

**Board of Fire Commissioners  
GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT 6  
Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Held:** March 23, 2023  
**Meeting Place:** Board Office  
**Meeting Called to Order:** 6:34pm  
**Members of Board Present:** **Chairman** – George Brown  
**Vice Chairman** – Brian Robinson  
**Treasurer** – Steven Funkhouser, excused  
**Secretary** – George Flinn  
**Commissioner** – Derek Grier  
**Administrative Clerk** – Renee Evans  
**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.

**Roll call Commissioners:**

Comms. Robinson, Flinn, Grier and Brown are present. Comm. Funkhouser is excused.

**Comm. Robinson:** Under Personnel, it is my pleasure to let everybody know that we were notified by Civil Service that our Clerk Renee is official. She's permanent, it's done, the process is over. It's been months of her hanging on and what is she going to do. There was a glitch it appears to be on Trenton's end at some point when she was hired, so at the next meeting we will do a Resolution dating everything back to the date of hire. So this is finally done. It's been a dilemma the last couple months.

Number two, I'm going to ask to go into Closed Session for a brief Personnel matter later in the meeting.

**Comm. Brown:** Do you want to do it at the end or now?

**Comm. Robinson:** You can do it now, that's fine.

**Closed Session – George Brown**

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Grier to go into Closed Session on a Personnel matter at 6:36pm. Roll call vote, all yes. **Resolution R – 16 – 23**

Closed Session **CS - 101** The Appointment of former Chief Joe Palumbo as Roof Consultant.

Motion made by Comm. Grier, seconded by Comm. Robinson to go into Open Session. Roll call vote, all yes.

**Comm. Brown:** Let the record show that we've gone back into Open at 6:38pm. Roll call, all here.

**Comm. Robinson:** While in Closed, we had been discussing for months as far as bringing on a Consultant to assist with the Roof Project. That gentleman will be former retired Chief Joe Palumbo of the Pennsauken Fire Department who will be appointed effective tonight as a Consultant for the roof project. He has a massive amount...he converted I believe 3 actual firehouses that were volunteer houses, social halls and all the bells and whistles in Pennsauken are now full time career houses with conference rooms, bedding, you name it, he's done it. He was the CFO for the last I believe 4 years out of emergent in the beginning just prior to the virus. Assisted with them and oversaw the building of the Pennsauken Library. His experience and knowledge was well beyond, to be honest with you any of us have to oversee a project like this and I think we need it. The way things are going, it's bogged down way too long and we want to get it moving. That's kind of where we stand.

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

**Comm. Brown:** OK, back to the agenda of the meeting.

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

**Correspondence – Renee Evans**

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** All have been distributed.

**Treasurer's Report – Derek Grier**

William Penn General Account	2,985,867.76
William Penn Payroll Account	26,896.40
Expenditures March 23, 2023	72,032.33
 TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL	 72,032.33

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson to approve the Treasurer's Report as read.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Liaison to the Fire Company – Christopher Brown**

**F.A.C. Brown:** Nobody to be approved by the Board this evening. I have a handful next week. As you all know, part of my time away this past week was in Florida. Lt. Robert Schoonmaker is being promoted to Captain. Ff. Joseph Blevins will be promoted to Lieutenant. I'll be dropping their Class A's off tomorrow morning to have the modifications made. We'll do the formal swearing-in at the April meeting.

Other than that, I'm happy to say that every time I turn around instead of finding disappointment, I see fun surprises. One of the things that made its way down my list was that we used to have contact lists of members. I was just in the office and saw a Firefighter working with one of the Officers, our Administrative Aid and it's already done. The manner in which people are always here, they're engaged, participating and finding ways to make the place better. It's something that everybody here should be proud of and I wanted to make sure I noted that for the record.

**Comm. Brown:** Are those promotions in effect now?

**F.A.C. Brown:** They are currently in effect, and they'll be sworn-in in April.

**Comm. Brown:** Congratulations to you two guys, well earned. (applause)

**Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** Just a note on the budget, we still do not have the budget back with all the last minute details. I did send a note to the Accountant, and he did send us what he had, but I'm not sure all of that's correct yet, so we're still verifying that. And that needs to be published.

