

**PRINCETON FIRE ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
JANUARY 4, 2022
7:00 PM
PRINCETON PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Gerold called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present: Dale Shelley (Greenbush Twsp.), Ken Murray (Wyanett Twsp.), Dan Hiller (Princeton Twsp.), Roger Nelson (Blue Hill Twsp.), Arvid Jenkins (Spencer Brook Twsp), Jenny Gerold (Council)

Members Absent: Lee Minks (Bogus Brook)

Staff Present: Michele McPherson (City Administrator), Ron Lawrence, (PFRD Chief)

2. Review/Consideration of the October 5, 2021 Minutes

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Jenkins, to approve the October 5, 2021 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

3. Agenda Additions/Deletions

Moved by Jenkins, seconded by Shelley, to approve the January 4, 2022 agenda as presented. Motion carried.

4. Fire Run Reports and Review of calls and events

Chief Lawrence reported that there was a total of 471 runs in 2021. The previous high total was 429 which occurred in 2017. He reported the following number of calls for the previous months:

- September: 43 calls
- October: 35 calls
- November: 44 calls
- December 37 calls

Chief Lawrence noted that medical calls are up due to COVID.

Gerold asked if Dispatch had improved how they describe calls.

Chief Lawrence noted that they are working on improving, but Dispatch is one area where there is a lot of turnover in staff, so it is hit and miss.

Hiller stated that the total population served in the District is 18,000 and the number of runs far exceed what other departments have on a per capita basis. He suggested that the Fire Department consider not responding to medical calls. He was concerned how the number of call impacted the budget and whether there would be another request to fund a truck.

There was discussion regarding the need to respond to medicals, the impact to families if response is not provided, the inability for the ambulance to respond in a timely manner if they are elsewhere, and how other departments handle medicals. It was suggested that the Township residents be asked what calls should be responded to.

5. Grant Updates-

Chief Lawrence provided a detailed accounting of the number and amount of donations received which helped fund the new UTV (Grass 2) Total donations equaled \$27,800.00 and total costs equaled \$29,963.00.

The Fire Act Grant was resubmitted with the same request as last year which was for hoses and drop tanks. This will be the third year of the same request; last year the application made it to the end but the program ran out of money. Funding looks like a good possibility.

6. Old Business

Foam Trailer

The foam trailer arrived. The total cost of the project was \$80,800.00 with Phillips Distilling funding \$71,696.00. The remaining cost is for four (4) 55 gallon drums of product that the Department purchased.

Hiller noted that he was disappointed with the quality of the trailer considering how much was spent on it.

7. New Business

Fee Schedule Changes, Fire Calls

Administrator McPherson reviewed the current fee schedule which charges a flat fee for fire response to various calls. She noted that after benchmarking other departments, they either don't charge or charge an hourly fee. Staff recommends that fees for service be billed at an hourly rate of \$300 per hour and that the hourly rate per firefighter be increased to \$15.00 per hour.

Murray asked if there would be an increase to the township payment as a result of the change.

McPherson stated no. This is the rate charged to individual homeowners/landowners/victims outside of the Township's payment to the City.

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Shelley to recommend that the City Council adopt the change in the fee schedule as recommended by staff. Motion carried, Hiller abstaining.

Collection of Outstanding Fees for Service, Fire Calls

Administrator McPherson stated that there is almost \$39,000 in unpaid invoices for fire calls dating back to 2008. She reviewed the two options for collection; use of a collection agency and assessing the cost back to real property where it is then collected with the property taxes.

McPherson stated that the City's ordinance would need to be changed to allow the assessment of unpaid fees. She asked if response to medicals should also be included; consensus was that they should be.

Moved by Nelson, seconded by Hiller to recommend that the City Council proceed with the collection of fees via assessment, said fees to include medical response and that the collection of the outstanding fees from 2008 forward should be pursued. Motion carried.

8. Next Meeting(s) & Agenda

March 1, 2022, 7 pm

9. Adjourn

Motion by Jenkins, seconded by Shelley to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele McPherson

Michele McPherson
City Administrator