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Date: December 5, 2018

To: Business Administrator, Kim Gonzales; Mayor, Rick O'Neil; Borough Council; Public Meeting

From: Chief Michael C. Armstrong

RE: Highlands Fire Department Year End Report

All,

On a monthly basis, a report is sent to the Borough Administrator, Mayor and Town Council on the activities that take place within the Fire Department. We provide this insight into the organization as we feel it is the best way to communicate the services provided by our department while keeping expectations aligned. We feel that our Fire Department adds a significant value to the wonderful people within this Borough and providing a view into our activity can help everyone understand this value.

The major points emphasized within the reports are Fire Calls, General Activity, Events, and pertinent Upcoming Activities. This report will detail a summary of this information from January 1<sup>st</sup> until November 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Fire Calls:**

For the reporting period noted we have received and responded to 190 calls. Our Calls ranged from fire alarms, water flow alarms, motor vehicle accidents, mutual aid requests, water rescues, first aid assists, CO alarms, downed wires, and structure fires. Pertinent information to these events is shown here.

**In January** we had a structure fire within the borough located on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and although the department was unable to salvage the structure we were able to mitigate any further damage to any surrounding resident structures. The resident within the house at the time self-extracted herself and only sustained minor burns.

**In February** we had a structure fire located on Navesink Avenue with a unique scenario in that the house involved was in the middle of Highland Avenue and Navesink Ave (HWY36), which was between two other occupied houses. The call was made to dispatch at about 8:11 PM on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Chief, two engines, aerial, rescue truck, Fire Police, First Aid, and HPD responded. On arrival Chief found flames rising above the back of the house and through the roof. Lines were stretched from the aerial and engine with mutual aid assisting with initial attack and overhaul. Mutual aid calls went out and fire units responded from Atlantic Highlands, Middletown, and Sea Bright. First Aid units from Atlantic Highlands and Rumson responded.

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Rumson and Middletown Company Brevent Park responded and stood by our firehouse for coverage within the Borough. Highway 36 was closed at Linden Avenue due to units staged on the highway and a supply line stretching across the 4 lanes of traffic.

The Fire was knocked down and units began to clear around 10:30 PM. Fire Police stayed on scene until 11:00 PM directing traffic. NJDOT and State Police Incident Management Unit assisted in this lane closure and subsequent traffic detour. The Chief cleared around 11:22 PM following the investigation of the fire cause by the Monmouth County Fire Marshal's Office. One resident was transported to the hospital for treatment of smoke inhalation. No other major injuries were reported nor were there any damage to adjacent structures.

**In June** we responded to a Motor Vehicle Accident which occurred within Middletown Township's jurisdiction, however, HPD was on scene first and dispatched our FD due to the severity of the accident. We were first on scene and used the extrication equipment to remove one victim and unfortunately there was one fatality.

There was also a structure fire at Henry Hudson Regional High School located within the band room involving an electric heater. The fire was contained to the one room and minimal damage occurred.

**In August** we responded to a call that could affect many households in Highlands that involved an elevated generator located on a platform attached to the side of a newly raised house. The generator had never been test ran during windy conditions before and when a recent storm hit that the town lost power the unit automatically started and ran for a lengthy period of time whereby the exhaust was being funneled into the attic via the soffit, this type of construction should be verified in the field to protect the homeowner and its occupants.

**In November** we responded to an electrical fire on a post-Sandy house which has been completely remodeled and lifted. It turns out that a Wet Rated GFI receptacle that also had a cover on it faulted due to water intrusion into the back of the box housing the receptacle. The receptacle was located on the outside of the house just left of the front door. The breaker faulted as it should have, however not before severely damaging the receptacle and siding that the box was attached to. Of note is that this receptacle was tied into a circuit which was a part of an instant hot water heater power feed. The code advises in this scenario that utilities within the home have dedicated power feeds and this house was not wired as such.

### **Notable General Activity:**

Details listed below are milestones within our general day to day activities throughout the time period of reference.

