

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

**Meeting Held:** November 15, 2022  
**Meeting Place:** Board Office  
**Meeting Called to Order:** 6:32pm  
**Members of Board Present:**

**Chairman** – George Brown  
**Vice Chairman** – Brian Robinson  
**Treasurer** – Steven Funkhouser  
**Secretary** – George Flinn  
**Commissioner** – Derek Grier  
**Administrative Clerk** – Renee Evans  
**Solicitor** – David Carlamere, excused

**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:**

All present.

**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. Funkhouser. Roll call vote, all yes.

**Correspondence – Renee Evans**

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** It's all been distributed.

**Treasurer's Report – Steven Funkhouser**

William Penn General Account	2,670,650.49
William Penn Payroll Account	12,933.27
Expenditures: 11/15/22	44,994.77
 TOTAL AMOUNT FOR APPROVAL	 44,994.77

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Budget Co-Commissioner – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** Comm. Grier and myself and the District Clerk have had some preliminary discussions and I thought what we would do tonight would be to hand out whatever information we have at this point, and the plan is that everybody is going to do their own budgets except if they share a budget with somebody else. The Clerk was going to prepare, it's probably in my packet here...

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** Everyone has theirs in their packet.

**Comm. Brown:** OK. So if your name is there, you're responsible for it. Let's see what's happening to the budget. It's going up by \$21,000 more and Comm. Grier is going to explain to us how he saved us that much already, so we'll take care of that when we get to him. I know you haven't had any time to look at this. Any comments or questions about how we're going to do this. If you're not sure or you need help, I'm available, just drop me a note. Comm. Grier is going to be the understudy for the budget for this year. The Clerk is going to be the upper study, I know she can do it. We're going to use the Accountant for the heavy lifting cause that's what we pay him for.

**Budget Co-Commissioner – continued**

Does everybody understand? So what's heavy lifting? If Renee decides something is really above you or one of us, you send it to the Accountant and say these are the things we're expecting from you on this date.

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** OK. And there is also a schedule in there of everything that's needed for the budget.

**Comm. Brown:** This just came in and none of us have had a chance...it looks like we have to have some things done by the 20<sup>th</sup> of December, then the next date is the 11<sup>th</sup> of January. It's about the same pace as any other year, so I would start with that page and look at that so you can focus on what we've got to get done.

**Computer Services – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** I have been having ongoing conversations with the kid from Blackwood about the phone system and the WIFI. I've come to the conclusion, I found out that the company that sells the WIFI also has a very sophisticated yet cheaper and easier to use phone system, so I'm leaning towards going that direction. I need to talk to probably Derek about that in order to make that decision by the next meeting. I'm not going to go with Verizon. It's too complicated and too unreliable for what we need to do. So hopefully a decision by next month.

**Fire Prevention – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** We had it, it went pretty well. It was a rotten rainy night, maybe next year it will be sunny and balmy. Thanks to everybody who participated. Dep. Chief same, pass the word. We appreciate people coming out knowing there may not be anybody there.

**IAFF Contracts Co-Commissioner – George Brown**

No report.

**Legal Liaison – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** The Legal Liaison is not here tonight. There are some issues, and we're going to start a list per the email the Dep. Chief sent out earlier today that I can discuss with him tomorrow if there is anything.

**Liaison to the District Volunteers – George Brown**

**Fire Adm. Brown:** This coming weekend is the final weekend for our two volunteers who are in Fire One Class. Off the record are so far sufficient and I'm looking forward to them graduating. Also the recruit who went thru last semester then left for seasonal employment has returned. He's already been back in the building brushing up on is skills so hopefully at the December meetings we'll have 3 new volunteers to swear-in officially and we are also processing one additional at this time.

**Comm. Brown:** Alright, numbers going up. We like that.

**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.

**Building Maintenance & Grounds – Steve Funkhouser**

**Comm. Funkhouser:** I spoke to Mr. Rogers approximately a week and a half ago. He was supposed to have a report to us before today's meeting, but I haven't heard from him and we're still waiting for his report. He said they had a backup and had to put ours off for a few days. I said OK, but would like to have a report soon. He also told me that our roof won't be on till next year sometime.

**Comm. Brown:** Tell him he needs more time in the neighborhood.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** I will. I didn't get any reports on any of my areas here, nothing on EMS Equipment, nothing on Turn-Out Gear or nothing on Uniforms.

**Communications – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

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

No report.

**Turn-Out Gear – Steve Funkhouser**

No report.

**Uniforms – Steve Funkhouser**

**Comm. Funkhouser:** I've gotten some guys that are getting their Class A's. I think the Chief reported that.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** There were a couple folks who were supposed to be getting sized for Class A's.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** I get no reports on anything that goes on. I would like to see if we could get it on some things like uniforms. If we purchase uniforms throughout the month, I would like to have record of that on my desk.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** There will be some folks who want to get sized in the future, in the next couple weeks.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** Coming to these meetings I'm coming blind, I have nothing.

