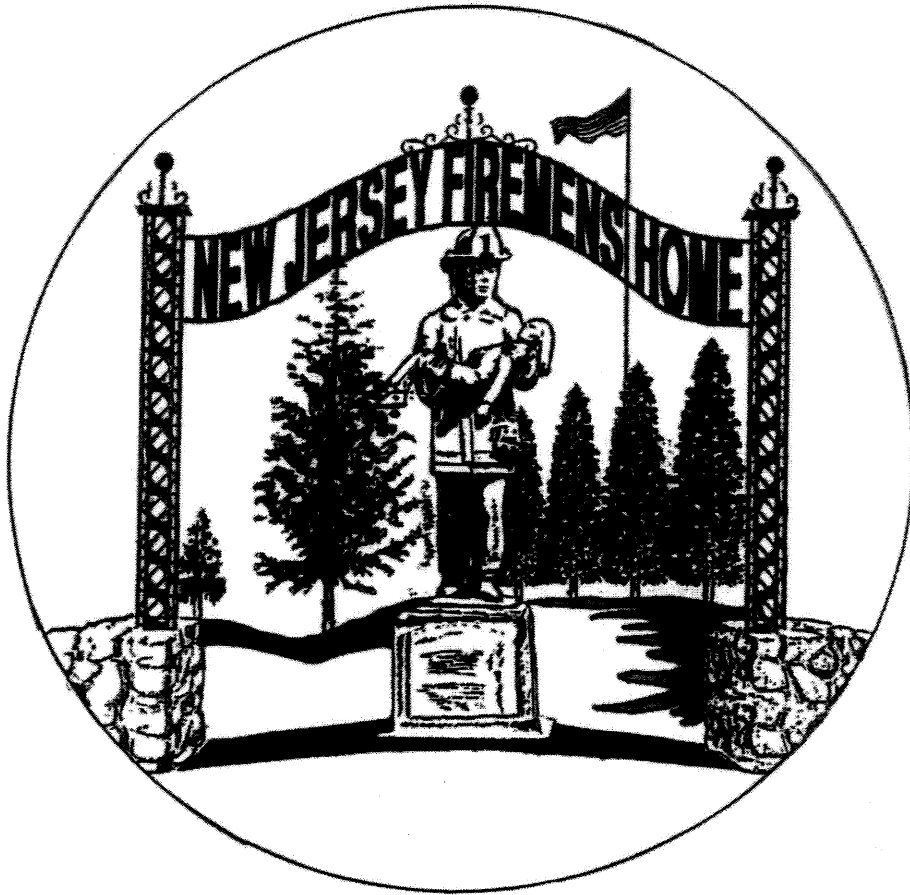


# New Jersey Firemen's Home Full Board Meeting



August 9, 2025

The August 9, 2025 meeting of the New Jersey Firemen's Home Board of Managers was called to order by Chairman Washer at 0900 hours and was followed by the pledge of allegiance. The invocation was provided by Manager Dutch.

Mr. Hull advised that proper public notice had been provided

Roll call was taken with 16 managers present. Mr. Lugossy (resigned), Mr. Mitch, Mr. Keyser, Mr. Signorello, and Ms. DeVirgilio were all excused. \*The Salem county manager position remains vacant.

The minutes from the July 12, 2025 Board meeting were approved.

**Communications:**

Secretary Hull reported that he received three letters that were as follows:

1. Letter from Gilbert Lugossy resigning as Mercer County Manager. Mr. Lugossy's resignation was accepted with regrets.
2. Letter from the Atlantic County Firefighters' Association stating "The Atlantic County Firefighters' Association does not support any current, or potential plans to expand the New Jersey Firemen's Home."
3. Letter from Board of Managers' Chairman Thomas Washer resigning from the position as Chairman of the Board of Manager's effective August 10, 2025. Chairman Washer's letter was accepted and he was thanked for his service.

Copies of all correspondence are attached.

