

The February 10, 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. DeLaurentis, Mr. Strube, and Mr. Mitch who were excused.

The minutes from the January 13, 2024 Full Board meeting approved.

**Communications:**

Secretary Hull reported that a flier for the Adopt -A- Firemen program for the Home was distributed.

**Reports of Officers:**

**Secretary:**

Mr. Hull advised no further report.

**Treasurer:**

Mr. Sutphen reported that effective March 1st there is a toll increase set for the Garden State Parkway. He will make changes to the Manager's reimbursements.

**Superintendent:**

Mr. Veras reported on the Legionella situation in the building stressing we do not have Legionnaires Disease in the facility. The Home had detected an exposure in Mid-December and the State's Rapid Response team got here quickly, arriving at the end of January. Our facility was inspected and testing was recommended for 18 locations in the building. The tests run \$200-\$300 each. There have been no other cases in Morris County in the last 6 months. It is a strong suspicion that this was brought in with the guest from outside of the Home.

Mr. Veras reported that the new Firemen's Home blankets have been put in each room. All beds now have the same, uniform blanket. Spares for each bed are in stock.

There will be an antique muster at the Home scheduled for October 19, 2024. The event had previously been held here and we are bringing it back as one of our activities along with a BBQ that day.

Mr. Veras added that he was working with Mr. Signorello to help resurrect the Golf Outing. We are looking to have it locally, at the Knoll West Country Club with the participants coming back to the Home afterwards. It would be an 8AM tee off concluding with a 1 PM lunch. Our food provider, Undine would handle the food for the event. The cost of the event at the Neshanic Country Club has risen and it would be better financially and logistically to have it at the Knoll West. This was approved on the floor to hold the event on June 27.

**Legal Counsel:**

Mr. Bell reported that the Rockaway Valley Regional Sewer Authority (RVRSA) approved the license agreement and they are paying the filing fees. We will have a check this week.

The Bid paperwork for the elevator project is complete and we have had 5 inquires thus far.

The Bids for the roofing projects are near completion and will be going out next week.

**Buildings and Grounds:**

Mr. Keyser provided a written report from Maintenance Director Hodierna listing the status of various projects. A copy is attached. Mr. Keyser added that they discussed the replacement of the dishwasher which was a topic brought up at the Budget Committee meeting. The dishwasher costs approximately \$30,000. Ours is 15 years old and has had repair issues. Mr. Veras elaborated on the high use of the dishwasher in the Home and our needs.

Mr. Keyser added that he walked the outside of the Home and found that the Home is in need of power washing and painting. Suggested we look into going out for bid on the project.

**Applications:**

Mr. Freeman provided a written report from the application committee meeting held on February 6, 2024 which is attached. The report indicated 67 guest in Long Term Care and 7 in Residential Care for a total of 74 guests. Since the last meeting there have been 1 new admissions. The committee is reviewing 5 applications: four have been accepted and one is being held for attorney review. Since the last meeting four guests have answered their final alarm. The next meeting for the Applications Committee is 0900 hours on Tuesday February 6, 2024 at the Home.

Mr. Freeman discussed the Applications Committee new admissions policy which will go into effect on April 1, 2024. The new policy is for new firefighters. If you are in the system now it would be under the old standard. Mr. Freeman added that they need to look into instances where the fire department was done away with and who would retain their records.

**Employee Committee:**

Mr. Dutch reported that everything looks good and no new cases are coming in.

**Finance and Budget Committee:**

Mr. Hull provided a written report on the February 6, 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 \$467,358.93. An invoice of note was for Omni Solutions for \$23,749. This was found to be for our video and IT upgrades that were previously approved and budgeted for. The project is under way. The repair costs for the dishwasher was discussed as we spent \$1800 in repairs this month. The committee found increasing numbers of repairs needing to be made and suggested Long Term Planning look into replacing the dishwasher through purchasing or leasing options. The cost is approximately \$30,000 to purchase. Other budget items were our pension "make up" obligation. There is an additional \$175,000 levy on the Home by the State of New Jersey this year. A significant increase where we will run short in that line item. This figure is set by the State well into our budget year. We will be able to cover it with funds from the current budget but we will be tight. Lastly the committee discussed approving the water treatment testing. At the time of the committee meeting it was suggested to do 11 test sites, but as the Superintendent reported earlier, the State wants 18 test sites. The budget committee recommended allocating between \$3000 to \$10,000 for necessary testing. The next committee meeting will be held at 8:00 AM on March 5, 2024 at the Home. The report and recommendations were approved by the board.

