

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Township Fire Service Committee was held on Thursday, March 14, 2019 at 7:00 pm. Members in attendance were Vice Chairman Martin Schreiber, William Marsden, Donald Raudenbush, David Waldt, T.J. Wojton, and Michelle Reddick. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. by Vice Chairman Don Raudenbush.

Pledge of Allegiance – Those in attendance pledged allegiance to the flag.

Approval of Minutes – Motion by T.J. Wojton, second by W. Marsden and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of January 10, 2019 with changes.

Reports

Operational Report –The reports were presented. T.J. Wojton noted no staff or training hours were listed for January. He explained they changed software, and he had trouble pulling the reports for staff and service hours. He noted the first page of the report is for February and the last page is year-to-date. There were 30 calls for the month of February, 60.62 service hours, 111.07 staff hours and 43 training hours.

Membership – There was no change in membership.

Treasurer – The reports were presented. D. Raudenbush provided an email outlining several items purchased for maintenance on the new traffic unit and explained these items, totaling \$1,701.98, will come from Fire Relief Fund. He noted the balance in the checking account will be \$8,840.12 (not \$7,138.14) after all the money is paid back to the company checking account for these items. In response to a question from D. Waldt, D. Raudenbush reported the new traffic unit is in service as of this past Sunday.

Fire Fund – M. Reddick presented the December 31, 2018 financial report along with the final budget for 2019. She explained the February 2019 financial report was not completed so it will be emailed later. In response to a question from M. Schreiber, M. Reddick explained the ending balance on the 12/31/18 financial report is \$67,194.13. T.J. Wojton noted the 12/31/18 financial report shows \$0 for the truck reserve. M. Reddick further explained the 2019 final budget shows a carryover of \$66,000 and a truck reserve fund of \$70,000 which appears the truck reserve fund at the end of 2019 would \$70,000, provided actual expenses do not exceed the proposed budget. M. Reddick explained the township's financial consultant reviewed all entries for 2018, and the ending balance in the fund is as shown on the 12/31/18 financial report at \$67,194.13. M. Schreiber expressed concern that there should have already been money in the truck reserve fund for a down payment on the truck. In response to a question from D. Waldt, M. Reddick explained the township started using QuickBooks in 2018 but all carryover balances from 2017 were entered into the new software at the beginning of 2018. M. Reddick agreed to research this matter further.

Fire Relief Fund – D. Raudenbush advised he was unable to finish the reports so he will email them once they are completed.

Grants – D. Raudenbush advised PEMA said they never received the appropriate paperwork in the mail. Therefore, he had to obtain additional paperwork from the bank in order to have the grant money deposited into our account. He reported the amount received was approximately \$14,800 and will be used for debt reduction on the PEMA loan.

Safety Committee – M. Schreiber reported first aid and blood born pathogens training will take place next month.

Old Business

Discuss Fire Study – M. Schreiber reported he contacted Mr. Hedden and noted some of the information requested is above their scope. One item is the call volume by day, week and month. T. J. Wojton noted information was also requested on how many times we gave and received mutual aid. He suggested we provide what information is available on the computer. M. Schreiber noted reports from 2014-2018 were requested; however, the problem is no calls are shown from January to mid-June 2014. The other problem is CAD at County only has data back three (3) years. Information was also requested on assets owned by the fire company along with square footage of each area of the fire company. It was suggested forwarding the building study to Mr. Hedden.

Discuss New Fire Services Agreement per New Fire Protection Ordinance – M. Schreiber advised there is no update regarding this matter. He explained the major issue is the township manager is a voting member of the Fire Service Committee.

New Business

By-Law Change – M. Schreiber advised the fire company is recommending a change to the by-laws which involves simplifying the process by which nominations for office are validated. D. Raudenbush explained the change would allow the nominating committee to validate only those nominations which qualify for office. W. Marsden noted the second to the last sentence should say nominating committee. Motion by M. Schreiber, second by T.J. Wojton and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the by-law change to Article XII, Section 5.

T.J. Wojton wanted to provide clarification on the rumor that was going around concerning the fire company trying to back door the township and merge with West Pottsgrove. He explained they are not trying to merge with West End Fire Company, but rather they been working with them to try to get more people out for calls and training. In response to a question from D. Waldt, T.J. Wojton explained Upper is answering calls for West End, and they are answering calls for us. In response to a question from D. Waldt, M. Schreiber advised there are no issues with workers compensation coverage.

Public Comments

Tom Mattingly, former fire chief and member for over 20 years, noted that he was expelled from the fire company for challenging a Commissioner at a public meeting, and it has been an on-going battle over the last few months. In response to a question from D. Waldt, T. Mattingly advised he does not believe he should have been expelled and feels it was retaliation. He advised he was reprimanded for using the utility truck for personal use even though he only had it one day for 12 hours and never traveled more than within a 3-mile radius of the fire company. He expressed concern the current fire chief is using the utility vehicle and questioned why the double standard. D. Raudenbush confirmed the current fire chief is using the vehicle. He explained there is no double standard as the fire company voted to allow the current fire chief to take the truck which was not the case with Mr. Mattingly. He further explained the only one aware Mr. Mattingly took the truck was the chief engineer and there was no vote taken to approve use of the truck. Mr. Mattingly also expressed concern the by-laws do not provide a definition for expulsion nor do they provide any governance as to what an expulsion is or what an expulsion means. He referenced his expulsion letter which states "it has been current or past practice that expulsion is loss of membership, not being allowed on owned or leased property of the fire company and not being allowed to attend or be a part of a fire company specific event". He expressed concern that provisions are being made to hold the annual banquet off site to allow an expelled member to attend. He noted that if exceptions are going to be made for one expelled member, then exceptions should be made for all expelled members. D. Raudenbush noted he agrees that you cannot make exceptions for one expelled member and not another. **Erin Galamba**, advised there is no specification in the by-laws as to what she can or cannot do as an expelled member. She further explained she was never given a letter outlining what the specifications or ramifications of her actions or inactions were so she is uncertain what she can or cannot do. In response to a question from M. Schreiber, E. Galamba advised she was first expelled at the August 2009 meeting. T. Mattingly advised Erin's expulsion was upheld at this meeting the same night he was expelled. E. Galamba advised it was upheld in 2010 but expressed concern how the expulsion was upheld when nothing happened. W. Marsden explained E. Galamba's expulsion was upheld by this committee based upon Stanley Hildenbrand's decision to expel her. He further explained the expulsion was made with the option to reapply. T. Mattingly advised he lost his appeal on a tie vote and questioned how Robert's Rules govern the loss of an appeal on a tie vote. In response to a question from D. Waldt, T. Mattingly explained his purpose for attending the meeting is to determine whether special provisions are being made for one expelled member and not for him, and if so, he is being discriminated against. D. Raudenbush advised the way to resolve this matter is to not allow E. Galamba to attend the banquet. In response to a question from E. Galamba, D. Raudenbush explained the Fire Committee conducted the research in 2010 and the expulsion was upheld. In response to another question from E. Galamba, D. Raudenbush explained that past practice defines what expelled members can and cannot do; therefore, you cannot attend the banquet.

Executive Session – The Committee adjourned into Executive Session at 7:43 pm to discuss personnel matters. They reconvened at 8:32 pm.

Erin Galamba provided a copy of Roberts Rules and referenced Article 13, Section 75.

Adjournment – Motion by M. Schreiber, second by T.J. Wojton and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle L. Reddick, Township Manger