**Reports of Officers:**

**Secretary:**

Mr. Hull advised that he has sent out the letters/ invitations for Wildwood. Managers were emailed and hard copies with the itinerary are up front. All previous managers were mailed a copy. Mr. Hull thanked Manager Dunn for setting up the events for Wildwood's meeting.

**Treasurer:**

Mr. Sutphen advised that we are one month into our new budget and he had nothing to report.

**Superintendent:**

Mr. Veras reported that we continue with our water testing process. He commented that his son is now employed at a facility in Bergen County where they have received positive results for Legionella. He added that it has been detected in New York City. The Department of Health is possibly attributing this to our water resources and contamination from fertilizer and algae.

A new ruby chestnut tree was planted by our tree service. Several dead trees removed from grounds and cemetery area.

Approval for our in house CNA school has been submitted to the Department of Health for our nurse to be an instructor. All of the books for the course are here. The lounge will be used as a classroom and a white board has been installed. A room on the first floor will be utilized as a simulation training room.

On August 16th the Bergen County Firemen's Association will be holding their annual picnic. They are also honoring a guest that will be 102 years old.

Mr. Veras added that with regards to the actuary study he has been contacted by legal authority and he is cooperating fully and expects the matter to be unfounded.

**Legal Counsel:**

Mr. Bell reported that he had no report.

**Buildings and Grounds:**

Mr. Cunningham read a written report from Maintenance Director Hodierne listing the status of various projects. A copy is attached.

The report indicated that water testing is still being conducted; lawn maintenance is still be worked on; a quote for our chiller is being worked on; and a hose reel with shut off has been added to the Dorm E patio; new door on outdoor quansit hut; replacing mini-split units in admin sections of building; combi-oven for kitchen and flooring in D & E dayroom.

**Applications:**

Mr. Freeman provided a written report of the application committee meeting held on August 5, 2025 which is attached. The report indicated 67 guest in Long Term Care and 5 in Residential Care for a total of 72 guests. Since the last meeting, there was one admission to the Home. Three residents answered their final alarm this month. There are 11 applications with pre-admission meetings to be scheduled. Two applicants are awaiting pre-admission meetings- five are still in review by staff and four applications were incomplete. Three applicants passed away before admissions. The next meeting for the Applications Committee is 0900 hours on Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at the Home.

**Employee Committee:**

Mr. Dutch commented on Mr. Veras' report that evidentially there is an issue however the Employee Committee and Ethics Committee know nothing about, so they have nothing to report.

**Finance and Budget Committee:**

Mr. Hull read a written report from the August 5, 2025 meeting of the Audit and Finance Committee which is attached. The committee reviewed revenue and expense reports from July 1, 2025 to July 31, 2025, as well as vouchers for the period of July 8th through August 5, 2025. Bills were reported in the amount of \$380,294.23.

The committee reviewed a draft copy of a new revenue and expense report. It is still a work in progress.

The next meeting of the committee will be at 0800 hours on Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at the Home.

Mr. Veras advised that the date of the committee meetings might be an issue with the bill cycle and Wildwood. He asked managers to consider moving the meeting. Finance and Application committees will discuss.

**Insurance:**

Mr. Strube advised he had nothing new to report.

**Legislative Committee:**

Mr. Miller advised that he had no report at this time. Mr. Miller later added that Mr. Lugossy had handled the committee for so long he honestly forgot he was on the committee. Mr. Miller will have a report for next month.

**By-laws:**

Mr. Apgar advised no report.

**Museum:**

Mr. Hull reported that he is in the process of cleaning out an Ocean County guest's room and some items will be going into the museum at the guest's request.

**Public Relations:**

Mr. Wilson reported that we are 99% set for Wildwood. The flashlights we plan to give away will be at the convention hall thanks to Chief Dunn. Mr. Wilson again thanked Cape May Executive Committeeman Dan Speigel for getting us set up with a table in the convention center. Mr. Wilson then turned over the committee report to Mr. Giglio.

