

New Jersey Firemen's Home Full Board Meeting



October 11, 2025

Date: Saturday, October 11, 2025
Location: New Jersey Firemen's Home
Called to Order: 9:15 AM
Presiding: Chair (Timothy Apgar)
Recorder: Secretary (Amy DeVirgilio)

Roll Call:

Managers present 20; Superintendent John Veras; Legal Counsel Mr. Bell.

Approval of Prior Minutes:

- **September 11, 2025 Minutes** — approved

Communications:

- Chair and Secretary reported **no new written communications** received.

Chair's Remarks:

- Thanks to managers, staff, and guests; commitment to teamwork and forward progress.
- Recognition of Executive Committee attendees.

Proclamations & Recognitions:

- **Manager Gilbert "Gil" Lagosi (Mercer County)** — Proclamation honoring **26 years** of service (Legislative Committee Chair; Finance and Museum Committees). Best wishes on retirement.
 - Remarks by Mr. Lagosi (turns 90 on March 11; gratitude for the Home).
- **Manager Peter Jeffer (Bergen County)** — Proclamation honoring distinguished service (Bylaws and Applications Committees; other assignments). Best wishes on retirement.
 - Remarks by Mr. Jeffer (gratitude; "privilege to serve").

Officers' Reports:

Secretary: No report.

Treasurer: Month 4 of current budget year; finances in good shape.

Superintendent:

Security software updated; some PINs reset. Managers may opt to restore PIN instead of fob—contact Superintendent.

- **Town of Boonton request** to use lower "Farm" parcel for a community garden (labor/fencing/insurance provided by town; gravel-only parking; access via existing gate).
 - **ACTION/VOTE:** Board authorized counsel and administration to draft an indemnified agreement (hold harmless; fencing; site plan approval; annual renewal; cultivation restrictions; town to provide water). Approved by all managers with one opposed by Mr. Hull.
- **Water testing:** Latest results show improvement (one site previously 0.5 ppm non-pneumophila legionella). State has approved reduced sampling sites, lowering costs. Continue monitoring.
- **Pavilion awning** installed (donation from Lacey Township Elks).
- **Pension notices:** Four managers have changes; see Superintendent after meeting for paperwork.
- **Department of Health survey:** 11 surveyors onsite Wed–Tue (non-CMS facility sweep). Minor issues discussed; final determinations issued by Trenton within 10 business days of exit.

Legal Counsel (Mr. Bell):

- Completed a first pass of Bylaws. Noted multiple areas for modernization (last update 2011). Will coordinate with Bylaws Committee on revisions and process.

Committee Reports:**Buildings & Grounds (Keyser):**

- Seasonal grounds transition complete (summer planters removed; fall setup in place).
- Chiller replacement: awaiting spec book to ensure “drop-in” compatibility; aim to avoid re-plumbing.

Applications (Freeman): **Report attached**

- Census (as of 9/30/25): Total 69 residents (breakdown read into record). Four final alarms since prior meeting.
- Pipeline: 3 admissions scheduled; ~15 applications in progress.
- Process updates:
 - Applicants contacted get 2-week response window; non-responses move to bottom of list.
 - Med/psych evals expire after 6 months; renewals requested as needed.
 - Infection control constraints limit rooming options; some applicants must await appropriate placement.

Finance & Budget (Keyser): **Report attached**

- **Preliminary FY26–27 budget** reviewed; discussion of **2–5% merit raises**
- Possible special meeting late October; budget vote targeted for Nov 8, 2025.
- Monthly disbursements \$494,943.30.

Insurance (Strube):

- State Health Benefits Plan (projected +37% health / +63% Rx).
- Joining Foundations HIF effective Jan 1, projected ~+14% for health.
- Plan to market in 2027 based on favorable utilization (~57%).

Legislative (Miller): **Report attached**

- 26 bills currently on Governor’s desk; A-5792 signed 8/21/2025

Museum (Hull):

- Progress. Report

Public Relations (Wilson): Positive feedback on Wildwood presence; thanks to logistics team.

Ethics & Code of Conduct (Sutphen):

- No report.

Pension (Apgar):

- No report; actuary transition at **BPS** (Mr. Kline retired; **Mary Reinhart** succeeding).

Inventory (Wilson):

- Nothing new to report.

Liaison to State Association (Hull):

- Convention concluded, differ to report from President Orway.

Inspection (Miller/Dunn):

- No deficiencies observed in today’s inspection.

Long-Term Planning (Sutphen):

- **KDA** to present at **November** meeting (same materials previously circulated)

Unfinished Business:

- None.

New Business:

- Parish soccer field request: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Boonton requested field use; referred to existing Boonton BOE contract holder to coordinate.
- Capital lift device: B&G supportive; will advance as a capital item with state-contract pricing if eligible.
- Manager Miller brought up compensation increase. Motion to increase county-based compensation by \$250/quarter per manager. Approved by all managers with one opposed by Mr. Hull.
- **Budget packets** to be sent **UPS** this week.

Payment of Bills:

- \$494,943.30 — Motion to approve; roll call approved.

Motions & Resolutions:

- None beyond items noted above.

Public Participation:

- Resident Sam Henderson expressed heartfelt appreciation for care and staff.
- Chief Charles Lynn, Jr. (Deputy & Battalion Fire Chiefs Association President) urged timely progress on facility expansion; offered organizational support; emphasized moral duty and partnership with the State if needed.
 - Board acknowledged the input; reiterated November KDA presentation, need for hard costs, and funding pathway work.

Good & Welfare:

- Manager Don Windsor (1972–1996) memorialized, recent funeral and interment at the Home's cemetery. Staff commended for exemplary care and integrity. Anticipated estate gift to the Home noted (details pending settlement).
- Seasonal resident events (pumpkins/pies) acknowledged.

Executive Session:

- None.

Adjournment:

- Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy DeVirgilio
Secretary