

**Board of Fire Commissioners
GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT 6
Re-Organization & Monthly Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Held: April 22, 2021
Meeting Place: Board Office
Meeting Called to Order: 6:30pm
Members of Board Present:

Chairman – George Brown
Vice Chairman – Brian Robinson
Treasurer – Steven Funkhouser
Secretary – George Flinn
Commissioner – Derek Grier
Administrative Clerk – Kathleen Crockett
Solicitor – David Carlamere

Salute the Flag

The Sunshine Law – George Brown: In accordance with the NJ Sunshine Law this meeting is open to the public. The public portion will follow the regular business of the Board.

Special Meeting Notice is given that the Board of Fire Commissioners, District No. 6, Township of Gloucester, Camden County, New Jersey will hold a special meeting on Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 6:30pm. This meeting will take place at the Board Office located at 1946 Williamstown Road, Erial, NJ. The re-organization of Board positions will be decided along with the scheduled meeting dates and time for the upcoming year. The regular meeting of the Board will immediately follow the special meeting.

Roll call Commissioners: Comms. Annacone, Robinson, Flinn, Funkhouser and Brown present.

Comm. Brown: Let's start with the Re-Organization. The first order of business will be to swear-in the newly elected Commissioner Grier. The Solicitor will do that?

Sol.Carlamere swore in Derek Grier to the office of Commissioner. (applause)

Comm. Brown: In with the new, out with the old. (Comm. Brown presented former Comm. Annacone with a plaque) Mr. Annacone, on behalf of the Board, thank you for 10 years of serving the Community. (applause)

Mr. Annacone: The plaque says "in grateful appreciation for his contribution as a Fire Commissioner for Gloucester Township Fire District 6 2010-2021." (applause)

Comm. Brown: And for the new Commissioner?

Sol.Carlamere: Once sworn-in, it's effective tonight.

Comm. Brown: If you could just review the re-organization of the Board and positions, and basically the only changes are that Brian will serve as the Board Vice Chairman and take the responsibilities that were formerly Comm. Annacone. Steve Funkhouser will become the Board Treasurer and retain his positions and assignments as before. George Flynn will stay the same, and new Comm. Grier will assume Comm. Robinson's responsibilities and that's effective tonight. Comm. Grier will have some time to go over the budgets with you, because that's really what we're here for are budgets. You also have a schedule of the meetings for the rest of the year in your file and into next year already.

Treasurer's Report – Kathleen Crockett

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|-------------------------------|--------------|
| William Penn General Account | 2,116,554.76 |
| William Penn Payroll Account | 26,966.19 |
| Expenditures: 04/22/21 | 140,812.47 |
| TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL | 140,812.47 |

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Robinson to approve the Treasurer's Report as read. Roll call vote, all yes.

Resolutions – Sol.Carlame

Comm. Brown: The Solicitor has advised me that we should vote on the re-organization.

Sol.Carlame: You can do it as a group for the positions for each Commissioner, the second one you can do a group of Resolution 2021-08 and 2021-09. The third you can do a group of appointments, or handle any one separately.

Comm. Brown: The Officer's and Assignments

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Sol.Carlame: Next you have the Resolution for the schedule of Board Meetings and the Cash Management plan. You can do those two as a group.

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson. Roll call vote, all yes.

Sol.Carlame: Next you can do your Resolutions of Appointments which is R-10 thru R-16 as a group unless anyone wants to handle something separately.

Comm. Brown: The Resolutions cover the appointment of the Attorney, the Accountant, the Auditor, Legal Notices, Dental Care Provider, Medical Provider and Award of State Contracts.

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson. Roll call vote, all yes.

Sol.Carlame: I'd like to thank the Board for my re-appointment. I appreciate it.

Comm. Brown: You're welcome.

Minutes of the previous meeting - Motion to accept the previous month's minutes as they are available to the public upon request.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Flinn. Roll call vote, all yes.

Correspondence – Kathleen Crockett

Cl.Crockett: It's all been distributed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown

No report.

Computer Services – George Brown

No report.

Fire Prevention – George Brown

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – George Brown

No report.

Legal Liaison – George Brown

No report.

Liaison to the District Volunteers – George Brown

No report.

Re-Opening of the Board Office – George Brown

Comm. Brown: We understand the Township and not the Court part of the Township is re-opening on Monday.

Sol.Carlame: That's correct.