Mr. Giglio advised that while he still had his voice, he wished to thank the managers for the desert basket that was sent; all of the calls, cards and texts that he received while he was sick. They meant a lot to him.

Mr. Giglio then reported that the committee also ordered pens to be given away at the convention as well. 2000 pens were ordered and when delivered it was found that the letter H in "Home" was in lower case. The company corrected the error and produced new pens for us, so instead of 2000 pens we have 3700. HE encouraged managers to take some.

The committee also ordered flashlights to be given away. 500 were here at the Home and the rest were sent to Wildwood.

**Ethics and Code of Conduct:**

Mr. Sutphen advised that no one discussed an issue of employee misconduct with the committee.

**Pension:**

Chairman Washer had no report.

**Inventory:**

Mr. Wilson advised he had no report.

**Golf Committee:**

Mr. Signorello was excused and no report provided.

**Liaison to the State Association:**

Mr. Hull advised that he had emailed a report after the State Associations' meeting summarizing what was relevant to the Home. No further report.

**Inspections:**

Mr. Washer will handle with Mr. Keyser

**Long Term Planning/Addition Committee:**

Mr. Sutphen asked the managers for their ideas and if we wished to move forward with the expansion project. He stated that the Committee told him to "slow it down".

Mr. Hull inquired about any plans the were given by KDA as we received (and paid for) an invoice which listed 25 copies of a concept plan.

Mr. Sutphen and Mr. Veras advised that a concept plan was provided and discussed with the Board.

**State Firemen's Association:**

President Ordway advised that they are gearing up for the convention and have been going to the caucuses. In light of Mr. Lugossy's resignation a special election will be held to fill the unexpired term. Mr. Ordway added that the Home's pens that public relations plan on handing out, albeit are nice pens, they might be an issue with the ballots and the ballot machines. He advises he will advise the convention to not use our pens on the ballots.

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**New Business:**

Mr. Veras reported on the new outdoor bench that was installed at the Home. It was paid for by the husband of our first female guest. She was a guest here in 2021 for a short period before passing away. The bench is pink because she suffered from breast cancer and to also honor her as the first female guest of the Home.

**Payment of Bills:**

Mr. Hull reported the total bills in the amount of \$380,294.23. Upon motion, a roll call vote was taken and the bills payment was approved.

**Motions and Resolutions:**

None

**Public Participation:**

Hudson County Executive Committeeman Larry Handlin thanked Mr. Washer on behalf of Hudson County for his service as Chairman and his open mindedness when working together. He also wished Managers Giglio and Lugossy well with their health matters and advised he looked forward to working with the new Chairman, Tim Apgar.

Essex County Committeeman Richard Otterbein and Morris County Executive Committeeman Gene Minell echoed Mr. Handlin's comments.

**Executive Session:**

Chairman Washer read a statement regarding incorrect numbers that were in the Actuary study the Home received. Chairman Washer stated that the Home became aware of the matter in May and the numbers in the report given to managers reflected a higher number than what was in the actual actuary report from BPAS. In July, Mr. Veras addressed the matter as an IT issue that was being looked into and that the PDF file received was corrupt. Mr. Ordway requested that the correct actuary report be sent to all managers with the corrected information highlighted. President Ordway reported on the actuary report at the State Association meeting stating that a computer file that is corrupt does not change numbers in specific locations, and in matching fonts.

After the July meeting of the Home and the State Association, several managers have questioned the actuary report and how it was changed. A closed session was requested to discuss the matter.

Due the likelihood that the discussion would involve Mr. Veras, Chairman Washer requested that Veras be "rice noticed" out of an abundance of caution. Mr. Veras received the noticed and responded that he wished the matter be discussed in public rather than in closed session.

As Chairman I requested this because it happened on my watch.

Mr. Sutphen began the discussion asking if there was any documents to compare to each other as he has not seen them.

Mr. Apgar stated that the study was received in October and in July it was reported on that it was incorrect. An updated report was supposed to be sent out which was not. Mr. Apgar asked Mr. Veras what makes ours wrong and what's right on the original report. What's going on here?

