

# JAMESBURG BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Fire District No. 1

Minutes

August 20, 2020

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**CALL TO ORDER:** This meeting was called to order by Attorney Joseph Youssouf. The meeting is being held pursuant to The Open Public Meetings Act of 1974 and provisions of that Act have been met. Meeting commenced at, 7:03 PM

*Attorney Youssouf was asked from Chairperson Dina Walker as to why at last month's meeting the Attorney advised that we have our meetings virtually and she is the only one that stayed home virtually? Attorney Youssouf spoke about virtual vs. actual meetings. Still not technically allowed to have public meetings, we are free to have a regular meeting but if turned into Trenton, we could be reprimanded.*

*"My advice is going to be consistent, you can do it if you want to, and some people do, but is it appropriate and wise to do in the age of COVID?, the answer to that is no. so what do you want to do, err on the side of caution or proceed to conduct your business in the normal fashion? I always think it is always wise to err on the side of caution, which is why I gave you advise last month, and which is why I'm telling you this again tonight."*

**ROLL CALL:** Salvatore Georgianna  
Pradeep Mathew  
Stephanie Rampacek  
Dina Walker  
Brian Wright  
Attorney Youssouf

**MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES:**

Proposed By: S. Rampacek

Seconded By: P. Mathew

All in Favor: Yes

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Stephanie Rampacek, First Constitution Bank

	<b>Checking:</b>	<b>Savings:</b>
<i>Bal. Bt. Fwd:</i>	20,022.31	270,436.55
<i>Deposits:</i>	13,562.36	115,933.32
<i>Vouchers:</i>	(13,571.97)	
<i>Rec. Bal.</i>	20,012.70	372,820.21
	<i>Grand Total Cash On Hand:</i>	392,832.91

**MOTION TO ACCEPT TREASURER’S REPORT:**

Proposed By: B. Wright  
Seconded By: S. Georgianna  
All in Favor: Yes

**REQUISITIONS:**

Stephanie Rampacek:

Approved Fire Protection: 6-single gas meters \$1195.00

**MOTION TO ACCEPT REQUISITIONS:**

Proposed By: P. Mathew  
Seconded By: S. Georgianna  
All in Favor: Yes

**CORRESPONDENCE: NONE**

**ATTORNEY’S REPORT:**

Joseph Youssouf:

I was in touch with DCA this past week extensively, I was asked by one of my other Fire Districts to research whether or not a Fire District could establish and administer an EMS First Aid Squad as part of the district’s operations. DCA came back to me and told me that they will not issue a formal opinion sanctioning the establishment of an EMS First Aid Squad within the Fire District for public funding, they will however approve a Fire Districts budget that includes that component. The reason for this rather strange position, I think, is that there is no clear statutory base for a Fire District to establish a First Aid Squad. However, in recognition of the fact that the fastest growing component of public safety, due to the aging population, is the First Aid Squad. So DCA is taking the middle of the road approach, by saying were not telling you its ok and were not telling you it’s not ok but if you do and you set it up and there’s a budget that submitted as part of the Fire Districts annual approval process that include funding for volunteer First Aid Squad or paid First Aid Squad within the Fire District, it will be approved as long as you all of the other regulations, meaning you don’t exceed the cap without a cap referendum.

We are raising questions about COVID regulations and enforcement being confusing, it is typical of what is happening in Trenton right now and that they are adapting to change and demanding circumstances.

The scheduling for bond referendums and bond questions still remain the same, time frames remain the same. I was told this week by DCA that the budget instruction booklet for 2021 is going to be basically the same as the last budget instruction booklet that the board had received.

DCA is leaning towards more on line paperless functions which will make it a little more complicated for all of us. But you can expect the same budget last year as far as format goes. This may change, but Trenton is not back to full staff. That is the legal situation in New Jersey as of now.

What I would urge the board to do tonight is to make a decision, if we are going to keep meeting in person or just put it on the record that the meeting will be in person but the public would be free to participate via zoom. If the Board wants to go exclusively zoom and no-one has to come to the Fire House that’s also accepted. If you make a decision tonight and then you can place necessary notice on the website and the bulletin board and you’ll be all set.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

Jonathon Rampacek:

We have a problem with flooding in the basement, we are going to get it repaired.

We are still maintaining the same things we have been doing for COVID.

We started to some exploratory work in the office area to try to figure out where we are going with that.

**FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT:**

Chris Rampacek:

*(See attached call sheet)*

J-3 is back in the shop for the pump not throttling up again, I believe this is the second or third time its been in the shop. Technician can’t seem to find the trouble so they have asked us to keep an eye on it. He stated that it may be the PTO pump trans. Were hoping its possibly something electronic and not the pump trans.

The exhaust system has been installed for the tanker.

Everyone is continuing to where their PPE around the Firehouse and were trying to maintain our social distancing.

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**OLD BUSINESS:** Dina asked the board are we zooming or are we not?

Stephanie stated that is easier for her to accomplish her job while being at the Firehouse during the meetings, Brian asked if the Fire Department are having their meetings in person or virtually and the response was, they are offering it both ways.

Pradeep stated that either way was ok for him.

Brian stated that it was more convenient to be at the Firehouse for the meetings but I can be either at home or in my office during the meetings, its up to you, you’re the chairperson, just tell us what you’d like us to do.

Dina responded saying she is fine with being at the Firehouse, I was just following the rules, lets move forward to make the resolution clearer that we can be in person as a board, we will be open to the public via zoom.

Attorney Youssouf reading of the resolution:

All future board meetings until the regulations are changed will be conducted as follows:

Board members will meet in person at 7pm at the Firehouse, public will not be admitted into the building but all meetings of the Board will be open to the public by Zoom. This resolution will be in effect until December 2020 and will be re-evaluated at that time.

Attorney Youssouf stated that if passed this resolution will be legally valid as long as it is posted.

Proposed by: B Wright

Seconded by: S Georgianna

All in favor: Yes

**MOTION TO OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Proposed By: S. Rampacek

Seconded By: S. Georgianna

All in Favor: Yes

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

John Walker: Last month we asked about an architect to get information for the future project the fire department is considering, we met with someone and are trying to get an estimate of cost and have a Department meeting on August 26, 2020 for the Department to obtain more information and which direction to head in.

**MOTION TO CLOSE TO THE PUBLIC:**

Proposed By: S. Georgianna

Seconded By: P. Mathew

All in Favor: Yes

**MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING: 7:34 PM**

Proposed By: P. Mathew

Seconded By: S. Rampacek

All in Favor: Yes

Brian Wright, Clerk