Comm. Brown: So what direction should we follow at this point?

Sol.Carlame: You could do the same thing. You can schedule your building open and your Administrative Office open. Your meetings are not zoom, so you're open to meetings, so you could do the same.

Comm. Brown: Comments from the Commissioners? Any ideas?

Re-Opening of the Board Office – continued

Comm. Flinn: Do we really need to be open?

Comm. Robinson: I kind of agree with George. Do we really need to be open Mike?

Chief Brezee: Yes.

Comm. Robinson: OK.

Chief Brezee: We're starting to get the complaints of "why can't I drop off my applications for smokes, why can't I drop off permit applications." It's mostly the Bureau of Fire Prevention business. We certainly would like to keep the doors locked to keep the vendors and solicitors out, but...

Comm. Brown: So the consensus is what... open, closed?

Sol. Carlamere: You're the first District that raised the question, but I do know that there are some offices out there, private as well as public that are still utilizing the drop box. If you have something to drop off, you drop it in the box. I don't know how long that's going to last because a lot of Municipalities are starting to open up.

Comm. Grier: Other than that, you'll get the public coming in wanting to ask questions of the Fire Department.

Chief Brezee: The other issue too is, are we going to have the office manned or occupied by this week?

Comm. Brown: Well that's why I asked the question now because that affects some of the things that are in motion with the Clerk that we may not do if we open next week, or may not have to do.

Comm. Robinson: You can go on trial and see how it works with the Township. I'll be there every day involved in it.

Sol. Carlamere: I believe they're still going to require masks.

Comm. Robinson: They'll still require masks.

Chief Brezee: There will only be so many people allowed in the office at one time, not that we usually have more than that.

Comm. Funkhouser: Hand sanitizers.

Chief Brezee: We can put a station there outside the office.

Comm. Brown: But the rules that I read today from the Township that were in the Mayor's weekly newsletter just said masks and 6 foot separation. It didn't say any other requirements. So I think if we're going to open to follow the Township, we should follow the Township's rules just to make it easier that we don't have a separate set of rules here.

Chief Brezee: I agree 100%.

Comm. Brown: Does anyone want to make a motion that we open on Monday?

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Robinson that the Board Office re-opens on Monday (04/26/21) Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Along that line, the question about the Clerk's schedule as of right now, she was told on Election night that she was to report next week on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday so we still have coverage issues on Wednesday and Friday. So what we planned to do was to let her work from home on those days, and in order to do that we need to get the calls to go to her and for her to have a computer that links to our network up here. The computer is here, there is nothing that needs to be installed on that other than the software that allows it to connect here and saves all her documents here, that's not a big deal. The problem with the phones is, we have a system here that's older than God here and we can't do much with it. I did speak to a number of vendors. The short-term least costly solution assuming it's not a long term, is to use an answering service for Wednesday and Friday and they'll send Renee an email as soon as they take the call so she can call the person back. To do that, I have quotes, it will cost roughly about \$220 a month. Again if it's only for a few months it's not a big expense. It's not in the budget, but if we're going in that direction the Board needs to approve it. It can be set up, they claim within a day but I don't think they're right, but I'm not going to argue with the vendor. The first request is to approve the answering service on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Comm. Robinson: Are we still going to need it if we're open?

Comm. Brown: There won't be anybody in the office if Renee's not here on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Comm. Grier: Can the answering service just do Wednesdays and Fridays?

Comm. Brown: The other three days Renee will be here so it will just be two days a week.

Mr. Annacone: If you're going to open, why is Renee not going to be here 5 days a week if you're going to open?

Comm. Brown: Because she cannot get a babysitter and we do not want to continue to keep Jan on the schedule and that's what we agreed to last month. I mean, we can do anything you want.

Sol. Carlamere: Someone will be in the office Administratively though, right?

Comm. Brown: No, not on Wednesday and Friday unless we...

Sol. Carlamere: So you'll have the office closed Wednesday and Friday?

Re-Opening of the Board Office – continued

Comm. Brown: That's correct.

Comm. Robinson: How's that going to affect you business-wise?

Chief Brezee: It's been rough. I've tried on days no one is here, I try to work in the office as much as possible to be available to answer the phones and stuff, but...

Comm. Brown: Let's go through the choices so we know. One is, we can't make her work those days if she has family issues, so we can continue with part-time people on those days until she can come back...

