

BOARD of FIRE COMMISSIONERS
MOUNT HOLLY FIRE DISTRICT No. 1

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday April 2, 2025

17 Pine Street

7:00pm

Call to Order: Chairperson Saucier called the April 2, 2025 meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of Mount Holly Fire District No. 1 to order at 7:01 PM.

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Chairperson Saucier read the following statement aloud:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and the right to attend all meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting the public's interest is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Board of Fire Commissioners of Fire District No. 1 has caused notice of this meeting to be given by having the date, time, place, and agenda to the extent known thereof posted as follows:

- Published in the Burlington County Times on January 4, 2025.
- Published in the Courier Post on January 4, 2025.
- Filed written notice with the Township Clerk for posting on December 29, 2024.
- Posted Written Notice on the Official Bulletin Board at the Township Municipal Building
- Posted on the District Website

The Notice set forth that formal action may be taken.

Roll Call: Present: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier. Commissioner Sheppard attended the meeting at 7:05pm.

Absent:

Staff & Professionals: Clerk Brooks, Clerk Mangan, Solicitor Stephen Raymond Jr.

Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence: Chairperson Saucier requested that all present stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and remain standing for a moment of silence.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 5th, 2025 Board of Fire Commissioners Meetings. Commissioner Gaskill offered a motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 5th, 2025 as presented. Commissioner Brown provided a second to the motion. The Board approved minutes of March 5th, 2025. At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Nay: Commissioner Logue

Abstain:

Approval of Vouchers: As prepared and presented. Commissioner Gaskill offered a motion to approve the payment of vouchers, as presented. Commissioner Brown provided a second to the motion. Commissioner Logue asked the Board to go into detail. They questioned the microphone reimbursement to Richard Difolco and asked to clarify if they are the current microphones being used. They also questioned the pending \$60,000 budget towards sound and audio. Chairperson Saucier said this was a quit fix. Commissioner Logue suggested rearranging the room as to save money and still be able to hear each other. They questioned why they were not included in this conversation of the purchase of microphones and if we are splitting with the town, is it a 50/50 split in time of usage as well. Chairperson Saucier requested that be discussed in closed session. The solicitor advised that amplification should be available to the public for public meetings.

Commissioner Logue also asked for the SSA with the Township and asked the solicitor to look into that.

Commissioner Logue questioned the payments to our former solicitor. Director Carty advised Commissioner Logue to Ms. Brooks the Finance Clerk. Ms. Brooks explained she is paid hourly and that was for her time rendered until her resignation.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown (abstain to reimbursement for Richard Difolco), Chairperson Saucier

Nay: Commissioner Logue

Abstain:

RESOLUTION 2025-014- RESOLUTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL AND CONTRACTS- FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN

Solicitor also added pending litigation and attorney client matters.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:10pm, Chairperson Saucier seconds the motion.

Rolla Call:

Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Roll Call to come out of Executive Session 8:10pm. Commissioner Brown made a motion to return from Executive Session, Commissioner Gaskill seconds the motion.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Reports from Fire Personnel:

Chief's Report: Chief Mason presented the report, See attached

Fire Official's Report: Chief Mason presented the report, See attached.

Chief Apparatus Officer Report: Director Carty informed the Board there was an attached copy of the report with their packet and let them know what a great job the safety officer was doing. see attached.

Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds: Commissioner Sheppard explained to the public that Director Carty is not point of contact and referred it to him. He said he would detail that in his report.

Apparatus and Equipment: No Reports.

Planning and Services: No Reports.

Budget/Finance and Insurance: Commissioner Logue deferred this to Director Carty as she is just an advisory now. Director Carty referred that report to Finance Clerk Rita Brooks. Ms. Brooks explained that we are in the audit procedure and she is prepping that currently.

Commissioner Logue asked when the reports for tonight's meeting were submitted. Director Carty response: Safety Officer Report was submitted yesterday and the Fire Police and Chief's report was submitted today.

Old Business: None

New Business:

RESOLUTION 2025-012- Resolution for Social Media Policy for Mount Holly Fire District No.1

Commissioner Brown makes a motion to table Resolution 2025-012. Commissioner Gaskill seconds the motion.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier.

