

The April 13, 2024 Full Board meeting of the New Jersey Firemen's Home Board of Managers was called to order by Chairman Washer at 0900 hours and was followed by the pledge of allegiance. An invocation was provided by Manager Dutch.

Mr. Hull advised public notice was provided in the official newspaper, the Star Ledger.

Roll call was taken with all managers present with the exception of Mr. Jeffer and Mr. Delaurentis who were excused.

The minutes from the March 9, 2024 Full Board meeting approved.

**Communications:**

Secretary Hull reported that an invitation was received from the Boonton Historical Society inviting managers to a reception at the Firemen's Home celebrating the return of the Lathrop Family Portraits to the Home. The event is Wednesday, April 24, 2024 and 6 PM. The invite will be copied and distributed to the Board of Managers.

**Reports of Officers:**

**Secretary:**

Mr. Hull advised no further report.

**Treasurer:**

Mr. Sutphen reported that we are 3/4 of the way through our current budget and had a few unexpected items that will make things very tight. Those items will be addressed in our next budget.

**Superintendent:**

Mr. Veras pointed out the Lathrop paintings were hanging in the meeting room and the dining room of the Home. The Boonton Historical Society is very happy that they are back at the Home.

The facility is continuing its water testing for the legionella and found very small amounts at one outlet. Additionally positive tests were found on our incoming water which may indicate the Boonton Water is not properly chlorinating their water. We will continue to test. We now have a water consultant.

The Home is filling up and we anticipate having a waiting list soon. Get your applications in.

May 11th kicks off our BBQ season with the much anticipated Sussex County Pig Roast. We are pretty much booked through October with a few remaining dates open.

**Legal Counsel:**

Mr. Bell reported that it has been very quiet and he had no further report.

**Buildings and Grounds:**

Mr. Keyser provided a written report from Maintenance Director Hodieme listing the status of various projects. A copy is attached.

On March 11th the bids for the elevator project were opened and after review by Mr. Bell one was awarded for \$235,000.

On March 13th the bids for the roofing project were opened. We only received one bid and it was not accepted. We will be going out for re-bid.

The committee is still looking to have the historical pull stations outside rehabilitated.

The committee is also looking at re-paving or re-sealing the parking lots.

**Applications:**

Mr. Freeman provided a written report from the application committee meeting held on April 9, 2024 which is attached. The report indicated 71 guest in Long Term Care and 7 in Residential Care for a total of 78 guests. Since the last meeting there have been 2 new admissions and 2 guests answered their final alarm. The committee approved 4 applications and there have been 2 more admissions that will be reflected in next month's census, bringing our actual total of guests to 80. The next meeting for the Applications Committee is 0900 hours on Tuesday May 7, 2024 at the Home.

At this time, Mr. Apgar asked if it was appropriate to discuss the application's admission policy that was brought up last month. Mr. Bell advised it could be discussed now or under new business. This opened the floor up to debate about the current policy and the recent proposed changes that were to go in to effect on April 1st. The Bylaws committee had original began work on the proposed admission changes but it was sent to the applications committee to handle as it was a policy change not a By-Law change. The change leaves the 1 year admission criteria in place and Mr. Apgar encouraged the managers to read what the By-laws committee presented. Mr. Apgar advised there is confusion as to where we are at. Also we never voted on any proposed changes, we just vote to accept the applications committee report.

A long debate ensued as to if the proposed policy was meant for firefighters who join fire departments after April 1,2024 or for applications received by the Home after April 1, 2024. The Board members had differing opinions. Mr. Bell read the minutes from previous meetings and still there was no agreement on the new process. Many managers spoke on the matter offering, opinions and different application scenarios which received conflicting feelings on if the applicant would qualify or not. Ultimately it was decided to have the applications to write and submit a more detailed policy on the qualifications for applications. Mr. Mitch asked that Managers submit the opinion to the committee because as it stands there is still confusion as to what the Board wants.

**Employee Committee:**

Mr. Dutch reported that he had checked with Mr. Veras and there are no known problems.

