

Neffsville Fire Company Minutes

April 2, 2014

The meeting was called to order by President Don Mellott at 19:00 hours.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

The Roll Call of Officers was taken.

The Secretary's minutes were presented and approved.

Reports

Financial Secretary's Report: Financial Secretary Alice Pinto presented the report, and Treasurer Melissa Templeton concurred.

Chief's Report: Chief Troy Slaymaker reported for the month of March there were a total of 83 calls; 34 fire calls and 49 QRS calls. The department failed to respond on 7 calls. Average personal response was 5, with 6 for fire and 4 for QRS. There was \$10,000 in fire loss.

Chief Slaymaker brought up the need for station coverage the last week of May, from 6pm to 6am, due to two live-ins and Driver Don Mellott being on vacation at the same time. The only live in at the house would be Amber, who is unable to drive. Two fold, we will need QRS and fire call coverage over night.

Chief Slaymaker is looking for a commitment from at home responders for that time. He opened the floor for discussion about whether there is a commitment from at home responders, or if part timers may need to be scheduled, if possible. A signup sheet was asked about, but with Chief Rick Kane already working on the schedule for May, an answer was asked for tonight. Deputy Chief Elliott is out that weekend for 3 days, so he can't drive. Chief Slaymaker said he has Command that week, so an option may be to park the 'buggy' and he responds to drive. There will also be other members going on this vacation as well, so it is a concern that needs addressed. Someone asked about using part timers, and Chief Kane said he can ask them, but they are not hired for evenings, so they may not be available.

Township's Chief Report: His report will be given in New Business

Captain's Report: No Report

Chief Engineer's Report: Engineer Mellott reported that the new light bar on squad 207 has been installed and to please report any problems that arise. Jeff Ober noted that the bar does not always trip the lights at intersection. It will be checked.

QRS Report: No Report

Trustee's Report: No Report

County/State Report: No report

Fire Council Report: No report

Junior's Report: Scott Weiser reported that training last week was at Neffsville on NIMS 100. He hopes the juniors went online and took the test for their certificates. Next Tuesday (4/8/14) training will be at the fire school. Hempfield is hosting training that night with a smoke maze search, RIT, and some incident command.

Combined Relief Report: No Report

Banquet Report: Vice President Gina Seace reported everything went well at the banquet. Everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves, and she thanked all for getting into the theme of things with their attire.

Bulk Purchase: No Report

Cadet Camp: Melissa Templeton reported the website is up and running, so please sign up as staff, or sign up your child as a cadet. There is another meeting April 23 at 7pm.

Food Service: Alice Pinto reported a Soup and Sub sale this weekend, April 5 from 8-until sold out. There is a signup sheet downstairs if anyone would like to help.

Live-ins: No Report

P-Truck: Ray Seace reported the committee met on March 19th. They are still looking into the insurance information for the accident in July at Pump Primers. P-truck will be taken to Gerz Radiators on Mulberry St and have the engine and cooling system flushed out, checked, and sealed properly. The committee is also dealing with Jeff Sensenig of Phoenix Fire about information on repairs to the damage done at Pump Primers. There is another meeting on April 9, and if any one has any ideas or questions, please let Ray or the committee know.

Township SOG: No Report

Standard Apparatus: No Report

Training: Asst. Chief Hoffman reported the statistics for the month of March were 14 classes, with 62 attendees, for 200 hours and 15 minutes. Year to date stats are 35 classes, with 170 attendees for 624 hours and 45 minutes of training. Training for the next three months is posted on the board downstairs. Training for April is the MTR meeting at Penn Cinema on April 7, which includes all members (auxiliary, active and social). April 14 is a township wide training at Eden, and April 21 and 28 are vehicle stabilization and extrication on the vehicle that was donated. Also, there is a signup sheet for a flash over simulator at HACC this Sunday (4/6/14). There are two spots left, so if you have your firefighter 1 or interior firefighter training with live burn, you are welcome to attend.

Uniform: No Report

Website: Dave Harrower reported that they are in the process of looking to change the website to FireCompanies.com. He will have all the pricing and information at next month's meeting.