**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.

**Budget Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson**

No report.

**IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – Brian Robinson**

No report.

**Personnel / Administration – Brian Robinson**

(see page 1 of minutes – Renee Evans & Joseph Palumbo)

**Personnel / Operations – Brian Robinson**

No report.

**Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser**

**Comm. Brown:** Comm. Funkhouser is not here, he asked me to present the book on the roof. It's going to be right up there as best read right after Jack and Jill. Just in case anybody was going to start a pool on when they expect to have it completed. As of right now, the date is September 28, 2023. I'm going to give this to the Administrator who can pass it along. I did not look at it for content. I think the document needs to have some things like the date it represents and the version number and other things, but I'll leave that to Mr. Palumbo...

**Comm. Robinson:** Exactly, we have a guy.

**Comm. Brown:** ....to get some control around the documentation, because at this point we're going to be in a document chase to make sure we're all on the same page. They're still quoting a number of \$322,000. I asked the Clerk to confirm that we have \$400,000 in the budget, and that's what we're going to try and manage to. So \$322,000 is the number, but they'll find some surprises, guaranteed. That's it.

**Communications – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

**EMS / Supplies & Equipment – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

**Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

**Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

**Office of the Fire Marshal – George Flinn**

**Comm. Flinn:** The only thing I have is, I'd like the Administrator to get with the Fire Marshal, and find him a part-time helper and we'll approve it.

**Comm. Brown:** On that note, if I could just suggest. I have some ideas that might...I don't want to really sit here and try to figure out whether they're making or losing headway or not, so maybe if we can get a monthly report out of him.

**F.A.C. Brown:** He forgot this evening was the meeting. You'll have a monthly report. I can tell you he's already completed a little over 40 inspections. They're not all into the reporting system yet, but the inspections are done. He had a high priority request from the Police Department in reference to getting their training facility and range inspected on Hickstown Rd. because they'll be using it for a special event. That was completed last week and the Police Dept. is aware of it. There was one question that maybe we can discuss about what we will do as far as a fee for that. If we waive it because it's another Government agency, that's a discussion to be had at a later date.

**Comm. Brown:** I don't think we need much of a discussion, we should just waive it. Does anybody disagree? (hearing none) OK, just waive it.

**F.A.C. Brown:** OK

**Insurance – George Flinn**

**Comm. Brown:** Do you have a send a memo out regarding an Insurance discussion for this month? You sent an email out on March 11<sup>th</sup> regarding renewal. OK, that's resolved?

**Comm. Flinn:** I didn't foresee the need to sign a two-year, when this year the rates already went down. So why would I sign a two-year with the rates going up in that second year when they may go down next year. We locked into the one year.

Insurance – continued

**Comm. Brown:** No, I think that's smart.

**F.A.C. Brown:** We'll formally notify them in that regard, but it will be taken care of and renewed one year.

**Comm. Flinn:** For now?

**F.A.C. Brown:** Yes.

Sign – George Flinn

No report.

Water – George Flinn

No report.

Apparatus – Derek Grier

**Comm. Robinson:** One other question, the discussion of the Pine Hill vehicle?

**F.A.C. Brown:** It was one of the items I met with Comm. Grier about.

**Comm. Grier:** So we talked about that, it's ongoing right now. I had some questions that were answered so it's under review and I'll get back to him next month or soon.

**Comm. Brown:** I don't know what the issue is, so if it's something I need to know with the other Commissioners, do you all know what the issue is he's talking about?