- January 14<sup>th</sup> the Department picked up a donated used Engine from Marlboro Fire District. This new engine will be replacing an aged engine known as 17-75.
- January 26<sup>th</sup> Department Chief Michael Armstrong met with PEOSH Enforcement Officer Stuart Cobb for a follow-up visit from the original inspection which took place of the entire Department on November 20, 2017. At the initial visit there were 8 items noted being deficient, two (2) items which were trip or head hazards, one (1) item which pertained to an electric panel not being clear for use, one (1) item regarding the non-compliant engine known as 17-75 being in service and four (4) items

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pertaining to administrative programs which were not in writing where the department was fulfilling the needs of the requirements. During the follow-up inspection, the inspector was shown that all deficiencies were abated except for the old engine 17-75 being in service. The inspector advised that due to us receiving the engine from Marlboro and it meeting the requirements this item would be considered abated and the file would be closed with no fines to issue.

- February 2<sup>nd</sup> the department submitted a grant application to FEMA for the 2017 AFG. Details of the grant are below. Results of winning this grant will not be posted until 2018.

SCBA equipping all first alarm structure fire apparatus (2 pumpers, 1 quint, 1 rescue) with current NFPA standard SCBA by purchasing 34 SCBA meeting the NFPA 1981 2013 edition standard will include heads-up air pressure displays, redundant alarms, connections for RIT intervention rescue air, and integrated automatic PASS units with lightweight composite cylinders operating at 4500 psi and 34 spare air cylinders. Our current SCBA units are over 20 years old and were retrofitted 10 years ago in order to save on capital costs. The cost for this project is \$327,284.

Pak-Tracker Locator for 34 SCBA will have the transmitters integrated into the units. One of the most dreaded and feared occurrences in firefighting is a member of the team goes missing or becomes trapped in a burning structure. Purchasing two receivers and utilizing this added technology will assure the firefighters and incident commander of a substantially higher level of safety and overall accountability of all firefighters. The cost for this project is \$5,034

SCBA RIT packs compatible with the new SCBA for use at all structure fires and other incidents involving IDLH atmospheres. Contains lightweight 4500psi 60-minute air cylinder, hose connections, quick attach couplings, SCBA to trans-fill, and unit low on air. Equipment will complement two in two out by equipping the standby RIT team with an emergency air source and regulator available to aid any firefighter injured or trapped and experiencing air supply distress. This RIT pack will be carried on the first due pumper and ladder to ensure availability responding to automatic and mutual aid assignments. The cost for this project is \$8,532

Firefighter personal escape system with a Class II seat harness that is certified to meet NFPA 1983 Standard on Fire Service Life Safety Rope and Equipment, 2006 Edition. The bailout systems will be used to serve the needs of our growing community, which is rapidly changing after the major impacts felt by Hurricane Sandy. Buildings located in our community contain roughly 65% of the downtown area base flood elevation is at 12 to 15 feet. The overall height of the average two and three story homes can reach as high as 45 feet. This presents many challenges to firefighters and fire operations. The cost for this project is \$25,920

Total Grant Request submitted: \$367,310.

- March 9<sup>th</sup> the department submitted for a New Jersey American Water Grant to purchase reflective safety stickers for the rear of our apparatus providing additional visibility to the apparatus during evening hours. The grant was for \$1,000. Unfortunately, on May 1<sup>st</sup>, we were advised that we had not been awarded the grant and to try again next year.
- June 25<sup>th</sup> the department attended a webinar for a Grant Funding Project to help aid in capital projects for the ongoing service of equipment.

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- August 19<sup>th</sup> we placed the used Engine from Marlboro Fire District known to us as 17-76 into service while removing from service the out of compliance engine 17-75. Work from the prior months by our members to install equipment had resulted in an engine well adapted for the needs of the borough.
- September 20<sup>th</sup> the department attended the Highlands Elementary School Back to School Night in an effort to provide more visibility to the parents and children that we are a resource for volunteering.
- November 13<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the Borough of Highlands, the Highlands Fire Department entered into an agreement with the United States Coast Guard Vessels Sitkinak and Shrike. The agreement outlines HFD providing fire protection services at no cost to the USCG whereby this agreement being in place could provide HFD with potential grant opportunities in maintaining and or upgrading apparatus or equipment in the future.