**Comm. Brown:** That's more than when you started.

**Comm. Grier:** I do believe last meeting Brezee said there was a delay in a shipment?

**Fire Adm. Brown:** I believe that was for Carl? He's waiting for some of the parts.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** Yeah, Carl. OK, that's it, that's all I have to report, which was nothing.

**Insurance – George Flinn**

**Comm. Flinn:** Chris, was any of the gift stuff turned over to you?

**Fire Adm. Brown:** Just sent to me this morning.

**Comm. Flinn:** So, the new budget number should have been sent to you too.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** That was what was sent to me this morning. During the meeting I had with the Chief this morning, it was discussed to change over some of that contact information.

**Comm. Flinn:** Well yeah, because she sends out a thousand emails out a month...

**Fire Adm. Brown:** There is a preliminary assessment for 2023. There is a 6.44% increase from the 2022 Assessment going up to \$85,008 which is over the Assessment of \$79,866 from last year. It's lowered the average increase which is 8.02%.

**Comm. Flinn:** We can't change the numbers so we'll just plug them into the budget. It is what it is. And the Water Co. usually sends him an estimate for the new year.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** If there was, it was not received.

**Comm. Flinn:** Very good. They usually send an estimated bill for the next year.

**Comm. Brown:** OK. There was an email bouncing around regarding going outside for Employee Healthcare benefits. I think we need to go to Closed Session to discuss that if anyone wants to discuss it.

**Sign – George Flinn**

No report.

**Water – George Flinn**

No report.

**Apparatus – Derek Grier**

**Comm. Grier:** One of the items that was in Closed Session can now come to light because it's been resolved. The boom from the Squad...the Company did agree to fix it, and we have to pay for it later. Hats off to Nick Brezee for giving me information and also the third person party contact that I made who told me how to go about getting it fixed with them, and it worked. It was all about the timing and some of the names dropped at the correct time of the year and they agreed to fix the boom at their cost for parts, and we'll pay for labor. So I signed the paperwork and the parts were ordered a week or two ago. So we're just waiting on the boom to come in and we'll finally get it fixed on the Squad. I'm also pressing them, I'm told not to press until they get the parts in, but I want a more permanent solution so it does not happen again so we're not facing this in the future.

**Comm. Brown:** Four months from now?

**Comm. Grier:** Four months from now.

**Apparatus – continued**

**Comm. Funkhouser:** Their going to replace the entire boom, is that what you're saying?

**Comm. Brown:** They're going to do the repair for the cost except for labor, and those numbers as you reported to me were roughly twenty some thousand for the boom and \$4,000 for labor roughly.

**Comm. Grier:** Correct. So we save the twenty some odd thousand, and only have to pay the \$4,000 for labor.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** You just said that they're replacing the boom or their waiting for the boom to come in...

**Fire Adm. Brown:** All they'll do is the parts around the turntable.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** We're going to keep our boom but the parts would be replaced. I couldn't understand why they were going to replace the boom.

**Comm. Brown:** If you changed the tire, you wouldn't be changing the car.

**Comm. Grier:** They did not necessarily admit fault, but in good faith they're going to fix it.

**Comm. Brown:** Well nice job Derek, very nice job. Well done, well played. That's \$20,000 that would be nice to have when we need it and something will come up. So is everybody good with that...accept that settlement?

Motion made by Comm. Robinson, seconded by Comm. Funkhouser to accept the settlement.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Comm. Brown:** Again, well played Derek.

**Comm. Flinn:** Well done. The attorney fees would have been more than \$4,000.

**Comm. Brown:** Anything else Comm. Grier?

**Comm. Grier:** No, not at this time.

**Fire Department Equipment – Derek Grier**

No report.

**Fire Department Operations – Derek Grier**

No report.

**Training – Derek Grier**

No report.

