

The May 11, 2024 Full Board meeting of the New Jersey Firemen's Home Board of Managers was called to order by Vice-Chairman Apgar at 0900 hours and was followed by the pledge of allegiance. An invocation was provided by Manager Dutch.

Mr. Hull advised public notice was provided in the official newspaper, the Star Ledger and the Home's website.

Roll call was taken with all managers present with the exception of Mr. Washer, Mr. Jeffer, Mr. Strube, Mr. Dunn and Mr. DeLaurentis who were all excused. Solicitor Bell was also excused and was represented by James Pryor from his firm.

The minutes from the April 13, 2024 Full Board meeting approved.

Communications:

Secretary Hull reported no communications were received.

Reports of Officers:

Secretary:

Mr. Hull advised that he had forwarded the names of Managers whose terms are up for re-election this year to the State Association as required by our By-laws. Letters will be sent to each Manager as required.

Treasurer:

Mr. Sutphen reported that we received the funds for our 2024-2025 budget and all else is well.

Superintendent:

Mr. Veras reported that groups from Morris County Historical Society have recently toured the Lathrop Mansion portion of the Home. Mr. Veras said the Home is like the "Willy Wonka Chocolate Factory", many people see it daily, but never been inside. The tours were a success.

Mr. Veras reported that today is the first BBQ of the season with the Sussex County pig roast.

Water testing of the facility continues and we are hoping that there are no trace amounts of Legionella. The results thus far have been very miniscule amounts.

The Home will have a waiting list for admissions, that Mr. Freeman will report on under applications.

The items found during the recent inspection have all be completed.

Legal Counsel:

Mr. Pryor reported that Mr. Bell apologized that he could not attend as he had a family matter to attend. Mr. Pryor provided Mr. Bell's report that there are a few personnel issues being worked on that will be reported on at the next Board meeting.

Buildings and Grounds:

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

The elevator project is due to start soon a proposals have been submitted.

On May 7th, Mr. Keyser met with a contractor in regards to having the historical pull stations outside rehabilitated.

Applications:

Prior to the Applications Committee report, Vice Chairman Apgar advised the Board that they should have received an e-mail from Mr. Freeman with regards to the new admissions policy criteria. All managers are requested to review and submit feedback to Mr. Freeman by May 31st so the matter can be discussed at June's Board meeting.

Mr. Freeman provided a written report and census report from the Application Committee meeting held on May 7, 2024 which is attached. The report indicated 73 guests in Long Term Care and 8 in Residential Care for a total of 81 guests. Since the last meeting there have been 4 new admissions and 1 guest answered their final alarm. The next meeting for the Applications Committee is 0900 hours on Tuesday June 4, 2024 at the Home.

Mr. Freeman commented that we now have a waiting list for the first time in 6 years.

Employee Committee:

Mr. Dutch reported that he was unaware of any problems, but the Solicitor mentioned personnel issues.

Mr. Veras responded that there employees being dismissed and all dismissal are run by legal counsel before doing so.

Finance and Budget Committee:

Mr. Hull provided a written report from the May 7, 2024 meeting of the Audit and Finance Committee which is attached. The committee reviewed revenue and expense reports as well as vouchers for the period. Bills were reported in the amount of \$497175.02. There were discussions on several bills which included \$13,775 for the continuing water testing due to the Legionella situation; \$16,211 for our Workers Compensation Insurance; \$99,053.31 for State Health Insurance obligations and the cost of our new infection control doctor (\$1,000 a month) which is required by the Department of Health. There are two months left in the current budget and we are on course with no anticipated large expense. The next committee meeting will be held at 8:00 AM on May 7, 2024 at the Home.

Insurance:

Mr. Strube was not present. Mr. Veras reported that the committee may interview other insurance agencies and will have a report next month.

Legislative Committee:

Mr. Lugossy reported on a national bill, H.R. 82 which involves the social security fairness act. The bill effects the approximate 80,000 members of NJ's Police and Fire Retirement system by allowing adjustments to their benefits in their retirement years.

By-laws:

Mr. Apgar reported that he had spoken with Secretary Hull in review of the By-Laws about item #5 of the "Special By-Laws" provisions with regards to the Chairman of the Board not being denied a right to vote. The Chairman is permitted to vote, but must vote last. Committee will review. (Page 7L-1 of By-laws)

Museum:

Mr. Hull reported he conducted some work in the museum to clean up a few items as a result of the recent earthquakes in New Jersey. The bookcase in the museum office collapsed and numerous die cast model firetrucks in the museum glass cases rolled off of the shelving and plummeted to the bottom of the cases. They were restored to their locations and it appears that only one appeared damaged. The work will continue to fix up the cases. Patches were also placed on each county patch boards.

Additionally, Mr. Hull advised that Mr. Dutch is working with the donor of the wooden models and making progress on removing the shelves from her residence to bring them to the Home.

Public Relations:

Mr. Wilson reported that all items approved by the Public Relations Committee have been ordered and will be here for Wildwood.

Mr. Gigilio reported further that the notepads for the Managers and Employees have arrived. There are 1000. Managers can pick up some after meetings. They will also be given out to people who tour the Home.