Comm. Funkhouser: I have a question...why can't she work better? I don't get it. Why can't she get a babysitter or whatever? If I had a Monday thru Friday job that I was hired for, I'm expected to be there Monday thru Friday.

Comm. Flinn: Right after that you got pregnant and had twin babies...FMLA.

Comm. Funkhouser: And nothing against Renee or anything, I understand about finding a babysitter, but...

Comm. Robinson: I make a motion we go into Closed Session.

Comm. Brown: We'll do that at the end, let's save that for the end of the meeting.

Mr. Annacone: Question, can you open for 4 days a week and close Friday?

Chief Brezee: That would match the Township, but that's 10 hour days.

Mr. Annacone: She could still work from home on Fridays or whatever.

Chief Brezee: That's 4 days to match the Township, if we're concerned about following the Township.

Comm. Brown: Well I think we'd have to check with Kathy and Jan to see if they're available on that 4th day for the foreseeable future, one or the other.

Mr. Annacone: What I'm saying is, close the building on Fridays and be open Monday through Thursday.

Comm. Brown: Monday thru Thursday includes Wednesday and we need someone for Wednesday.

Mr. Annacone: Oh, she can't work Wednesdays at all?

Comm. Brown: No, that's why it was two days a week...Wednesday and Friday. So do we want to go to Closed and deal with that at the end here?

Comm. Funkhouser: Yes.

Comm. Brown: OK, then I'll hold all my other issues. Comm. Annacone is no longer in the organization. I don't think there is anything in there that we didn't just touch on with the Administrative person.

Budget Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson

No report.

IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson

No report.

Personnel / Administration – Brian Robinson

No report.

Personnel / Operations – Brian Robinson

No report.

Apparatus – Derek Grier

No report.

Fire Department Equipment – Derek Grier

No report.

Fire Department Operations – Derek Grier

No report.

Training – Derek Grier

No report.

Insurance – George Flinn

No report.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser

Comm. Funkhouser: Referring to the Chief's report in regards to the roofing and all, I heard from the Engineer Company in the Township right now to see if they can come out to give us estimates on what it would cost us.

Chief Brezee: Shortly after, I received an email and a meeting is set for Monday the 26th at 10:30am here, and they just want to physically see the roof and then we'll discuss what they need to move forward.

Comm. Funkhouser: OK.

Chief Brezee: They'll give the whole breakdown of everything they do and how it's handled and everything. So I'll have more to report after that.

Comm. Brown: The Engineer hasn't given us a price yet for his services?

Chief Brezee: No. They want to see the job.

Comm. Brown: OK, a walk through.

Chief Brezee: It's Consulting Engineer Services on Cross Keys Road within the Township.

Comm. Brown: OK, so the question is, do we want to wait another whole month to approve their fees or do we want to set some dollar amount not to exceed so that we can...

Chief Brezee: I have no idea of that number.

Comm. Funkhouser: I have no idea of the number...\$200,000.

Comm. Brown: So probably those kinds of services are between 10 and 15% of that, so why not approve at least the initial amount so the guy can get to work, is there a problem with that?

Sol. Carlamere: No, you can set at least a max and then you have to review it if it looks like it's going to exceed to get started.

Chief Brezee: I just wouldn't be able to give you a number, but it sounds like probably 15-20%?

Comm. Brown: I think when we talked to the Architect as I recall, that's where it got those numbers from, so I'm saying it's in the range of Architectural services, let's approve \$30,000 for right now, don't tell him that that's what we approved.

Comm. Robinson: I make a motion we approve the \$30,000 cap for the Engineer.

Comm. Funkhouser: Taken out of the roofing budget.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Communications – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

EMS / Supplies & Equipment – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser

No report.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Chief Brezee: The report's been submitted. Out of the usual, I do have that update on the roofing. For May's meeting, May 27th, we have a blood drive...do we have an end time for that?

Comm. Funkhouser: There is no end time.

Chief Brezee: It may interfere with our meeting. May 27th is the Board meeting that night.

Comm. Brown: My suggestion, as I mentioned the other night, you weren't here, is we ask the Red Cross if they can come up with the bus and they do their show out in the bus as they've done a couple times before, and this room would still be available. So can we contact the Red Cross and ask them if they can do that?

Comm. Funkhouser: Sure, I've never seen the bus, but sure.

Chief – Michael Brezee

Comm. Brown: It's been here.