**Comm. Grier:** It was my concern.

**F.A.C. Brown:** We received a verbal inquiry and I sent it through the Operations and Apparatus Commissioners.

**Comm. Brown:** OK.

**F.A.C. Brown:** It's cc'd on every email I send, but I know how you feel about that.

**Comm. Brown:** You're right. Is it something we need to know about, that's all I care about.

**F.A.C. Brown:** OK, then skip it.

**Comm. Grier:** The incident reported in your report, you said you would make some adjustments.

**F.A.C. Brown:** Yeah, I'm going to have to do it again. The way in which I was providing these reports was in real time. The problem is, we don't always have the data in real time for the meeting, so instead of leaving it incomplete, starting in the April report, what will happen is, I will include the March statistics because I will be able to insure that the month of March's stats and reporting is 100% done in regards to incidents, inspections and investigations. So instead of giving you incomplete data, because for instance, the last 48 hours of runs I couldn't give you some of that data. Unlike, and it was possible under the previous reporting system, incidents that were mutual aid automatically populated in the system, we have to manually enter that. So if a report doesn't get entered, so for instance, we were not staffed today. All of our incidents that were handled today as well as the day before yesterday, were handled by our Shared Service Department. So that's about 11 runs that occurred on those two days that would skew the data and give incomplete data. So for April's meeting, you will get March's stats with all that criteria, all the mutual aid runs including the metric that we discussed this afternoon. I'll be able to figure out how to pull that and include it in the report.

**Comm. Flinn:** Didn't the old system both were populated for both departments?

**F.A.C. Brown:** Correct.

**Comm. Flinn:** Are we fixing that?

**F.A.C. Brown:** Right now it has to be manually entered.

**Comm. Flinn:** Yeah, but it's not an issue you created?

**Comm. Brown:** No, they're making progress with the new system.

**Comm. Flinn:** I'm just saying it was over there...

**F.A.C. Brown:** No, it got picked there, but no.

**Comm. Flinn:** Just checking. Because it seems kind of weird how things go out.

**F.A.C. Brown:** No, there is definitely differences in the way in which it works, it's a different system.

**Comm. Brown:** And could I back up a second, back to your comment Comm. Flinn about the Fire Inspector has done 40 inspections. What I'd like to know is not just what he's done, but how many more he has to do on an ongoing basis so we can decide....

**Comm. Flinn:** I think he's still trying to populate what we're missing.

**Comm. Brown:** OK.

**Comm. Grier:** The number is growing.

**Apparatus – continued**

**F.A.C. Brown:** There was another business that was found just the other day.

**Comm. Flinn:** He calls me at least 3 times a week.

**Comm. Brown:** No, but I'm saying the only thing I care about is, if you ask for more help over the next 3 months, that's OK, but I'd like to know, so if somebody says why, because somebody will say around here why did we get help for the Fire Marshal, we can say he did 40 inspections this month and still has 691 to go that we know of, and we're going to get caught up and get that cleaned up. You need a number to measure whether or not you're making progress, that's all.

**Comm. Flinn:** I know Steve payed him a visit and he was working on the software and trying to get everything loaded and figured out for him.

**F.A.C. Brown:** Yeah, he's been doing a good job reaching out to other Officials in the area and getting help. I honestly can't help him because I don't utilize that module in First Due. I directed him to the online training they have and there's also some, I sent him a link to manufacturer's having a couple online training webinars coming up soon. Pulling through those, hopefully that will help him accelerate the process.

**Comm. Flinn:** It's new to everyone.

**F.A.C. Brown:** Everybody, everywhere. I just had a conversation with Mr. Fisona who's sitting over my right shoulder here earlier about something he's been using for the past 2-3 months, went in there doing an update and it looks completely different. These things are coming at us like curve balls, and one of the things that's noted in there is about us reestablishing our NFIRS compliance. The way in which that data is reported, and in fact actually I had a discussion last week with our representative from the NFIRS reporting unit that right now they can't properly accept the data out of First Due because there are things that populates and sends information for that they don't collect at the State level. It's causing problems on the collections side of it and they're trying to integrate the data they're exporting from First Due into the State system. It's everywhere. And it's all getting better, everybody learning curve on the system, even the reporting side of it. One of the things I may have mentioned at a previous meeting about that is, in Firehouse which was the previous RMS, there were probably 45-50 canned came with it statistical and analytical ways to run reports and pull data. Right now, we just finally last month got from the vendor, the County was able to get them to load about a dozen in there. Everything else as far as any other data or reporting, you have to create the report by choosing which data base, which field, if you want a tabular review, the column review, so if you don't have really any background in understanding what the heck those things mean, you're lost. So not to pat myself on the back because I have a little bit of a background and understanding of what those things are, we're a little bit ahead of certain other people as far as being able to pull that data, so hopefully by the summertime we'll be beyond crawling and at a brisk walk as far as pulling that data and doing what needs to be done.