Ethics and Code of Conduct:

Mr. Sutphen advised no report.

Pension:

Mr. Signorello reported progress.

Inventory:

Mr. Wilson reported everything was status quo.

Golf Committee:

Mr. Signorello reported that we currently have 72 golfers signed up and everything is going well. He thanked Mr. Veras for "steering" the event.

Liaison to the State Association:

Mr. Hull advised he had emailed everyone a copy of the report from the State Association's May 4, 2024 meeting which he attended with Mr. Miller, Mr. Keyser and Mr. Cunningham. Mr. Hull read from the report and advised if anything was incorrect President Ordway could elaborate. The State is freezing the Spousal Care and Assisted Living portions of their Health Care Reimbursement programs to new applicants on June 1st.

Mr. Hull added that he had spoken with Mr. Otterbein who is the Chairman of the Firemen Home Committee for the State Association. Mr. Otterbein advised that the dates listed for the IRS 990 filings were incorrect, along with a few grammar error. Those errors in the report will be corrected. As well as the wording with regards to how much money some local associations may have in the future. The sentence was changed from "will have", to "may have". A copy of the corrected reported is attached.

Inspections:

Mr. Mitch reported that he conducted the inspection with Mr. Denny on May 8th. A few minor items were reported to the Superintendent and they have since been taken care of. Overall they found the building and grounds to be in overall excellent condition. A written copy of Mr. Mitch's report is attached.

Long Term Planning:

Mr. Sutphen reported he will have a more in depth report once he gets information compiled. They are working with Maintenance Director Hodierne with getting information on our equipment (generator, roof, etc.) that the actuary requested. Unfortunately, the ongoing water testing has taken up much of his time. Once everything is together the actuary will provide a report.

State Firemen's Association:

President Ordway reported that Mr. Hull covered everything. President Ordway clarified the temporary freezing of the Spousal and Assisted Living portions of the State Association's Home Health Care programs. (**a letter from Field Examiner Jennie Hollingsworth was sent to all locals in regards to this)

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

Mr. Sutphen asked that since we now have a waiting list, we should consider forming a committee to look into a possible addition to the Home. This way when the actuary report comes back we can be ready with planning.

Mr. Wilson responded that the Public Relations Committee must be doing a great job with the influx of applications recently. He then inquired of Mr. Veras if we increased our bed count would we need to change our license.

Mr. Veras responded that we would need to apply for an increase just like we had with the addition of the memory care unit.

Mr. Keyser inquired as to the location of a possible addition.

Vice-Chairmen Apgar advised he will discuss this (possible addition) with Chairman Washer when he returns.

Mr. Heflich advised that he has been in contact with the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) who have a group of sorority sisters that wish to send birthday cards to our guest on their birthdays. Mr. Veras will provide a birthday list to Mr. Heflich.

Mr. Freeman then brought up that it is Nurse's Appreciation Week and asked if we are doing anything. Mr. Veras responded that the Manager's do, indirectly, as nothing is free. Mr. Veras also noted the banner on the front of the building from the Board recognizing the nursing staff. Mr. Veras advised he had more for good and welfare on this.

Payment of Bills:

Mr. Hull reported the total bills in the amount of \$479,175.02. Upon motion, a roll call vote was taken and the bills payment was approved.

Motions and Resolutions:

None.

Public Participation:

Mr. Otterbein, Essex County Executive Committeeman and Chair of the State Association's Firemen's Home Committee, asked two questions about our budget that he noted on our revenue and expense report.

The first, was the housekeeping line was over budget by approximately \$100,000.

Mr. Veras advised that the numbers were prior to the new contract and it will catch up in the next cycle. Mr. Veras went on to report that the Home researched bringing Housekeeping back in house and it was found to not be cost effective.

Mr. Otterbein also had a question with regards to the Buildings and Grounds line. Mr. Veras explained that we transfer funds that are for projects that carry beyond a budget year to the property fund account as "encumbered funds". (****Secretary's Note:** the transferring of encumbered funds to the property fund account was discussed during budget preparation and reported on at the January 2024 meeting. Previously, the encumbered funds would reflect, incorrectly, as reserves).

Executive Session:

None had.

Good and Welfare:

Mr. Veras commented that for Nurse's Appreciation Week there are many things planned for the staff with events each day that the guests also enjoy. Friday there is a Luau with a dunk tank. There will be food trucks during the week. Mr. Veras thanked Monica and Sharon for the work they did to plan the events.

Additionally, family members of guests have sent in lunch every day this week. It is very heartwarming what the families have done for the staff.

Mr. Veras also reported that one of our nurses was the recipient of a Daisy Award, which is a National Award recognition program to celebrate and recognize nurses by collecting nominations from patients, families, and co-workers. Mr. Veras added that it is nice to hear from the "outside" how great our facility is. Our doctors, x-ray provider, our dentist, all go to other facilities and they have nothing but positive things to say about our Home. "It is easy to say your the best, but it is really nice to hear it from the outside."

Mr. Apgar then asked President Ordway if he would go into the dunk tank. Mr. Ordway responded "I'll get back to you".

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 0935 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Roger Hull', with a stylized, flowing script.

Roger Hull
Secretary