Chief Brezee: I just wanted to have a backup plan and my thought was I don't think we'll be moved along with the small room, that we would have that set up for the meeting if necessary.

Comm. Brown: No, I don't think we will. So I'm saying, we've used the bus here before and it seemed to have worked. If that will work out will that meet your concerns Chief?

Chief Brezee: Oh yeah, I was just worried about...I didn't want you guys to walk in and go what, we can't have a meeting in here?

Comm. Funkhouser: Again, if they can't get the bus we can set up in the other room, it's not finished yet, but we can still set up a couple tables for our meeting.

Chief Brezee: It would be set just like it was prior to us moving out of there.

Comm. Grier: Do you have a rough estimate of how many donors to expect?

Comm. Funkhouser: No, they handle that list.

Comm. Grier: Historically do we know that number?

Chief Brezee: In the past they seemed to have gone from 2-8pm at the latest.

Comm. Brown: The thing that's different is, before they just used to all walk up, so you get a group of them waiting to get waited on. Now they like to schedule appointments so they don't get too many.

Chief Brezee: Yes, and with the Covid, they were allowing no walk-ins. They would schedule so many and allow a couple to walk in. But once Covid hit and we got started doing them, the agreement was only scheduled people would come. They would not accept...because they would do pre-screen prior to them getting here and everything.

Comm. Brown: I do recall when we used the bus before and we just put a couple chairs out in the hall and if they came in 5-10 minutes before their appointment they were told to have a seat so they could take them out to the bus.

Comm. Funkhouser: Question, are the other people still going to be allowed in the building...the workers etc. to use the facilities?

Comm. Brown: Sure, as long as they have a mask on.

Comm. Funkhouser: OK.

Chief Brezee: I did want to mention, it wasn't in my report, but that we don't have any of the details in concrete on the Johns Mansville fire that I'm sure everybody heard of or knew about. That was dispatched out on April 7th, it was a Wednesday morning at 5:44am, and that incident didn't end until April 12th, Monday at 8:03am. I think they said 134 hours maybe in service from the start of that fire till the end. I can tell you that District 6, between the Deputy Chief and myself, our career crew and a couple volunteer crews, we spent probably more than half of that there. The Deputy Chief and I operated suppression and incident command, as well as our firefighters all operated in suppression. That's been discussed, that's probably once in a career fire there, it was interesting. I started to print out the report that County sent us, but it looks like they gave up a couple hours in to their narrative page, and there's not a lot to it. Winslow Township Chief Rigberg has advised he's going to put a full report together and issue them out to us which will certainly help me making sure the reports are right in the computer. 99 different agencies operated on that fire from Edison all the way down to Cape May County. It was quite the deal, and I just wanted to mention that.

On May 5th, the Camden County Chief's Association Executive Board, I'm going to host the 8-10 fellows here for that meeting. We'll probably just have them here in the same setting you're looking at now. Nothing is needed other than that, there's no food or anything like that, and we do the blood drive. That's all I had to add.

Comm. Brown: I do have one comment on your report Chief, and that is that I guess somewhat of a question on what to do with 869.

Chief Brezee: Yes. I figured I was going to wait for the Commissioner appointments and whoever that Commissioner was to fill them in on absolutely where we're at with that and where we want to go.

Comm. Brown: OK, so that appointment belongs to Comm. Grier right now. My only comment is, that vehicle...I was here when it was purchased.

Chief Brezee: '07.

Comm. Brown: And I've been a Commissioner since '06. It's now 14 years old, the body needs work etc. I think we should look hard at whether we're willing to put potentially \$5,000 by the time you're done...

Chief Brezee: Just to get the check-engine light off is \$1,000. We were going to fix the body issues, and I think anybody who's driven it will tell you the suspension is starting to loosen up. It's at the point where it's going to start getting costly.

Comm. Brown: And if you say the suspension is just starting, I remember when it was a year old, it was just starting and that was 14 years ago and it's getting worse. I disliked driving that vehicle from the day we got it.

Chief – continued

So anyway maybe we need to put our thinking cap on about changing the apparatus replacement plan a little sooner than we originally thought. That's my only suggestion, it's not my area, that's your area Comm. Grier. The second thing is, there was a comment in the cover email of the report, and why don't you tell the Board what's going on there.

