

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS,  
TOWNSHIP OF UPPER; DISTRICT #3**

**December 1, 2025**

A meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Township of Upper, District #3 was held on December 1, 2025, at 5:15 p.m. at the Marmora Volunteer Fire Company on Old Tuckahoe Road in Marmora, NJ. Commissioners **Paul Hoster, Kurt Austin, Edwin Kooker, and Jeff Pierson, Jr.** were present. **Sean Whelan** was unable to attend. Also present were **Tonya DeVita** representative for **Cheryl Sayers, CPA**, Accountant and Recording Secretary to the Board along with **Jon Batastini, Esq.** Counsel to the Board, **Jay Newman**, Chief of the Marmora Volunteer Fire Company, and **Mark Newman**, and Deputy Chief of the Marmora Volunteer Fire Company.

The meeting was opened by **Jon Batastini** who read the appropriate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey.

As the first order of regular business, the Board reviewed and approved the minutes of the prior meeting, held October 20, 2025.

**Ms. DeVita** presented a financial report, including a list of checks to be approved, signed, and distributed. The checks were approved as presented. **Ms. DeVita** reviewed the 2025 year-to-date expenses relative to the budget. The \$27,000 line item for air packs was discussed as the board thought the grant and match would come out of this category. **Ms. DeVita** researched and found the grant and match were billed in late 2024 and therefore, expensed in the 2024 Budget in Equipment-Misc.

The meeting then turned toward the 2026 approved budget. **Ms. DeVita** introduced the 2026 Budget per the workshop discussion held in October. The Board discussed the increase in taxation of 2% along with adding the new ratables. The Board will also utilize its Reserve for Future Capital to cover the downpayment of the new truck. There were other smaller increases in line items due to inflation. The largest increase was in Misc Loose Equipment which will go towards fitting the new truck. The Board discussed reducing the Building Lease in 2027 due to the payoff of the building and increase in debt service from apparatus. **Jeff Pierson** made a motion to approve the introduced 2026 Budget as presented. **Kurt Austin** seconded the motion with all in favor. The approved budget will be submitted to the appropriate state agency.

The Board reviewed the Building Lease and Fire Fighting Agreement and unanimously approved a motion to contract with the Marmora Volunteer Fire Company. The agreements were then given to the Chief to present to the Marmora Volunteer Fire Company.

The Board made a motion to pass Resolution 25-13 without exception to allow for a Temporary Budget to provide for the period between the beginning of the fiscal year, January 1, 2026 and the adoption of the budget by the legal voters of the fire district, which election is scheduled for February 21, 2026.

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**December 1, 2025  
(continued)**

**Ms. DeVita** presented proposals for professional services. The first, for accounting services for the 2026 calendar year by **Cheryl Sayers CPA PC** and the second, a retainer agreement with **Loveland Garrett & Batastini** for legal services for 2026. The Board reviewed the proposals and unanimously approved a motion to retain the accounting services of Cheryl Sayers CPA PC along with the legal service of Jon Batastini for the 2026 calendar year.

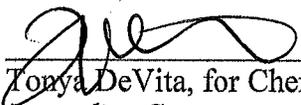
**Mr. Batastini** led a discussion on another apparatus purchase that will need to go onto the 2026 Ballot in the amount of \$3 million. He spoke about bonding versus a traditional lease option. He mentioned there are companies that recruit people to buy bonds for a fee of about \$10,000. This fee includes much of the work, leaving the Board to do very little in the process. Additional pros of bonding are the extended payback period (up to 20 years) at a lower interest rate. Traditional financing has a payback period of 10 years. The Board unanimously agreed to place the apparatus on the 2026 Ballot leaving both bonding and traditional finance options available.

**Mr. Newman** presented the chief's report where he touched on adding hydrants (4) to Shaw's Development which should come online in 2027. The "Apparatus Committee" will be making a visit on December 18<sup>th</sup> to the Sutphen Conference and again later in 2026 for the "acceptance visit" when the truck is ready.

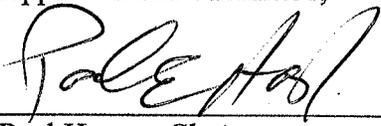
**Mr. Newman** reported that the Burn Building is now operational. The Fire Company has retained Norm Briggs, Esquire, to review a contract to use the building with Ocean City along with insurance issues, etc. The Fire Company Fund Drive is underway, and the district home and business owners have responded positively. The Chief's "End of Year" report will be coming early 2026.

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Tonya DeVita, for Cheryl Sayers, CPA PC  
Recording Secretary

Approved and Submitted,

  
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Paul Hoster, Chairperson