TRAIL DATE FORMAT</b>	MM / DD / YYYY
<b>STATUS</b>	● Signed

---

## Document History



SENT

**08 / 08 / 2022**

13:23:25 UTC

Sent for signature to Randi Knechel  
(rmalkiewicz@hopewelltpfire.org) from  
jmoore@hopewelltpfire.org  
IP: 173.61.41.5



VIEWED

**08 / 08 / 2022**

21:39:30 UTC

Viewed by Randi Knechel (rmalkiewicz@hopewelltpfire.org)  
IP: 173.61.15.114



SIGNED

**08 / 08 / 2022**

21:39:53 UTC

Signed by Randi Knechel (rmalkiewicz@hopewelltpfire.org)  
IP: 173.61.15.114



COMPLETED

**08 / 08 / 2022**

21:39:53 UTC

The document has been completed.