**Finance and Budget Committee:**

Mr. Hull read a written report from Audit and Finance Vice- Chair Sutphen on the April 9, 2024 meeting of the Audit and Finance Committee which is attached. The committee reviewed revenue and expense reports as well as vouchers for the period. Bills were reported in the amount of \$483,397.13. There were discussions on the large pension bill received and how the State's billing system in January is hard to predict and can vary greatly from what we budget. This year its was \$240,000 more that the \$510,000 we forecasted. Another item was the estimated \$70,000 it is predicted to cost for ongoing water testing due to the Legionella situation. Lastly, the Department of Health passed recent requirements for Enhance Barrier Protection (PPE) with all encounters with many of the guests. This is a new, unpredicted expense. The next committee meeting will be held at 8:00 AM on May 7, 2024 at the Home.

**Insurance:**

Mr. Strube reported that there was nothing new.

**Legislative Committee:**

Mr. Lugossy reported both houses will be spending most of the time between now and July 1st working on the budget. There is one voting session on April 15th. There are 224 bills that the committee is tracking and are on hold during budget hearings.

Mr. Ordway added that a new bill was introduced in both houses this week that calls for insurance companies to provide cancer screenings for EVERYONE, not just firefighters, emergency responders, etc. The bill calls for screening for 26 types of cancer.

**By-laws:**

Mr. Apgar reported that since the by-law change of all meetings being full board meetings with a 9 AM start, attendance was as follows:

January	22 present	Meeting was 1 hour
February	18 present	Meeting was 35 minutes
March	17 present	Meeting was 1 hour 10 minutes.
April (today)	20 present	

**Museum:**

Mr. Hull reported the museum committee met on March 9th to go over locations to place the wooden models. Additionally the donation box was opened by the committee and there were \$755.00 in cash contained inside. Mr. Lugossy donated an additional dollar today bringing the total donations to \$756.00. Mr. Hull turned the cash over to Mr. Sutphen for the museum fund.

Mr. Hull added that on March 13th, Mr Cunningham and Mr. Heflich received the hose cart that was donated by the South Essex Fire Department which is on display in the lower level. On March 25th Mr Heflich conducted a work detail where he blew off the trucks in the basement and removed all of the leaves from the basement.

Mr. Veras advised that maintenance has prepared the wall outside of the museum office for display of the wooden models. Mr. Dutch is arranging for the shelves to be delivered.

**Public Relations:**

Mr. Wilson reported that the Public Relations Committee will be giving out can/bottle openers at the convention and notepads with pens for managers. The order was given to Mr. Veras to place with the vendor.

**Ethics and Code of Conduct:**

Mr. Sutphen advised no report.

**Pension:**

Mr. Washer reported that if anyone has any issues with their pension to contact him.

**Inventory:**

Mr. Wilson reported progress.

**Golf Committee:**

Mr. Signorello reported that we currently have 28 golfers signed up which is par for previous years at this point. We have obtained golf balls with our logos and wooden golf tees that were donated. We are looking at a type of shirt for our give away item. Mr. Apgar is assisting.

Mr. Dunn reported that with the assistance of former manager, Jim Matthews, Cape May County purchased a gold sponsorship for the event.

Mr. Veras added that 500 golf fliers were mailed out to every fire department in the State.

**Liaison to the State Association:**

Mr. Hull advised he no report.

**Inspections:**

Mr. Wilson reported that he will be conducting the inspection with Mr. Hull after the meeting. Any issues will be given to the Superintendent.

**Long Term Planning:**

Mr. Sutphen reported that the actuary came back with a long list of items that they need further information on. Mr. Veras is working on it.

Mr. Veras commented that this is a long process and will involve the State, the FMBA, our applications for rosters and data. Once this data is compiled it will be given to the actuary who will provide us with an estimated report cost.

**State Firemen's Association:**

President Ordway reported progress.

**Unfinished Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

Mr. Veras thanked Mr. Apgar for additional tents he got donated for outside events. Mr. Apgar commented that since the Earthquake that occurred recently made him famous on TV he has been approached by people who want to make donations. He has directed several to the Home.

**Payment of Bills:**

Mr. Hull reported the total bills in the amount of \$483,397.13. Upon motion, a roll call vote was taken and the bills payment was approved.

**Motions and Resolutions:**

None.

**Public Participation:**

None.

**Executive Session:**

None had.

**Good and Welfare:**

Mr. Ordway inquired how Mr. Jeffer was doing. Mr. Dutch advised that he will need surgery to have 5 vertebrae repaired.

Secretary Hull congratulated Mr. Signorello on being named Union County Fire Marshal.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 0948hours.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RH', written in a cursive style.

Roger Hull  
Secretary