**Chief – Michael Brezee**

**Fire Adm. Brown:** Chief Brezee is not here this evening. Just 3 quick items in addition to what I reported on earlier, is on 11/5, we had full-time and volunteer personnel attend the Active Shooter Hostile event over at Camden County College. I'm actually attending a follow-up meeting at ten o'clock to try and get some documentation together and plan for the next phase of the drill which is holding a press conference which will be distributed on Social Media for all the impacted parties. Overall, the drill went well, it was not a complete disaster. There has not been another drill in Camden County utilizing any of the rescue task force resources since I believe 2017. So you go five years through a pandemic where a lot of the training in the agencies didn't occur and then you get to pull something off that goes pretty well. There were definitively some things and lessons learned by all parties. The best parts of that was, in addition...I've been in the fire service since October 2003 here in Gloucester Township, and in those nearly 19 years, I cannot name a single event, a single drill where you had the disciplines of Police, Fire and EMS all working together at something of such skill. I'm not going to bore you with the numbers, but I can quote an email from over 100 participants on the home safety side as well as about 40 volunteers that played the victims. It was a good exercise. You don't know what are the things you need to train on until you get that first one out of the way. So the dialogue that occurred between the fire service of which I am, the point person for all of Gloucester Township Fire Rescue Annex Rep, interfacing with OEM and Police Department about future training as far as Command Post set up, training with the team they have, interfacing with the Commander of the SWAT team as far as getting very active shooter RTS specific training. If those things are followed through on as far as discussions go, it's going to be a bigger win to finally start getting all these agencies operating out of the same book. We're not on the same page yet, but try to get us all in at least the same book. I'm very optimistic that we're moving in that direction.

**Comm. Robinson:** One question, were there reps from every organization, all six?

**Fire Adm. Brown:** Of the Fire Departments? No. Of the RTM's, Districts 1 & 3 are not involved in the Rescue Task Force component. District 4 does have a stake in it, they were not there. They did send a crew and personnel

**Chief – continued**

from Squad 8 Operations who participated so it was 88, 85 and ourselves as well as Voorhees, Runnemede and Winslow which are all the components of the Southern Region RTM. Glendora and Blenheim do play a role in actual dispatch, but they are supposed to be there as fire specific resources. So when all the Chief's filled out the boxes back in 2016-2017, because those agencies were not part of the Rescue Taskforce, donning the PPE and making rescues, it was determined that 81, 83 and then Pine Hill would be utilized as fire specific resources to be dispatched. So during an event whatever it is, they become the fire suppression element that goes to a staging area. So they would have a stake in a real incident but we would kind of try and keep them out of the real reps from the DPA, FBI, UFDA, alphabet soup you name it, County Rep for Public Safety, County OEM, so try and keep it to a manageable level to exercise and show the contention in dealing with the active shooter threat.

**Comm. Robinson:** Excellent, thanks.

**Comm. Grier:** I remember that drill in 2016.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** Which one are you referring to, Penco Tech? There has been two. So the first full scale drill was right after the establishment of the team, it was over at Lindenwold High School. The next one was utilizing only Gloucester Township Resources at the Penco Tech.

**Comm. Grier:** The Penco Tech one, and I did Lindenwold High School, but I did it with another Fire Department.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** So the Penco Tech was a much smaller endeavor, it did not use as many law enforcement assets, it did not use as many EMS assets. It only utilized two RTF for all intents and purposes. So you brought the southern region taskforce or agencies I mentioned together and got involved in a real incident, that's who's getting sent to this end of the County.

Second, last night myself and a couple other members who were at the three alarm Mansion's fire on October 7<sup>th</sup>, attended the after action review over at Pine Hill Middle School. It was a good exercise to get everybody on the same page about the incident. The complex and most importantly at one point there was a supply issue involving the new hydrant that's on Branch Ave., that was all ironed out and got everybody pretty much on the same page, it was a very productive event. If anyone wants to discuss anything about that off the record later on, I'd be happy to. Last but not least, one of the things I forgot to mention earlier is, it's that time of the year for reimbursement checks for the volunteers. Some years the Board passes a resolution to approve them being done, sometimes they don't. Money is budgeted. I am trying to extrapolate the data from the last two months. Ten to twelve months are done and ready to go because that was out of the old RMS Firehouse. I'm trying to figure out how to have the data look the same from First Due. It's something that probably should be complete by the end of the week. Once it's done, I will send that spread sheet to the Clerk and she can cut the checks.

**Comm. Flinn:** I think we should vote on that as a bill right now so they can be distributed before Christmas.

**Comm. Brown:** Well he doesn't know what the amount is.

**Comm. Flinn:** Yeah, but you can't cut them the checks without the approval.

**Comm. Brown:** Right a catch 22 thing. Can I just cut through the issue. Can we just have the Commissioner of Personnel approve individual numbers and be done with it rather than worrying about...

**Comm. Robinson:** I agree, that's fine with me.

**Comm. Brown:** That way it just goes by you and you say that's it and it's done.

Motion made by Comm. Funkhouser, seconded by Comm. Grier to allow the Commissioner of Personnel to approve the reimbursement checks as soon as the numbers are done.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Solicitor – David Carlamere**

Not in attendance this evening.

**Old Business – George Brown**

- 1) Computer Room/Officer's Room project
- 2) Apparatus boom leak - update
- 3) Roof - update
- 4) New phone system for the building
- 5) 2023 Budget

**New Business – George Brown**

No report.

