

New Jersey Firemen's Home Full Board Meeting



September 17, 2026

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2026
Location: New Jersey Firemen's Home
Called to Order: 3:00 PM

Roll Call:

Managers present 19, (Managers Dutch and Freeman excused); Superintendent John Veras; Legal Counsel Mr. Bell via Zoom.

Manager Oath of office:

- Sussex appointed manager, Bessie Ayars oath given by Mr. Bell.
- **2nd Roll Call:**
- Managers present 18, (Managers Dutch, Washer and Abgar excused); Superintendent John Veras; Legal Counsel Mr. Bell.

2nd Roll Call:

Managers present 20, (Managers Dutch and Freeman excused); Superintendent John Veras; Legal Counsel Mr. Bell via Zoom

Approval of Prior Minutes:

- August 8, 2026 Minutes — approved

Communications:

- Appointment of Salem County Manager, Bessie M. Ayars as interim board manager to the home from President Ordway
- Resignation from Sussex Manager Thomas Washer as he was elected as the Executive Committeemen for his county
- Hudson County letter expressing opposition of the proposed expenditures for an addition at the home submitted by Executive Committeemen Handlin
- Cape May County letter expressing opposition of the proposed expenditures for an addition at the home submitted by Secretary of Cape May Firemen's Association Andrew Raniszewski
- Family of Lester Carbone, former resident of the home, made a donation to the home and expressed gratitude to the homes staff for the care of their family member

Chair's Report:

- Managers who were re-appointed and newly appointed managers will be recognized at the October reorganization meeting and will again take the oath of office.

Officers' Reports:

Secretary:

- Requested past managers to give updated contact information

Treasurer:

- No report at this time.

Superintendent:

- Work would begin with the auditor in preparation for the upcoming budget process.
- Barbecue season would continue through mid-October

Legal Counsel (Mr. Bell):

- Home's response to the pending lawsuit involving New Jersey Firemen's Home and Gerald F. Smith was due that day at 5:00 p.m.
 - The response had been completed and was expected to be filed before the deadline.

Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds (Keyser):

- Water testing continues.
- Pre-construction meeting for chiller was scheduled and will give board update next meeting
- Work is progressing on the telephone/bell system, including installation of new wiring and nursing-station equipment
- Maintenance staff continued extensive grass cutting due to the recent rainfall and growing conditions
- Future work includes replacement of certain sidewalks, anticipated around mid-October
- Painting of the fire call boxes in front of the Home had begun
- The maintenance department continues to make repairs and improvements throughout the facility

Applications (Cunningham):

- Census (as of 08/31/26): Total 71 residents (breakdown read into record)

Employees (Miller):

- Completion of updates to the Superintendent's employment contract being finalized and reviewed by legal; will be distributed to the managers for review and then forwarded to the Superintendent for Signature

Finance & Budget (Miller):

- Reviewed 8/4/2026 – 9/8/2026 operating expenses; \$616,269.53 approved by committee.

Insurance (Strube):

- No updates

Legislative (Miller):

- There are currently 59 bills being tracked for the firemen's home

Bi-Laws (Joas):

- Revisions to the bylaws were being prepared for distribution to committee members for review and comment; chairmen would like the updates/changes finished by end of year .

Museum (Hull):

- Progress

Public Relations (Miller):

- Preparations and table setup for the upcoming convention were completed, request for manager participation early morning for distribution of bags at the convention center

Ethics & Code of Conduct (Dunn):

- No report

Pension (Apgar):

- No report

Inventory (Wilson):

- Progress

Golf (Signorello):

- Progress

Liaison to State Association (Hull):

- Efficiency study commissioned by the organization is underway.
- The Chairman and Vice Chairman met with a representative of the firm conducting the study. Additional questions and results will be coordinated through the Chairman and Secretary.

Inspection (Apgar):

- The Chairman reported that the building had been toured and appeared to be in compliance with applicable requirements

Long-Term Planning (Sutphen):

- Committee reported that work remains ongoing

State Firemen's Association (Ordway):

- Information concerning the State Firemen's Association had previously been distributed to the Board and that no additional formal report was necessary

Unfinished Business:

- Chairman recognized Manager Mike Joes for his efforts in attending the Atlantic County caucus and assisting with the Salem County caucus and his effort in the election of new Salem County Manager

New Business:

- Proclamations of outgoing managers:
 - Sussex County Manager Thomas Washer
 - Monmouth County Manager Nicholas Giglio Jr
 - NJSFA President Robert Orway (to be given during convention meeting)

Payment of Bills:

- \$616,269.53— Motion to approve; roll call approved.

Motions & Resolutions:

- Mr. Bell presented a resolution memorializing and confirming the execution of an agreement with Denis F. Driscoll, Esq., of Cleary, Giacobbe, Alfieri, Jacobs, Lagana, LLC, to represent the interests of Gerald F. Smith in the matter of George Heflich v. New Jersey Firemen's Home and Gerald F. Smith, Hudson County Docket No. HUD-C-132-26
 - The resolution was approved by roll-call vote

Public Participation:

- Former Manager DeLaurentis requested better communications with the former managers.
- Former Manager Foran requested more detailed information regarding the application committee

Good & Welfare:

- Manager Wilson recognized managers celebrating September birthdays
- Manager Dunn on behalf of Cape May County presented a donation commemorating the 250th anniversary to the museum

Executive Session:

- None.

Adjournment:

- Meeting was adjourned at 3:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy DeVirgilio
Secretary