

**HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP BUREAU OF FIRE
MONTHLY MEETING
JUNE 27, 2017
7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hempfield Township Bureau of Fire was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Bruce Beitel.

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| Committee Members Present: | Mr. Bruce Beitel | Mr. Shaun Teacher |
| | Mr. Anthony Marquis | Mr. Michael Wolford |
| | Mr. Greg Saunders | Ms. Amber Werner (Arrived 7:15 p.m.) |
| | Mr. Don Thoma | Mr. Don Thoma |

Staff Present: Mrs. Denise Rosak

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS - None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Walz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thoma, to approve the June 6th, 2017 monthly meeting minutes of the Hempfield Township Bureau of Fire. Vote: 7-0. Motion carried.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report was reviewed at the work session.

5. TRAINING

a. **Training Update** – Mr. Teacher advised that the Essentials Program is complete and the Structural Burn. Preparations have begun for Firefighter I with scheduled dates being posted and advertised out to the committee. After only one individual from outside of the Township showed up for the ropes and knots training, he requested pre-registration be required for all future classes for accountability. Registration will be through the Parks & Recreation website. Also, all registrants providing their emails will received notifications of any changes in the classes. In addition, it was recommended that the ECM system be utilized for training classes scheduled. Secondly, Mr. Teacher advised that there is a “Well Site Incident Management Course for First Responders” on Thursday, June 29th, 2017 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Jeannette High School. The program will involve how to handle events dealing with the oil and gas industry and fires – anything from small fires to well events. He said interested individuals should contact him for registration.

6. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

a. **Recruitment Update** – Mr. Walz advised that the Retention Committee is planning the fire picnic for August 19th, 2017 and recognition of years of service for the volunteer firefighters. Further, Hempfield Township Community Days is September 10th and 11th, 2017 at Hempfield Park. He said that it is planned to staff a Recruitment and Retention tent. He asked for volunteers to work the tent. Finally, Mr. Walz said that the Health

Fair is scheduled for October 21st, 2017 at the Township Building beginning at either 6:30 or 7:30 a.m. and conclude about noon. He noted that this year they are also going to add testing for Lyme disease. This is all paid for by the Township for the any volunteer, Mr. Walz explained. Family members of volunteers are welcome to participate in the Health Fair but their costs will be billed to their fire department.

Mr. Wolford advised that he and Mr. Teacher met with District Justice Mansour to discuss the proposed program for delinquents in the fire service. He said Justice Mansour explained to him that he would sentence somebody to community time and then this committee can decide or the chiefs can decide whether or not they would want them in their department depending on the severity of the crime. As more information becomes available, Mr. Wolford will inform the Bureau of Fire Committee.

7. SAFETY/OPERATING GUIDELINES

In Mr. Storey's absence, Mr. Beitel advised the Committee that the Board of Supervisors at their monthly meeting on Monday, June 26th, 2017 approved the following recommended policies: Debt Reimbursement for Apparatus, Firefighter Rehab Policy, and the Apparatus/Equipment Out-of-Service. Accordingly, he said these policies will be incorporated into our manual and handbook as the process continues.

8. EQUIPMENT/FLEET

a. **Equipment Update** – Mr. Thoma advised that he is still working on the Rescue Pumper Equipment list. Mr. Beitel advised that on Saturday, June 17th, 2017 the Rescue Tool Committee had a demonstration at Co-Parts of various rescue tools including Amkus, Hurst, and Genesis. Participants from North Hempfield, High Park, Grapeville, Adamsburg, Hempfield #2 and West Point had a chance to use the equipment that day to cut cars. He added that they are trying to schedule a follow-up meeting within the next week or two with the vendors to acquire additional information. In another matter, Mr. Beitel advised that they are working to schedule Rescue Tool Service for Genesis and Hurst sometime in July.

Mr. Beitel also advised that they are working to schedule rescue tool service for Hurst and Genesis sometime in July. As for aerial inspections, he said they will be scheduled in August. He also explained that we are still waiting on the number of participants in the breathing apparatus program for the year and the fire bureau program. Mr. Thoma said that the deadline for responses would be prior to the Supervisors' July public work session.

Mr. Beitel also informed the committee that the Board of Supervisors' at their monthly meeting on Monday, June 26th, 2017 donated the Township Snorkel to the Westmoreland County Community College's Public Safety Training Center.

Lastly, in regards to the Quint, Mr. Beitel advised that the Quint Committee forwarded the specifications to the Board of Supervisors. He said the Board approved the generalized specifications and asked that we notify vendors to look at the specs and return sealed quotes and materials to the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors by August 21st, 2017 for discussion at the Public Works Session on August 23rd, 2017. Mr. Teacher asked whether or not the quotes would be returned to the Quint Committee for review prior to action by the Supervisors' at their July 24th, 2017 monthly meeting. Mr. Walz responded that the Board of Supervisors would handle the quotes from that point forward. Mr. Teacher said that he thinks that, we, as a Bureau of Fire Committee, that's going outside of the policy of everything that we have designed this Bureau Committee around. He strongly urged that the quotes should be reviewed by the Quint Committee for a recommendation prior to any purchase especially due to the fact that Supervisor Reese added an amendment that exceptions will be taken allowing deviations to the generalized specifications. Mr. Thoma agreed.