**Closed Session – George Brown**

**Comm. Brown:** Let the record show that the Board will go into Closed Session to discuss some items of Personnel at 6:55pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Open Session – George Brown**

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson to come out of Closed Session at 7:13pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.

Roll call Commissioners, all present.

**Comm. Brown:** During the Closed Session **CS – 95** we discussed items impacting Personnel. The first one of those has to do with the appointment of a Fire Official. Dep. Chief, can you get it on the record in open. You have an application...

**Fire Adm. Brown:** We have a resume and letter as well and supporting certifications for James J Gordon, Sr., Winslow, NJ.

**Comm. Brown:** So the Resolution is to make a temporary appointment pending State establishment of a permanent part-time employee at an applicable rate of \$30 per hour.

**Comm. Flinn:** I make that motion to hire Jim Gordon, Sr. at \$30 per hour pending he is sworn-in, contract is completed and State approved, and should start immediately.

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

**Comm. Brown:** Next item **CS – 96**

**Comm. Flinn:** I make a motion that the two Commissioners who handle personnel contracts create a contract and appoint the new Volunteer Chief for the District as of December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Comm. Brown:** Let's make sure we have this straight because I don't want it to be that they're going to have the contract done by December 1<sup>st</sup>. So the appointment is effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, pending the permanent contract and the swearing-in. The swearing-in is on December 1<sup>st</sup>?

**Comm. Flinn:** Or by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** I don't need to get sworn-in December 1<sup>st</sup>, unless the District feels that way, as long as I get sworn-in.

**Comm. Brown:** You're going to get questioned, so...

**Comm. Flinn:** If you're taking Jim Gordon over there to get sworn-in, get sworn-in yourself while you're there.

**Comm. Robinson:** That's fine, an official swearing-in in December.

**Comm. Flinn:** That's fine.

**Comm. Brown:** So a Resolution to appoint the permanent Chief effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, in time to go out on the first call of December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Roll call, all yes.

**Comm. Brown:** A point of order by Comm. Grier I see?

**Comm. Grier:** Permanent?

**Comm. Flinn:** No, we won't use permanent.

**Comm. Brown:** The Chair is so corrected.

**Comm. Flinn:** Appointment of the Volunteer Fire Chief.

**Comm. Brown:** No, Appointment of the Fire Chief.

**Comm. Flinn:** You've got to watch how you word that, trust me.

**Comm. Brown:** I understand where you're going.

**Comm. Flinn:** My point is he's over here as Administrator and employee. He's over here as the Volunteer Fire Chief. We got to make sure we separate the two. Up there they care.

**Comm. Brown:** Agreed.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** Hence two separate agreements that I've requested.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** Oh yeah, definitely.

**Comm. Flinn:** So it's the appointment of the Volunteer Fire Chief.

**Comm. Brown:** Alright, I'll start a little pool on who's going to jump on that line the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. OK, you got it. We'll drive Kathy crazy here.

**Open Session – continued**

**Comm. Flinn:** CS – 97 I also make a motion that we allow Chews Landing and the rest of the Fire Districts to search for all the insurance they want. We need to stay with the State, we know what we're getting. As of right now I think that's the way to go because you're opening up a can of worms and it stinks.

**Fire Adm. Brown:** I'll reply that we will not be attending the meeting.

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Grier. Roll call vote...

**Comm. Funkhouser:** Question on the motion. Would it be of harm for us to go listen to this Insurance person?

**Comm. Brown:** I understand that some people that listen to this turn to stone and deafness.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** OK, I was just curious if there was a reason why we couldn't go.

**Comm. Flinn:** We've done this before. You could go.

**Comm. Funkhouser:** I ain't going.

**Comm. Brown:** Oh ok, I was going to ask if you were volunteering.

**Comm. Flinn:** My motion stands.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Resolutions – Renee Evans**

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** We have the Resolution of the Board of Fire Commissioners for NJ approving the employee Health Care Benefit Waiver Reimbursement. There is one for Adam and one for myself for this past year.

**Comm. Brown:** OK, so what this is is, this is approving a waiver whereby the employees get reimbursed for not taking our insurance, correct?

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** Yes.

**Comm. Brown:** And it sets the amounts of which is to be reimbursed.

**Adm.Cl.Evans:** Yes, and the amounts were approved by the Accountant too.

**Comm. Flinn:** Which are in the budget, correct?

**Comm. Brown:** We need it to put it in 2023 budget.

Roll call vote, all yes.

**Comm. Brown:** That's two Resolutions, one for Adam and one for Renee.

(R-22-22 Renee Evans, R-23-22 Adam Craig, R-24-22 Closed Session, R-25-22 Appointing Fire Official James Gordon)

**Public Portion – George Brown**

n/a

**Adjourn – George Brown**

Motion made by Comm. Flinn, seconded by Comm. Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 7:20pm.

Roll call vote, all yes.