

Call to Order

The October 8, 2022 re-organization meeting of the Board of Managers was called to order by Chairman Greci at 930 AM.

Superintendent Veras was named acting Secretary until the election of new secretary.

Salute to Flag was held and an invocation was made by Mr. DeLaurentis.

Roll call was taken. Managers Wilson, Strube, Miller were excused absent. Solicitor Ward was also excused absent.

Chairman Greci read the names of the Managers who were elected to a four year term of office commencing October 1, 2022. Oaths of Office were given by Superintendent John Veras to:

John Mitch- Cumberland County  
Tim Apgar- Hunterdon County  
Gil Lugossy- Mercer County  
Garrick Miller- Middlesex County (excused absent)  
Gary Keyser- Morris County

Chairman Greci appointed the following Managers as Judges for Election: Mr. Lugossy (Chairman); Mr. Sutphen; Mr. Giglio.

At this Chairman Greci appointed Superintendent John Veras Chairman Protem for the nominations and election of the Chairman of the Full Board. Mr. Greci was the only candidate nominated from the floor and the nominations were closed. Acting Secretary Veras cast the ballot for Mr. Greci.

Mr. Greci resumed as Chairman, and opened nominations for Vice Chairman of the Full Board. Mr. Signorello and Mr. Jeffer were both nominated for the position. Ballots were cast in favor of Mr. Signorello.

Nominations were opened for Secretary. Mr. Washer nominated Mr. Hull for the position. No other nominations were made and acting Secretary Veras cast the ballot for Mr. Hull. At this time Mr. Hull assumed the position of Secretary for the meeting.

Nominations were opened for Treasurer. Mr. Silvestri nominated Mr. Sutphen for the position. No other nominations were made and the Secretary cast the ballot for Mr. Sutphen.

Nominations were then opened for the 5 Executive Committee positions. Managers who were not interested were asked to raise their hands. Managers Dutch, Matthews, Heflich, Lugossy, Denny, DeLaurentis, Keyser, Silvestri, and Ordway all withdrew their names for consideration. Managers on the ballot were: Freeman, Giglio, Washer, Wilson, Jeffer, Mitch, Strube, Apgar, and Miller. Ballots were cast and the five managers selected for the Executive Committee were: Wilson, Jeffer, Apgar, Washer, and Giglio.

The Executive Committee will re-organize after the full board meeting.

Nomination for professional and miscellaneous appointments for 1 year terms:

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Pension Actuary-                  | David E. Klien                 |
| 2. Insurance Broker-                 | Hughes- Plumer Associates      |
| 3. Consulting Psychiatric Physician- | Dr. Julie Tropeano             |
| 4. Portable X-rays-                  | Speciality Portable X-Ray Inc. |

- |                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5. Hospice Care-       | Fellowship Garden State Hospice |
| 6. Stenographer-       | Mary Ann Sager                  |
| 7. Official Newspaper- | Star Ledger                     |
| 8. Auditors-           | Yodice & Company                |

Mr. Keyser advised that for professional appointments a resolution was needed for each position that includes: Name; Job Description and Compensation. Mr. Jeffer suggestion putting off appointment for attorney's opinion. Mr. Matthews suggested instead of calling them "Professional" appointments, call them miscellaneous appointments. Mr. Matthews made motion to approve miscellaneous appointments for one year term listed 1-8. Second by Mr. Signorello and passed with Mr. Keyser voting No. Mr. Ordway asked if the compensation for the positions who be posted and Chair advised they would be.

Approval of meeting dates for Full Board and Executive Board as per attached Notice of Public Meetings. Discussion was brought forth by Superintendent Veras about the July meeting and travel issues for Managers from the south as it is busy travel weekend. Recommended to move July meeting to 3rd Saturday (July 15th). Motion by Mr. Matthews, 2nd by Mr. Hull and passed.

Motion to close re-organization meeting made by Mr. Apgar, 2nd by Mr. Matthews. Meeting adjourned with a five minute recess before the full board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Roger Hull  
Secretary

**Approved by Full Board 11/12/2022**

The October 8, 2022 Full Board meeting of the New Jersey Firemen's Home Board of Managers was called to order by Chairman Greci. Roll call, public notice, salute to flag and invocation had been done and at the earlier the Re-organization meeting.

A motion was made to approve the September 15, 2022 minutes by Mr. Sutphen and 2nd by Mr. Apgar. A question came from the floor from Mr. Otterbein (Essex County Committeeman) about corrections to the minutes. Chairman Greci advised that after the minutes were approved by the Managers, concerns from guests would be heard under new business.

**Communications:**

Secretary Hull had none.

**Reports of Officers:**

**Secretary:**

Mr. Hull had no report as new secretary advising there was a contact list on the front table please make sure your information and email is correct. Mr. Veras added that the NJFH email accounts for managers were being done away with, so please make sure the information is accurate as this will be going into the booklets.