Commissioner Logue would like to request the written format of that before the next agenda.

Solicitor Raymond requests an Add on Resolution for the Director's Contract for Director Carty.

Resolution 2025-015- Resolution authorizing an appointment agreement, between the Mount Holly Fire District No.1 and Jason Carty for the role of Director of Fire Services. Commissioner Brown makes a motion to add that to the agenda, Commissioner Gaskill seconds the motion.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Nay: Commissioner Sheppard

Abstain: Commissioner Logue

Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Gaskill seconds the motion.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Nay: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard

Abstain:

Commissioner Logue made a motion to amend the agenda to advertise for quotes for cleaning services for Relief Fire building. Commissioner Sheppard seconds the motion.

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard

Nay: Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier.

Matters Presented by the Public:

Commissioner Logue asked if there is a reason as to why this was moved on the agenda. Why the Director's report is not given prior to the public comment as it was in the past. Director Carty said they are following by laws. Discussion continued between the Board and Director as to where they can find the bylaws and how they are being followed. Director Carty informed them that any document they would like, they may request and if he will be happy to give that to them. Director Carty also stated that he cannot speak as to what was done before he took the position.

Michael Rothmel (33 Union Street) - They brought up the bylaws and their OPRA request. They also handed out resignation letters by Sendzik and Sendzik and read her reasons as to why she resigned. They also read Ted Rosenbergs complaints about hiring Jason Carty. They also stated as to their assumptions on why Sendzik and Sendzik resigned. They also stated on how to properly hire a Director of Fire Services. They also stated that where public comment is at on the agenda is in violation. They brought up Director Carty's past with other townships. They also stated the Commissioner Gaskill is also in violation.

L.Lopez (Levis Drive) - They asked for an update status on the grant. Director Gaskill referred that to the Director and he told him they will look into applying for that. They also brought up public comment being changed on the agenda and it being a violation. They stated their disappointment and also questioned why the Chief was not in Executive Session. They asked for an answer. Commissioner Logue stated she does not know the answer but she will look into it. They mentioned Lumberton's meeting the next day as well.

Christina Johnson- member of the firehouse appalled of the remarks and actions of members and the public at last month's meeting. They stated their values and dedication from her and her husband over the 49 years there. They also stated that the Directors qualifications are the best for the position. They believe he has already made positive changes, they stated those changes. They believe the firehouse needs a Director and pointed out a specific commissioner and their personal agendas. They gave support to the current Finance Clerk. They asked the public to please stop with the drama and be friends and let the firehouse get back to what it should be, firemen serving their community and saving homes and lives.

Commissioner Logue wanted to point out and thank her that it was her testimony in past meetings that encouraged Commissioner Logue into becoming an elected Board member and listed her reasoning. She

appreciates her passion and concern. Mrs. Johnson said to Commissioner Logue that she was causing more drama. Commissioner Logue hopes to shed light and effect changes. They agreed that the firehouse needs to come together and work together.

Jim Logan (Brainer Street) - Can the solicitor be held liable for bad advice. The solicitor commented they will not talk about an ongoing litigation. They questioned the Westampton lawsuit that Director Carty was involved in as they did in previous meetings and stated that there is already a lawsuit in Mount Holly now. They asked the Board why they thought things would be different. They asked Commissioner Gaskill about the lawsuit and Solicitor Raymond advised the Board again to not comment on the legal matter. They questioned why Commissioner Gaskill did not abstain to tonight's vote. The solicitor reiterated to Mr. Logue that they would not comment on the litigation.

Tara Astor (416 Buttonwood) – will the Fire District bylaws be uploaded for the public to see. Commissioner Logue responded that she does not know the answer but hopes that the Director will do so when he gets them. They also asked to post their email contact for the Director of Fire Services on the Fire district website.