START HERE:

Mr. Walz: All I can talk to you is about process. So, we talked about it at the work session this past Wednesday. They approved the spec and their desire has been and expressed at that meeting, which Stush was at, would that it be, because it is such a large purchase, that it be fully go thorough the Board, that all quotes be directed to the Chairman of the Board in a sealed packet, so that no one outside, and then that they will open those at that August 23rd work session. Mr. Teacher: For review and then it comes back to us or for review so that they can put it on for purchase? Mr. Walz: At that point they make a decision as to how they want. Mr. Saunders: They could make a decision that night to buy that truck. Mr. Teacher: I personally just think it needs to go, I don't care about the price. The price doesn't matter to me. It matters if this is what they determine to buy, then it needs to be forwarded to us... Just like we do to them and just like we do to the chiefs.. This is what we intend to buy, not that you are going to change our decision, but do you have any suggestions, recommendations, or concerns prior to us purchasing a 2 million dollar order. Mr. Thoma: I thought that was sort of the procedure during this Bureau of Fire thing here. I know they have. Again, they have the final decision. But I thought we had input. I mean let me ask you, when you buy a dump truck, who buys the dump truck? Who recommends it? Mr. Walz: The Public Works Department. Mr. Thoma: Do they have input, do they look at it, do any employees have a chance to give any input? Mr. Walz: Yes. Mr. Thoma: I feel like we were going up to that point, we put all of these hours in and then it's like okay we will do it from here. I thought we had input all the way up to the point, maybe even to the point where, okay, what do you see here that you don't or do like, so that we can take that into consideration when we decide to buy it. Mr. Walz: All I can say at this point, is August 21st is when they are due, August 23rd, they'll be opened. From that point on, how it's decided that the final decision is made, is up to them.

Can we write a letter asking them for???? I don't agree that they are just bypassing us. Mr. Thoma: This will ruin the whole Bureau of Fire thing. Mr. Saunders: Let's just say, look can we discuss this once the bids are in before you make a decision. Mr. Walz: Can I just make a recommendation because that is in 2 months and not next month, perhaps members of this committee who feel strongly about that, could discuss that with Supervisors and if you do not like what you hear, then perhaps at the August meeting you make a motion to do what you are talking about.

I think that you as a committee member of the Bureau of Fire would about going to them to say hay, how do you plan on doing this? It is you as an appointed member. It's not you as chief of Adamsburg or chief of Bovard or anything like that. It is you as a committee member asking how do you guys plan to proceed, that you approved the Qunt spec, and that they are due... Mr. Teacher: I would prefer to see that in writing. I would like to see it come from this Board in writing and have it returned to us in writing like they require everything from us. I want to see the purchase process in writing from here on out because I could go and talk to them and they can tell Don one thing and then they could go open those bids and vote on it a different way. I would like to see the process of the purchase in writing. Supervisors requesting their purchase policy from this point out for this committee and return it to us in writing by the next meeting so then we can determine where we want to go because if that's the process for this, then this is just a show. This committee means nothing then. Because the process is the circle where it comes from us to the chiefs, the chiefs to them and if we go from us to them and there is no review process in that purchase, you have cut us totally out of the operation. Mr. Thoma: Let me ask a question. And I hate to do this because it sounds like I'm being disrespectful and that's not what this means. I don't know how to say this. But I'm just going to say it. I'm on the committee because we are getting it. You are on the committee. We've had one for 20 years. We use the same type of truck in the Township that we want to buy. I don't care what manufacturer it is. We talked about safe, dualing new, ergonomics, traveling down the road – all those things. Can you tell me who on the Board has more experience than the people on that committee? Any ideas? That's going to look at it. Mr. Teacher: And I think that's why you need it in writing because maybe they do. Maybe their policy is they are going to open the bids, they're going to select the dollar amount, and then they are going to pass it back to us. Here are the exceptions. What do you guys think? I just think that we need to get ahead of it and it needs to be in writing so that there can't be any... Mr. Thoma: I thought all along the procedure was here, you widdle it down, you present it to us, we don't like it, you tell us why. There is going to

be some negotiations. If it is \$800,000.00 and they want it to be lower, what can we actually do to get it there or can we get it there? That kind of stuff. Mr. Teacher: What options are a necessity and what options are luxuries? Mr. Thoma: Right. That's probably why you are saying that Andy about not doing this, but they got to know we want to be involved in it. Mr. Teacher: If you wait 30 days, the process has already begun. They're going to assume that we've accepted it, it's moving forward, they're going to open them bids, they're going to make whatever decisions they've already had... If you wait 30 days to do that, then it's like it's too late, we don't have a meeting to discuss that. I think that if we get the letter to them now and ask them the finish process, they put it out for specs, so now we just want to know the complete process here. Who is making the decision? Are we going to get to see it again before it's purchased? It's a simple answer. We want to be involved.