**Insurance:**

Mr. Strube was not present- no report.

**Legislative Committee:**

Mr. Lugossy reported that four bills were signed by the Governor and they are:

- A5179/S861- Fire Life Safety Damper and Smoke Control Inspection Act
- A4125- Prohibits sale of certain Firefighting Foam
- A3791- New Townhome Fire Safety Act requiring sprinklers in new townhouses
- A5567- Extends the useful period of fire apparatus from 10 years to 20 years for purposes of bonding.

**By-laws:**

Mr. Apgar advised no report.

**Museum:**

Mr. Hull differed to Mr. Wilson who reported that he had received a \$135 cash donation from Konrad Mellert, former Warren County Executive Committeeman. It was recommended the funds be used for the shelves maintenance was asked to build to hold wooden model fire trucks that were received by Mr. Dutch.

**Public Relations:**

Mr. Wilson reported that the Public Relations Committee held a meeting on January 13, 2024 and they looked at a total of 24 suggestions for items to distribute. The committee narrowed it down to 10 and they would be meeting this afternoon to have further discussions.

**Ethics and Code of Conduct:**

Mr. Sutphen advised no report.

**Pension:**

Mr. Washer reported that everything is status quo. Mr. Washer and Mr. Veras are working on transferring funds from old brokerage type accounts that were set up years ago into regular accounts for medical, special and pension. These accounts are brokerage type accounts that are based on speculations. Mr. Veras felt we should not have brokerage type accounts. They were set up many years ago and the only person who is around that is still listed on this is Mr. DeLaurentis. Once Mr. DeLaurentis contacts the bank we can move the funds into regular accounts.

**Inventory:**

Mr. Wilson reported nothing new.

**Golf Committee:**

Mr. Signorello reported further on the golf information Mr. Veras provided in his Superintendent's report. Mr. Signorello is looking forward to "giving this a shot" for this year and if the golf event doesn't work we can look into a raffle. Mr. Signorello added that he received feedback from Essex County Committeeman Rich Otterbein that it is a great golf course. Mr. Otterbein concurred. Mr. Signorello added that it is a fun event.

**Liaison to the State Association:**

Mr. Hull advised he had brief conversation with Mr. Otterbein and everything seems to moving along fine. Mr. Hull added that he will not be able to attend the State Meeting on February 24th and asked Mr. Keyser to attend and report.

**Inspections:**

Mr. Keyser advised he inspected the Home on February 8th and found no deficiencies. He added that he conducted the tour during lunch hours and was impressed with the operation of the staff and the cleanliness of the kitchen etc.

Mr. Apgar commented "they must have fed him".

**State Firemen's Association:**

President Ordway advised that it was "report season". Finance reports are due 2/20; green sheets (percentages) are due 2/28. Currently there are 70-75 Associations have not done thier balance. Some people like to wait to the last minute. Please get them in.

Mr. Washer advised President Ordway that the Manager petition forms on the State website have wrong date. Mr. Ordway responded they will be fixed by Tuesday.

**Long Term Planning:**

Mr. Sutphen reported that they have not hired an actuary due to the situations going on at the Home making it a bust month. We will be moving forward on this soon.

**Unfinished Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

None.

\* Mr. Jeffer was not feeling well and left the meeting at this time.

**Payment of Bills:**

Mr. Hull reported the total bills in the amount of \$467,358.93. Upon motion, a roll call vote was taken and the bills payment was approved.

**Motions and Resolutions:**

None.

**Public Participation:**

Mr. Otterbein, Essex County Executive Committeeman requested that the Home fix its website. Information is outdated and the meeting dates listed are still for 2023. Mr. Veras advised it is being worked on.

**Executive Session:**

None had.

**Good and Welfare:**

Secretary Hull advised that he has some obligations this weekend which would delay the draft copy of the minutes being sent out for a few days.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 0935hours.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger Hull  
Secretary