Maureen Taylor Ford (117 Branch Street) - Happy Wednesday. They questioned that the website is not updated on multiple aspects and the Director Job is still posted. How can they make the appropriate appointments with committees and where is that information. Chairperson Saucier guided her where to find it and made her aware that they are also updating the website to be more streamline. Commissioner Sheppard let Mrs. Taylor know that the committee boards are advisory only. All questions should be directed the new Director. They asked that incidents be updated on the website. Director Carty informed her that he has a list of things that need to be updated and he will continue to work on that. They will start with updating 2024 and work on 2025 as soon as they can. Should inquiries all go to him or should they CC the Chief, Director Carty let her know she may email whoever she would like to. Commissioner Logue explained to Mrs. Ford how exactly to find the committee groups, names and contact info, by typing committee in the search bar.

Jeff Eversmeyer (203 Broad Street) – they asked if the contract would be public knowledge. The solicitor said yes. They asked who drew up the contract. Solicitor Raymond believes it to be prior council. They questioned that answer. They brought up personal conversations they had with Commissioner Gaskill and how they advised her in hiring a director. They brought up the details of that conversation and believe it was a rush on hiring a Director. They brought up a person who applied and asked why he was not considered and stated his benefits. They mentioned Scott Mitchell again who applied to the position.

David B. (166 Rancocas Road) – They questioned how the contract was written and if it protects the town from him suing. They mentioned the hostility of the meetings and asked about morality in the contract. They wished his wife well, but questioned how he will do his job with what is going on. They mentioned Director Carty's money and hope that any ramifications that may happen from this that the Board will accept it. Commissioner Logue responded: They thanked him for being engaged and mentioned they want nothing but the best for Mrs. LaPlaca and the Director and his family.

Amber C (100 Madison Avenue) – they questioned whether they were on the 3 minute time or unlimited time. They picked up where Jack left off and mentioned Scott Mitchell and the things he has done and discussions he had with the public. If all questions and concerns are being directed to Mr. Carty, what are those hours? They waited for response. The solicitor informed the public that this is a public comment portion and does not require a response. They questioned why some get answers and some do not. They also asked if there are committee meetings with the Director now that they are in an

advisory role. Commissioner Logue mentioned they have not been informed of any meetings, however, the Director has just recently assumed the position and defers those questions to the Director.

The public stated that another person would like to speak but they were hesitant to stand

Robert Allen (704 Bloomfield Drive) - they questioned Resolution 2025-014; they stated that the Board did not disclose if any action was taken during the executive session. The solicitor advised the public on how Executive Session works and no action is ever taken.

Clarification was made between Commissioner Logue and the solicitor regarding Robert Allen's public comment.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to close public comment. Commissioner Gaskill seconds the motion

At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows:

Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier

Nay:

Abstain:

Matters to be presented by the Board: No Reports

Director's Report: Director Carty informed the public that committees have always been advisory. There has been no change since him being hired, however at the absence of a Director the committees were stepping up doing additional roles as the bylaws allow. He also can move Director's Report before public comment if that is what the Board chooses on the agenda. They thanked everyone for the confidence in selecting him as Director of Fire Services. His goal is to improve efficiency, communication and morale in the department. He has had productive meetings with team members and will continue to do so. There have been many issues with the longtime Directors resignation as well as the big move the new firehouse, record retention and access etc. New American Flag was installed. See attached report for more details.

Solicitor's Report: Stephen Raymond Esq.- No Report

Chairman's Report: Chairperson Saucier mentioned that "Wednesday's Child" aired today. Commissioner Sheppard thanked Courtney for copying everyone on that email.

Commissioner Logue asked the Director about two of the events and how they were posted, and how they were unaware of the events. Director Carty mentioned they were also unaware until late notice and hopes to have improved communication. Director Carty mentioned that they will be at Rita's this Friday as per Rita's request.

Next Meetings: With no additional items being presented, Chairperson Saucier announced the next meeting of the Board as follows, if advertised: Meeting: Board of Fire Commissioners
Date: Wednesday, May 7th, 2025 Time: 7:00pm Location: 17 Pine Street, Mount Holly, NJ 08060

Adjournment: Lacking additional business or discussion presented for consideration, Commissioner Brown offered a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Gaskill provided a second to the motion. At call of the roll, the vote was recorded as follows: Aye: Commissioner Logue, Commissioner Gaskill, Commissioner Sheppard, Commissioner Brown, Chairperson Saucier Nay: The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Saucier at 9:07 pm, respectfully submitted, Commissioner Sheppard.