Mr. Veras responded that he printed the report when he received it and it is in a binder in his office. The report states 109 beds. The report Mr. Ordway is questioning was printed on the copier machine later on and they were picked up by everyone and they had incorrect numbers. Mr. Veras stated he wasn't aware of the incorrect number until Mr. Ordway casually mentioned it to him and Mr. Bell and asked us to look into it. BPAS is aware of the discrepancy because they prepared the report for us. Mr. Veras looked into the matter and found that it was a corrupt file that can cause printing errors. Mr. Veras stated that he was cooperated with the Attorney General's office who were sent here. They were given all of the information and subpoenaed BPAS.

Mr. Veras went on to state that the report is just an opinion. We can not have more than 96 beds due to our license. There has never been a discussion about expanding capacity, it was always about creating single rooms for the guests. To do a certificate of need to increase our capacity would be very difficult to do.

Mr. Apgar asked who is accused Mr. Veras of altering a document.

Mr. Veras responded that Mr. Ordway did.

Mr. Ordway stated that he did not state anyone's name but did ask how numbers could change and perfectly line up on a corrupt file, with the fonts matching perfectly, and only certain numbers changed. Mr. Ordway stated that he received the "correct" document from Mr. Veras that he believed was sent to all managers.

At this time Mr. Veras advised his attorney would speak.

Mr. Jonathan Cohen from Plosia Cohen LLC addressed the Board. Mr. Cohen stated the implications being made are that Mr. Veras changed the report. Either an error was made or it was done intentionally. Mr. Veras and the Home have no benefit for intentionally changing a report. Errors can happen and Mr. Cohen used the misprint on the pens the Public Relations Committee had brought to the meeting today as an example. A printing error, no harm no foul. Mr. Cohen there are people more qualified than the board that will look into this. Mr. Cohen stated that this matter was not brought before the Ethics Committee and having what looks like a "trial" today is not legally appropriate. Mr. Cohen stated he advised Mr. Veras to not answer further questions outside of a hearing. Mr. Cohen spoke about Mr. Veras' career as an exempt firefighter and that his blood sweat and tears go into the Home. Mr. Cohen stated that Mr. Veras made a mistake and to err is human. He has earned the right to due process.

Mr. Apgar asked what mistake did Mr. Veras make?

Mr. Cohen responded that Mr. Veras takes all responsibility as the Superintendent. The buck stops with him. If a mistake was on the report that went out to an agency then that mistake is his and I am not saying he changed any document. To be clear, Mr. Veras doesn't know what happened.

Mr. Wilson asked what happened with the Attorney General's Office.

Mr. Cohen responded that they could have been made aware in a number of ways. Someone may reported it to them. They have to do their job. Mr. Veras spoke with them and provided information. They (Attorney General Office) is better equipped to look into this.

Mr. Freeman commented that there was never a discussion about an expansion to the Home. It has always been about single rooms. Someone is talking without knowing all the facts or skewing the facts.

Mr. Dunn asked about the original report from BPAS and why only Mr. Veras received the original email and no one else on the Board. It was sent out later by the Secretary.

Mr. Veras commented that his job is sometimes difficult as he answers to 21 people. He was asked to find a company to do the study. He turned it over to the committee and that is where his responsibility ended.

Discussion followed on how the original report was distributed. In summary, Mr. Veras received an email, hard copies were distributed to the committee in October, Mr. Hull scanned that hard copy and sent it to all managers. The discussion continued as to why the correct report was not distributed by the Superintendent.

Mr. Stube asked why protocols were not followed regarding an employee issue.

Mr. Hull spoke on the matter and advised the Board that he was the one who contacted the Attorney General's Office. Mr. Hull did not feel comfortable with the answers given for the changed report. Mr. Hull advised that as Secretary his signature is on things that go to the governor, comptroller and commission of banking and insurance. Mr. Hull spoke about his history with issues at the Home and agreed with Mr. Veras' attorney that the Board is not equipped to investigate certain matters.