Chief Brezee: I don't know if any of you guys got a chance to read the proposal from District 2, District 4 and Engine 88. I was contacted by the President of the IAFF as well as Administrator Robb of District 2. During the height of Covid, Engine 88 lost two crews at once, and were down those two paid crews so they were using volunteer fill-ins. And right before they ran out of volunteer fill-ins, they started to get some people back, but it made them very nervous that if something down the road from here, if we don't have a plan in place and we lose too many firefighters. So they're looking to put an agreement together between 2, 4 & 6 that if they were to hit that spot or we were to hit that spot where there are no volunteers available, we have career guys out for injury, pandemic, whatever reason, that we would be able to either hire one of their firefighters at their overtime rate for the day, or they would be able to hire our firefighter at the overtime rate. For example, if they hired one of our firefighters to fill one of their voids, we would pay them the overtime rate and then we would submit a request to be reimbursed from them. So they're looking for a memorandum of agreement to put this program together. Before they went and added us into this agreement, they wanted to know if we would be interested at all. I said I would certainly take that back to my Board, get their feelings, if there are any questions I'll bring them back. If you're interested in moving forward, I believe the next step is they're going to start writing up the agreement which will...you're not deciding on joining right now, you're deciding OK, we're interested, let's see your agreement and what you got.

Comm. Brown: If I could clarify that, I think what we're saying is that we are agreeing to read the proposal, just to be precise, for the Chief to go back to District 2 and say prepare your proposal so the Board can review it and approve it or modify it.

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Solicitor – David Carlamere

Sol.Carlamere: I have nothing to report.

Old Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: I think we covered most of it. There are a couple of issues regarding the move of the offices, but that's still a work in progress so let's skip that right now. We are going to do that, we're waiting for furniture layout, etc.

Comm. Funkhouser: Question on that, has the furniture been ordered?

Chief Brezee: No.

Comm. Funkhouser: OK.

Old Business List – George Brown

- 1) CPA issue with 1099's – Comm. Brown is calling the CPA
- 2) Computer Room Project – hiring for electrical and computer install
- 3) Comm. Funkhouser to visit Comm. Brown's office for cable layout
- 4) Update – Adm. Clerk work from home, computer, phone, etc.
- 5) Engineer to be hired for the roof project
- 6) Discussion of Administrative work schedule
- 7) Blood Drive 5/27/21
- 8) What to do with Engine 869
- 9) To review District 2 proposal to hire other District's firefighters in case of illness, injury etc.

New Business – George Brown

Comm. Brown: New Business? (hearing none)

Cl.Crockett: Did you want to say anything about the Election?

Comm. Brown: Yes, do we have the final Election results?

Cl.Crockett: Yes.

Comm. Brown: The final numbers for the Election were Flinn-421, Grier-391, Write ins-17, Budget 308-yes and 134-no. To me, that's always a vote of confidence from the citizens in terms of what they think about the job that

New Business – continued

everybody is doing here, the career firemen etc., and the budgets run 3 to 1. There are some happy campers out there. You're always going to have some that wouldn't pay a dime for anything, but those budget number I think are a real salute to everybody here.

Public Portion – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Public Portion?

Mr. Annacone: Yes, if I may. I'd just like to say thank you to everyone for the time I spent here, all the help I got from everybody. Thank you to the career staff as well as the volunteers for the work they put in for the town. It was a pleasure being on this Board for this amount of time. I got a hell of an education on public finance, still learning and probably never will. A special thanks to Kathy and Jan for stepping up for this last year during Covid and all, filling in whenever we needed them. Thank you everyone.

Comm. Brown: Thank you again Rich.

Cl.Crockett: Thank you Rich. (applause)

Closed Session – George Brown

Comm. Brown: Let the clock show that we're going into Closed Session at 7:04pm.

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

Comm. Brown: Let the record show that we've come out of Closed Session and back in Public session at 7:42pm. Roll call Commissioners, all present.

Comm. Brown: Comm. Flinn, the Solicitor reminded me this is a new session for you as Commissioner so you have to get sworn-in again before you go.

Sol.Carlamere swore in Comm. Flinn to a new 3 year term. (applause)

Comm. Funkhouser: Welcome Back.

Comm. Brown: **CS -79** Discussion of Administrative Work Schedule **CS-80** Volunteer Compensation Stipend
During the Closed Session an issue regarding personnel was discussed and has not been resolved yet. When it's resolved it will get read into the next meeting.

Adjourn – George Brown

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Grier to adjourn the meeting at 7:43pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.