**Treasurer:**

Mr. Sutphen thanked everyone for re-electing him. He reported that the budget is fine and that our current reserves would cover the loss of income from doing away with the \$850 monthly fee to guests.

**Superintendent:**

Mr. Veras congratulated the newly elected managers and officers. Mr. Veras reported that BBQ season is ending and that patio heaters have been installed outside so that families can visit guest outside into the fall. Booster and Flu shots have been administered to the staff, guests and managers. The demolition of the house at 320 Vreeland Avenue had asbestos issues. A contractor also found an oil tank on the property. Work is being done to get pricing for asbestos removal; tank removal and demolition of the property. Asbestos abatement estimates were \$10,000.

Mr. Veras further reported that they have received only 3 submission for the position of Solicitor with the application period closing soon. The maintenance department has begun their pre-winter preparations. Issues were found with the back flow valves on the fire sprinkler antifreeze system. Repair estimates were \$50,000. Mr. Heflich advised that this should be addressed immediately. Mr. Keyser added that 3 price quotes should be obtained. A motion was made by Keyser and 2nd by Sutphen to make the repairs. Discussion followed with regards to our current sprinkler contractor and if any other contractor did the work, would that cause a contract issue with current contractor. Discussion of setting a price cap was had. Mr. Veras commented that our current system is over 40 years old. It was recommended that repairs be made with our current contractor and approved by the board.

**Buildings and Grounds:**

Mr. Signorello provided a written report from Maintenance Director Tom Hodierne which is attached. The list contained updates on multiple projects.

**Applications:**

Mr. Washer read a report provided by former Manager Horvath who was previous Chair of the Application Committee. The report indicated 60 guest in Long Term Care and 7 in Residential Care. The report is attached. Mr. Keyser asked that he be included in Mr.

Horvath's report as he was present at the October 4th application committee meeting and he was a Manager effective October 1st. The next meeting for the Applications Committee is 0900 hours on November 8, 2022 at the Home.

Mr. Hull brought up that guests were no being doubled up in the residential dorm. Some of these guest are pretty upset. Mr. Hull discussed us losing rooms because the wing was reported as underutilized and is now in need of guest to share rooms. Mr. Veras explained that there are no private rooms and guest are aware of this. Mr. Veras explained further that guests in other dorms are jealous of those in residential with single rooms. Mr Hull added that managers previously presented him with information from Department of Health Commissioner Persichelli that suggested single rooms in nursing homes. Mr. Hull felt that we should look into this further.

**Employee Committee:**

Mr. Hull had no report.

**Finance and Budget Committee:**

Mr. Silvestri report bills in the amount of \$362,421.57. A written report is attached. Mr. Hull brought up that at the finance committee meeting discussion was held on allowing our employees to opt-out of the healthcare we provide so long as they have coverage. The cost of health insurance plan for an employee was approximately \$12,000. The finance committee discussed giving the employees a non pensionable stipend of \$1000 a quarter (\$4000 total) for those who opt out of our insurance plan. This would save us approximately \$8000 per employee who opts out. Employees would be able to re-join at open enrollment if needed. Mr. Veras consulted our labor attorney with regards to laws concerning coverage and fines an employee could face if found to have no coverage. Currently the fines are \$0 (zero). Mr. Hull made a motion to allow employees to opt out and giving those who do so the aforementioned stipend. Mr. Dutch seconded the motion and it passed. The next meeting of the Budget and Finance committee will be 800 AM on November 8, 2022 at the Home.

**Insurance:**

No Report

**Legislative Committee:**

Mr. Lugossy reported on Assembly Bill # 1119 which would allow National Guard Active Duty Members to remain age eligible under Civil Service requirements for firefighter positions.

**Bylaws:**

Mr. Lugossy had no report. Mr. Keyser has questions about Manager's terms and advised that we should adhere to the Bylaws and not just go and change them. Mr. Keyser added that there were a number of things in our Bylaws we do not follow. Chairman Greci advised the new Bylaws Committee will look into and address Mr. Keyser's concerns.

**Museum:**

Mr. Hull reported that a number of donations were coming in including a hand cart from Cedar Knolls FD. The museum committee will be meeting at 900 AM on October 22, 2022 at the Home for a work detail and to accept items.

**Public Relations:**

Mr. Hull reported that a group of Officers from Italy were touring the area and that the committee wished to purchase 30 Firemen's Home ball caps to give them. There are sufficient

funds in the PR budget to cover the cost. Chairman Greci explained he was invited to represent the Home in meeting with the contingency and thought it would be nice gesture to give them something from the Home. Approved by Board.

**Ethics and Code of Conduct:**

Mr. Sutphen had no report.

**Pension:**

Mr. Greci had no report.