Mr. Hull and Mr. Veras debated the wait list and the number of beds needed.

Mr. Cohen spoke on behalf of Mr. Veras citing case law for his right to privacy for the Home's computer and law enforcement's investigation would supersede that of the Home. Let law enforcement do their job.

Mr. Joas commented that he is a member of the Long Term Planning Committee and stated that the expansion to the Home was to get one guest per room. We never talked about putting 132 beds in the Home.

Mr. Dutch addressed the letter from the Atlantic County Firefighter's Association that was read at the start of the meeting, stating he explained it to them (Atlantic County) that we need 39 beds to get rid of double rooms.

Mr. Miller commented that we are hearing about how many beds are need, but asked how the report got changed?

Mr. Sutphen made a motion to allow the Attorney General Office to investigate the matter and take it from there.

There was much discussion about the Attorney General Investigation, and hiring an expert third party.

Mr. Hull read an email received from the detective encouraging an internal investigation, as we are not law enforcement and it would not impede their investigation.

Mr. Cohen commented about his client's due process.

Ms. Bundrick, Director of Nursing, interrupted the meeting to speak for Mr. Veras and the fine job they do. They are dealing with real lives who need them to take care of them. We cant have chaos.

The debate continued as to getting to the bottom of things.

The motion was withdrawn as we have no authority to tell the attorney general's office what to do.

Mr. Cohen then suggested a motion be made to defer any investigation by the Board until the AG office completed theirs.

Mr. Wilson stated his disagreement on the record.

Mr. Apgar made a motion that the Home hire a third party forensic investigator to look into the matter and examine the Superintendent's computer.

Mr. Freeman commented that the cost of such an investigation would be expensive.

Mr. Veras commented on what the guests will think with computers being taken out, people coming and going and him (Veras) being under a cloud of suspicion. He is in charge of their lives and how can I work without a computer.

Mr. Wilson advised that the Board will buy a new one.

Mr. Dutch suggested waiting for the AG to come back with their findings.

The motion was re-read. A yes vote would be for a third party investigation, a no vote would be to let the AG do it and follow up after their report is done.

A roll call vote was taken, resulting in a 8-8 tie (the vote was 8-7 against conducting an investigation and Chairman Washer wished to exercise his right to vote under our by-laws. Mr. Washer's vote created a 8-8 tie and accordingly the motion was defeated.

Voting in favor of an internal investigation: Dunn, Miller, Apgar, Giglio, Hull, Wilson, Ordway and Washer.

Voting against an internal investigation: Dutch, Jeffer, Freeman, Joas, Cunningham, Strube, Berckes, Sutphen.

Mr. Wilson made a motion that in the future, any reports from outside agencies be sent to the Chairman of the Board, the Secretary and the Superintendent. This way we don't have this happen again. Motion passed.

#### **Good and Welfare:**

Mr. Hull reported on a \$10,000 donation the Home received from the Lacey Township Elks for a fundraiser after the Jones Road Wild Fire.

Mr. Apgar added that whatever we do with the money, like an awning at the grill area, we should identify it with the name of the Lacey Elks.

Mr. Veras thanked Gene Minell and the Morris County Association for a donation of \$1070.00 from the 50/50 and their caucus.



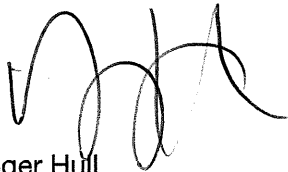
Mr. Jeffer commented that he was unsuccessful in his re-election bid for the Bergen County Manager position.

Mr. Hull advised that in light of the events, he is resigning as Secretary and Chairman of the Audit and Finance Committee effective immediately as he is not comfortable with operations. He also suggested Mr. Bell look up the "Whistle Blower" laws, and stepped away from the head table leaving the Board with no Secretary. No Mangers present wanted to take over the position.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 11 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RH' with a stylized flourish.

Roger Hull  
Past-Secretary