Ways and Means: Secretary Jenn Hollinger reported there are two events coming up. The Easter Bunny Breakfast is on April 19 from 8-11 and the Cruise Days at Oregon Dairy on May 24. Signup sheets for both are posted down stairs.

Correspondence: We received an Easter card from Zach, and there is a thank you card posted down stairs.

Bills: Two copies were placed on all tables to be reviewed and voted on for payment. Ray Seace asked if the bills from Comcast have to be separate like they are, and if they could be bundles and cheaper, because the house is so much more per month. President Mellott stated that the accounts are both under Neffsville Fire Company, and the house is a business account because they (Comcast) refused to give us a residential rate. So the business account, cable, internet, and phone for the alarm system to communicate are all used there. At the station, we only pay for the internet because the cable TV is free as part of the franchise contract with Manheim Township. That is why there is such a large disparity between the locations bills. Ray asked if it makes sense to have a phone when everyone there has a cell phone. Don pointed out that the alarm system must have a phone line to function.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Don Templeton, seconded by Chris Castagna, and the motion passed.

Old Business: None

New Business: Scott Weiser had certificates of appreciation to hand out to the Juniors for their service over the last year. The Junior with the most hours was Zach Musser.

The E-board looked at three options for purchasing bunk beds for the bunk room ranging in prices from \$1,000-\$2,500. It was decided the beds from Sleep Center for \$2,500 were the best option for the fire house. It includes 2 sets of bunk beds, 4 mattresses, delivery and set up. A motion was made by myself to purchase the beds. Brian Freysz asked about the set up of the beds, since the couch is still present in the bunk room. The couch will be gone, and the candy machine will be moved as well. The motion was seconded by Patrick Brennan, and passed.

President Mellott had three items to address. The incentive cards, for those that have qualified, were given their forms as they came in tonight. The sheets on the back board have your total numbers for the quarter. If you have any questions, let Don know. Secondly, the sheet to the left is the membership for the past six months, so if you are looking for where you are membership wise for the 2015 year, there are the statistics.

The third item was the necessity this month of the disciplinary board to meet. After they had their hearing, met with the person who made the complaint, the person the complaint was about and so forth, it has been determined Michael Calasonte will be suspended from the company until the October 2015 business meeting. He will still have some privileges such as the EAP program, but will not be able to respond on calls, participate in training, and stuff like that. He will be getting notification of this via certified letter. His key fob has been turned off, and his gear pulled. Please do not allow him on the premise until the October 2015 business meeting.

Deputy Chief Elliott asked if the board's ruling can be appealed or overturned. He feels Michael should be terminated from the company totally for breaking the law and lying about it. He was very upset with the ruling of the disciplinary board, and feels it did not make the right decision. Presently, only Michael

has the ability to appeal once he is informed of the ruling. If he does appeal, the executive board (sans any member involved with the incident) would meet and can overturn the ruling in any way they deem fit. As this is something that has not happened before, President Mellott did not know the answer to this, so will be investigating further.

At this time, Chief Kane addressed the company about some changes at the other two stations, Eden and Southern. Both stations have acknowledged that they are not capable any more of staffing, management, and leadership personnel to run their own stations. The history of this show, as many of the members know, a continual decline in the ability to respond to calls, or responding with too few personnel.

In December 2013, the chief from one station and the president from the other got together of their own accord to discuss combining their stations. This conversation took place unbeknownst to Chief Kane, Deputy Chief Borry, or the Township. Once it was brought to their attention, many meetings were held involving the Township, the chiefs, and the company's leaders. It was found to not be beneficial to just combine the stations into one due to the buildings, the lack of staff. Then it was broached by said stations to allow the Township to provide the oversight, with the understanding that the station would stay open, the volunteers would stay, and the Township would manage and run the fire stations and move on as business as usual.