**Inventory:**

Mr. Veras reported that an 82 page inventory and appraisal report was received. The report was forwarded the insurance committee chairman. 2 items were found that needed to be addressed which was the property at 320 Vreeland Avenue which is to be demolished and that the Quonset hut on the property was underinsured. Both items being addressed by committees.

**Golf Committee:**

Mr. Greci had no report.

**Liaison to the State Association:**

Mr. Lugossy had no report.

**Solicitor Search Committee:**

Mr. Jeffer stated "We are looking".

**Inspections:**

Mr. Matthews reported progress and no problems observed.

**State Firemen's Association:**

President Ordway had no report.

**Unfinished Business:**

Mr. Heflich advised that at the September meeting he presented Solicitor Ward with a list of questions to be answered. Mr. Ward has yet to answer Manager Heflich. Mr. Heflich added that there should be a place on the agenda for the Solicitor to give a report and that any other comment from the attorney should go through the Chair. He should not just butt in. Discussion from the floor about Mr. Ward no longer being solicitor. Mr. Heflich was not satisfied and that he had questions about Mr. Ward's health benefits and pension package adding that Mr Ward was an employee since 2006 and "nobody knew". Chairman Greci advised Mr. Ward is remaining on as solicitor until new one is found. Mr. Ward can answer Mr. Heflich's questions next meeting. A copy of Mr. Heflich's questions were submitted to the Secretary and are attached.

Mr. Keyser requested information about the demolition of 320 Vreeland Avenue. Mr. Veras will provide. Mr. Matthews asked about how much asbestos was found on the property. Asbestos was reported to be found in the tiles and the plaster.

**New Business:**

Chairman Greci distributed a committee list. The first name under each committee is the Chair of that committee. Chairman Greci added that the first two things he wants the new By-Laws committee to work on is addressing the manager term issues that Mr. Keyser brought forth and the doing away with the Executive Board. With regards to the Liaison to the State

Association Committee, Chairman Greci stated it will be the responsibility of the members on that committee to attend the State Association meetings. \*A copy of the Committee list is attached pending any changes.

Mr. Heflich questioned the policy of only 1 year of fire service as the criteria for admission into the Home. He advised that it is wrong and it used to be 7 years of service to come into the Home. Chairman Greci advised that specific topic has been part of discussions between the State Association and Home and will be continued to be discussed.

Mr. Keyser requested that the minutes of the meetings be available to the managers faster and that they should be easier to locate when searching our website. Mr. Veras added that the minutes on the website are one month behind as they get added upon approval of the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Keyser introduced himself to Board; presented his background and resume and is looking forward to being a bridge between the Home and State Association.

Mr. Heflich inquired if he became a guest of the Home, would he be able to remain a manager. He was advised that he could not as per our Bylaws.

Mr. Freeman offered that with regards to length of service consideration for an applicant, a person injured in the line of duty should come right into the Home regardless of service time.

#### **Payment of Bills:**

Mr. Silvestri made a motion to approve bills in the amount of \$362,421.57. Roll call was taken and the bills were approved. Mr. Ordway made mention that the new secretary incorrectly called Chairman Greci during roll call as he does not vote and would only vote in a tie. Corrected.

#### **Motions & Resolutions:**

None.

#### **Public Participation:**

Mr. Hankins, Vice President of State Association, if being on HOSPICE Care would be reason for denial into Home. Mr. Veras responded that being on HOSPICE does not preclude a guest form admission.

Mr. Otterbein, Essex County Executive Committeeman, pointed out two corrections to be made in the September 15, 2022 minutes. The first being his name was improperly spelled and he wished it corrected. The second was with regards to his comments about the \$1 million in surplus and the \$850.00 guest fee being suspended. Mr. Otterbein advised he was not against the suspension of the \$850.00 monthly fee. He questioned the \$1 million dollar surplus that was used to offset the budget. Mr. Otterbein advised that his statements are correct in our verbatim minutes and incorrect in the abridged minutes. He respectfully requested that his comment be corrected. Chairman Greci advised that the correction will be made.

Mr. Handlin, Hudson County Executive Committeeman, asked Superintendent Veras about information he previously requested with regards to how many guest pay full fee, partial fee or no fees to reside at the Home. Mr. Veras responded that he had the information and it is available, but the information about the guests fee status should not be public record. Mr. Handlin also asked about the Home providing dialysis treatment. The Home does not provide

dialysis treatment as there are multiple locations within 5 miles. We transport guest to and from dialysis if needed. An applicant in need of dialysis will not be rejected.

**Executive Session:**

None had.

**Good and Welfare:**

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Keyser and seconded by Mr. Lugossy.  
Meeting adjourned at 1120 AM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. Hull', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Roger Hull  
Secretary

**APPROVED by Full Board 11/12/2022**