Mr. Beitel: I think, you know, not to speak for the Board, but I think that at the work session they basically made it fairly clear, they will take those specifications and the exceptions and they will make the decision. That's how it was stated at the work session.

Mr. Thoma: I just wonder how they are going to do that? Mr. Teacher: If that's the case and how they are going to do it, then we should dissolve this Board and they should just make all the determinations.

Mr. Walz: We don't have the power to dissolve this Board. I would feel more comfortable with this that perhaps we take the members of this committee who are here as firefighters meaning Amber and Tony, and Greg and Don as chief representatives to this Board to perhaps meet with the chairman of the Board and express those concerns. That might be better than a letter. Mr. Beitel agreed. Mr. Saunders said he would be fine with meeting face to face. Mr. Beitel: You would have plenty of time – 60 days. We are going to have another meeting here plus another 25 days after that, 22 days after that.

Mr. Thoma: The bigger picture is the Bureau of Fire in this Township. If this doesn't go a good way, I'm not saying the right way or the wrong way but a good way, and this gets out, it's going to get ugly. We could ruin all of the steam we have. Mr. Marquis: I agree with you because right now people are on the fence as far as if they believe this is even going to work. Because a lot of people have a lot of doubt in the Bureau of Fire at this point. I've always said that this Quint is going to be the turning point in determining what's going to happen down the road. This is just coming from what I'm being told on a daily basis. Mr. Thoma: Plus you could buy 2 trucks. You're right. You could buy 2 quints and put them out there but when they ask why this and why that, and we can't answer them because we weren't involved, what are you going to say? Mr. Teacher: I 100% agree as long as that meeting results in a documented or definition, not just oh yeah we will keep you in the loop. That word of mouth is no good for me in the political world.

Mr. Thoma: Why do you say it would be a bad idea to write a letter? Mr. Walz: All I'm going to say is that I'm going to be abstaining if there is a vote. Mr. Beitel said, no defense, but I think we both have to. The Board has given it's opinion and I respect that opinion, and that's where it is. Mr. Walz: I understand where all of you are coming from. I think in the discussions of when this committee was created and this Board was created, that there are 4 people in this room specifically here to bring forward the concerns of the firefighters on the ground and the chiefs. I think it would be very appropriate for that meeting to occur because your role on this committee is to talk about how the decisions of this committee affect the day-to-day firefighter. Mr. Beitel agreed. Mr. Teacher said he was in support of you guys having the meeting as long as when you leave the meeting that you are comfortable. I would like that to be prior to our next meeting so that you can bring that back to us for a final determination. Mr. Thoma: So you are asking those 4 people and we are going to meet with Doug. Mr. Walz: My suggestion would be that when you 4 get together and figure out some stuff and call Doug and wee who else you want to have there. I can give him a heads up that he is going to be getting a phone call. Mr. Beitel: At this point, I think we're all in agreement with that and not sending any letters. Mr. Saunders: Yes. We have to do something. Otherwise, like everybody has mentioned, it's going to look like we've done all of this for nothing. Mr. Walz: I think a letter maybe at some point, if you guys really feel that strongly, take it and

run but give it a 60 day period to work something out. That should be the last resort. We just found this out last week.

9. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Mr. Beitel stated that we are working on those final fire inspections. We have the numbers for the contacts out to the various fire stations. Once we get those finished as we continue to say, we will be responsible for fixing those things in your truck room spaces that we are responsible for. So we want to bundle those all up, do those at one time and get better pricing. That's all we have for buildings and grounds.

Mr. Saunders: Is there anything on there, I know it's a year and a half away, but raising that door in our station and putting a bigger door in? Mr. Beitel: We haven't yet but we know that it's coming. Mr. Walz: One of the things that we did talk about after we got the letter from you guys about your roof issues, is if we end up having to do something more there, we are thinking about maybe doing a bundle and getting a price on raising it and everything. We are going to see what happens with it. Mr. Saunders said he has state grant money, if again I didn't know that you guys were going to do that, so I got it for putting the door in but if you guys are going to put the door in, then I'm going to use it to put emergency standby generator in so that I could make that into a shelter for whatever. Mr. Beitel: I would ask that if you are thinking about doing that for that, John, just because we are working on a project for generators, long term generators usage so before you do that... Mr. Saunders: I have to do something with that money by the end of summer or the state is going to take it back. Mr. Walz: Could you contribute that towards the roof project? Mr. Saunders: I don't know but if you could get me a paid bill that says they fixed the door, then I'll use it for that and then it will be gone. Mr. Walz: We will talk about that Greg off line.

10. ITEMS FOR ACTION – None

11. OLD BUSINESS -- None

12. NEW BUSINESS

a. Received a request from Chief Fordyce that the Grandview Fire Department requesting our Fire Prevention trailer on July 9th, Sunday, from 10 to 2. They have an event called touch a truck. We are going to be more than willing and happy to send the fire prevention trailer to that event. We will work to coordinate how we are going to get it there. Mr. Saunders said he could pull it down with his truck because he is probably going down there anyway.

13. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

14. ADJOURNMENT

The regular monthly meeting of the Hempfield Township Bureau of Fire was adjourned at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman Bruce R. Beitel.

Chairman