**Comm. Flinn:** Then they'll change something on you.

**F.A.C. Brown:** Right, that's probably what will happen.

**Comm. Flinn:** I know a good software company...

**Comm. Brown:** And for whatever it's worth, there's a rumor that Comm. Grier is an expert at writing those reports.

**Comm. Flinn:** You mean that program to figure out what information you need?

**Comm. Brown:** Yeah.

**Comm. Grier:** Nick from Campbell Supply called me mid-March to inform me that the manufacturer did push out receiving of that for one more month. So we're now looking at mid-April to receive the part for them to begin work.

**Comm. Brown:** And it will be out of service for approximately a month still?

**Comm. Grier:** Approximate, yes.

**Comm. Brown:** I don't like the way you looked up to the heavens for that answer.

**Comm. Flinn:** The roof and the truck are in a race.

**Comm. Grier:** .....before the apparatus leaves the building for that repair.

**Comm. Brown:** That's a better answer. Anything else?

**Comm. Grier:** And we are still looking at getting the apparatus weighed soon.

**Comm. Brown:** OK. That's all you have?

**Comm. Flinn:** You can do it right over Erial concrete.

**Comm. Brown:** You can take it out to 295.

**Comm. Flinn:** I know they have a certified scale there.

#### **Apparatus – continued**

**Comm. Brown:** But I think there was a question of whether or not you can weigh the truck front axels first...if you can weigh them separately because it may not be overweight in total, but may be overweight on the rear axils which is what we're trying to uncover.

**Comm. Grier:** Operations has a plan to do so, and I will leave that in his hands to accomplish it.

**Comm. Brown:** There you go...I love plans. Anything else Comm. Grier?

**Comm. Grier:** That will do it.

#### **Fire Department Equipment – Derek Grier**

No report.

#### **Fire Department Operations – Derek Grier**

No report.

#### **Training – Derek Grier**

No report.

#### **Fire Administrator/Chief – Christopher Brown**

**F.A.C. Brown:** The report was submitted, just a couple of the highlights and one addition that didn't make the report. Thank you Capt. Kramer who stepped up and helped me finish the initial review of our S.O.G.'s. The last S.O.G. revisions were issued in 2013, ten years ago. There have been a few Chief's orders and directives, but then never integrated into the S.O.G.'s. Even for certain calls for service we didn't really have tightened up and buttoned up policies and procedures for. We're trying to complete that and get that. That's really the basis for the operations of what we do everything from. All of our training, all of our calls, if we don't have it in writing, we don't have a reference to set an expectation of people, we really have nothing. I do have a meeting next week with, in line with the stuff about the apparatus, with Gloucester Township Public Works. I sent an email to the Commission earlier with all the details in there. If you have any questions about it, I can talk to you after the meeting. We finally got the guy who we really needed to be talking to. The previous maintenance Supervisor is in the process of retiring from the Township, so this gentleman is kind of transitioning into his position, but they are absolutely enthusiastic about doing whatever they can to help us out provide service. It was actually Mr. Carlamere...usually it's people just standing up at Council meetings berating the Township and beating up on people, but to be able to deal with somebody who is professional, helpful, knowledgeable and enthusiastic was absolutely great. So we'll continue to investigate that per the Board's request.