Then, about six weeks ago, there were some over the top operational issues that went on at station 204 that were off the charts bad. That lead to Chief Kane needing to speak with the Township Manager (his boss), in regards to this problem. It was decided an Executive Board meeting with 204 was needed, and the board unanimously decided to move forward immediately with merging their organization with Manheim Township, which then followed with a special meeting held at 201, and their Executive Board unanimously voted to do the same.

In March, both groups touched base with their legal counsel. The board of commissioners and township manager made a list of commitments to the volunteers, and the process moved forward with all parties. The stations held their monthly business meetings last week, where both groups voted unanimously to move forward after presentations by their e-boards.

So, basically, what this means to us at Neffsville, is absolutely nothing. Those two organizations began this process, not the Township. It was welcomed by the Township due to it being a way to correct the operational issues seen there. There is no discussion on phasing out the volunteers and replacing with paid. The commissioners have made a commitment to the volunteers, that will be in writing after their next meeting, to the volunteers on that organization that nothing will change from the perspective of no stations are closing, no stations are moving, no apparatus is being reassigned, no station number is changing. Essentially, it will all be the same with the exception of, when this merger is complete, people who would be identified as Eden or Southern volunteers will be Manheim Township Volunteers. The benefits will be the same as before, i.e. the incentive program, retirement and such.

Operationally, there will be no difference except for the currently elected officers will go away, by their own choice. Deputy 20 has moved his office to Southern, and Chief Kane has moved to Eden. Most likely it is a permanent move as they are running the stations now, and are riding the engines. There will be operational officers in the future, who will be volunteers.

Chief Kane then asked if there were questions. How the stations are being staffed in the evenings and weekends was asked. Chief Kane said both stations had stopped using "I am responding" months ago

without his knowing it, so there was no system to coordinate the volunteers. So, Chief Kane has begun setting up staffing at the stations by calling, and emailing members. They have already seen an increase in the coverage, and hope to continue it. As to who is 'running the show', it reverts back to whoever the most senior person there is riding in the officers seat. If Neffsville is assisting either station on a call, any of our Chiefs will be Chief 20. The SOP, pre MTFR, says the highest ranking man from any company is in command is unchanged.

Deputy Chief Elliott asked about the plans to replace the duty buggies, and if that will change. Chief Kane said Neffsville will still be getting one, but the other stations will not, as they will not have a chief other than Chief Kane and Deputy Chief Borry. The other equipment plans stay the same.

Brian Freysz asked about how combined relief will be affected, but Chief Kane says it will not. Volunteers will still be on the relief board from the organization. Fire Council will be changing their by-laws due to them stating volunteer chiefs from the three stations are to be on the council. It will need to be amended to say the volunteer Chief from Neffsville and two volunteers from the Manheim Township Volunteer Fire Fighter pool.

Chief Kane went on to discuss the buildings as well. Both of the stations will become Manheim Township assets, but will still be labeled the Eden Station and the Southern Manheim Station. The buildings will be tended by Manheim Township staff, as will the grounds. If a problem like pipes arises, they will contact the Township plumber to fix it, which is already paid for.

Chief Kane stated that he hopes to have everything ready by January 1, 2015. The ball has been rolling very quickly since it was set in motion by the stations bringing it to Chief Kane. He is pleased to also say that not one person has said they are leaving because of the merger. It has been the opposite and seems to be seen as beneficial. They are not looking to hire more paid fire fighters other than the one slot that has yet to be filled for 2014. The goal is to reengage the volunteers, not spend more money. The live in programs will continue, and are being looked into, as some people applied, but were not contacted. The other stations do not have at home responders like Neffsville, so the live in program is essential.

Lastly, Chief Kane wished to express that they are expecting nothing from Neffsville. He wanted to speak to the company first hand, so as not to have rumors spread. Our station is nowhere close to having the staffing or operational issues that presented themselves at the other two stations. He asked that if our members have any questions, to call him or Chief Borry. We will remain an independent volunteer entity as Neffsville Community Fire Company.

Don't forget the MTFR Business meeting April 7, at 7pm at Penn Cinema. It is for every member!!

For the Good of the Cause: Nothing

A motion was made by Chris Castagna to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 2014.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura "Boo" Oberle
Assistant Secretary