I did reach out to the vendors for Personal Protective Equipment. I spoke with Comm. Funkhouser, Comm. Robinson and you mentioned Comm. Grier earlier about the Board passed a Resolution x amount of years ago in regards to service life for PPE. We're reaching a point where there's a lot of it that's coming up to the end of that service life, so we're going to investigate other vendors, one at the request of the personnel. The fine folks you see sitting behind me are the ones who actually wear the stuff more than I do. A lot of times the jobs, if they're local, I'm standing in the back of the SUV pointing and talking. For me to be the sole decider on something that they have to wear on every single call that is integral in protecting them is a little unfair and is against my ethos and how I like to do things. So I've received numerous requests from a bunch of the members about looking at alternate vendors. In addition to that, the last vendor which we did utilize, it took a little over 14 months to come in. I know there are supply chain issues still allegedly going on but that is a little excessive. So if we can save some money in the process of doing it and it's a win and the folks enjoy it and are more comfortable in it, then that's the route we're going to go. Sometimes you take a holistic look, and that's what I put out to everybody. If we don't know the answer to why we're doing something, then we better figure it out. Just because it's always been that vendor or always been something, then it's time to change.

Lastly, on behalf of the two new Officers I mentioned earlier, this past week they attended the Andy Fredericks Training Days down in Lexington which is the same training the District was kind enough to send me to last year. They had a heck of an experience, and there is at least one lecture in there that I tried to bring up in this area for some other Departments. It's one of the things without the Board support and funding for that, we couldn't make it happen. So not only did they have a good time and good life experience, they learned a lot of stuff as well and be able to bring it back, so thank you.

**Solicitor – David Carlamere**

**Sol.Carlamere:** Nothing to report.

**Resolutions – Renee Evans**

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** None.

**Old Business – George Brown**

1) Computer Room project

**Comm. Brown:** The Computer Room project is delayed until April, that's the earliest the vendor can get in here.

2) Apparatus boom leak

**Comm. Brown:** Comm. Grier gave us an update on the apparatus.

3) Roof project

**Comm. Brown:** We had an update on the roof and the roof project manager.

4) New phone system for the building

**Comm. Brown:** I have a call scheduled with Verizon on Monday, nothing on that till April.

**New Business – George Brown**

**Comm. Robinson:** Folks will see some lock upgrades coming in the near future hopefully. We brought a company in to look at our system, it's quite old. And directly in front of him, as I was trying to swipe the front door, he flat out said the readers are old, the system is antiquated, blah blah blah. So it's turning out to be a multi-phased project that you're going to see over the next year or so, which is going to be the locks upgraded, the doors upgraded, a little more secure. That's going to be a phase one, phase two type system. A little more security at the front door with a camera system and a buzz system, Renee will be able to buzz people in and out, so it's not a free flow throughout the building during the day. As far as the guys who work here know, oh we're around here during the day, it's not a good mix. In the future phase three of it, the camera system will be coming. Where it's going to be, it won't be anywhere private, offices, stuff like that, but probably always engine bay, outer cameras, parking lot probably to cover p.o.v.'s, privately owned vehicles, so it's all for the safety and security of all of us. There is a lot of foot traffic around here now. In the very near future there is going to be obviously an increase in foot traffic with Wawa. So it's something we're anticipating down the road that we may need so we just want to be ahead of it. That's it. Any questions? (hearing none) I just want you to know that if you see the movement around here, people looking at things, measuring and stuff, we are ahead of the game because we already have a swipe system in place, so they don't have to re-wire the whole building thank God.

**Comm. Brown:** Does anybody know what the date is for the opening of that?

**Comm. Robinson:** Some days it looks like it's going fast. Anybody know? (hearing none) That's all I have.

**Public Portion – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** Please stand, state your name and address and address the Board.

**Comm. Grier:** We're waiting for the public accountant to fill in the rest of these numbers, or are these other numbers that we're working on?

**Comm. Brown:** I can't see that far, what's the date on the document?

**Comm. Grier:** It says January to December, 2023.

**Comm. Brown:** That's probably not correct.

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** Yeah, he just put the data in, and there are a couple things that I already found that need to be adjusted.

**Comm. Flinn:** So see Renee for a copy.

**Comm. Brown:** I think once it's approved, everybody will get a copy.

**Adjourn – George Brown**

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Grier to adjourn the meeting at 7:05pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Comm. Brown:** Thank you everyone for being here, thank you for continuing to come here, good job to the new Officers.