### **All Activity:**

- January 1<sup>st</sup> the Department attended the Re-Org Meeting to swear in the new town officials and Chief of the Department whereby the doors were then opened to the public for welcoming in a new year.
- January 17<sup>th</sup> the Department Chief's attended the monthly Bayshore Active Chief Association Meeting which involves the entire Bayshore Area.
- January 18<sup>th</sup> the Department Officer's attended the Monmouth County Chief's Seminar to refresh all on where the County Academy and Fire Marshal's Office will focus attention for the year.
- Various dates throughout the month members attended Annual Refresher courses required for Hazcom, Blood Born Pathogen, and Right To Know review.
- January 24<sup>th</sup> the Department helped Mrs. Brookes in a Rabies Clinic for the Borough which involved opening the doors to the building for vaccinations.
- February 6<sup>th</sup> Department members trained on Radio Standard Operating Guidelines, Mutual Aid Response Plans, Fire Prevention Plan and Emergency Action Plan. This was then followed by working on the new engine 17-76 to ready it for service.
- February 17<sup>th</sup> Department Chief attended the Atlantic Highlands Fire Department Annual Chief Dinner.
- February 20<sup>th</sup> Department members were re-qualified on our SCBA's with a FIT Test to meet the annual requirement.
- February 21<sup>st</sup> Department members attended two meetings:
  - MidMonmouth Mutual Aid Association
  - Bayshore Chief's Association.
- February 27<sup>th</sup> Department Chief's met with HPD to discuss upcoming events within the borough and coordinate required resources. Members also cleaned equipment from the recent structure fire along with readying equipment for the impending nor'easter due to hit over the following weekend.
- March 6<sup>th</sup> Department members attended training at Middletown Fire Academy for Forcible Entry.
- March 10<sup>th</sup>:
  - HFD Fire Police Assisted PD for the Annual Guinness Run.
  - HFD helped the Elementary School PTO with a Paint and Sip Event.
  - HFD attended the annual Navesink Fire Co.
- March 18<sup>th</sup> Department members assembled a work detail on the new Engine 17-76 to ready it for graphics and equipment.
- March 20<sup>th</sup> Department members cleaned house and ran all equipment.

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- March 24<sup>th</sup> Department members attended the Annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade.
- March 27<sup>th</sup> Department members performed annual gear checks and worked on new Engine 17-76.
- March 28<sup>th</sup> Department members attended a Downed Fire Fighter CPR training drill with the First Aid.
- March 30<sup>th</sup> Department members attended the Annual Chief Dinner honoring Ex-Chief John McKay.
- April 3<sup>rd</sup> The Department held a critique training event with our mutual aid fire companies on the Highland Ave Structure Fire.
- April 7<sup>th</sup> members attended an American Lung Association Event whereby the members wearing full gear raced to the top of a 14 story building in Newark, NJ.
- April 14<sup>th</sup> The Department held it's annual Cornhole Tournament Fundraiser.
- April 16<sup>th</sup> members attended a training event with the Highlands First Aid to review there in service Polaris.
- April 17<sup>th</sup> members attended the annual FIT Test Training and cleaned equipment.
- April 21<sup>st</sup> members attended a Town-wide Earth Day Event at Veterans Park.
- April 24<sup>th</sup> members worked on the new truck 17-76.
- May 1, HFD and AHFD performed a joint drill at the Middletown Fire Academy Smoke House. The drill was well attended by both fire departments.
- May 5, The Chief attended a Marine Task Force Meeting organized by the United States Coast Guard and all surrounding mutual aid fire departments.
- May 15, members worked on compartment lighting for new truck 17-76 along with readying Marine 17 with its equipment.
- May 22, members verified all equipment to be operating properly along with cleaning all trucks to ready them for parade details.
- May 26, members attended annual Highlands Memorial Day Parade.
- May 27, members called a drill to finish Marine 17 preparations. The boat was checked out and placed into service for the summer season.
- May 28, members attended annual Atlantic Highlands Memorial Day Parade.
- May 29, members tested fire pump and light operation of Marine 17 along with running all Highwater rescue vehicles.
- June 5, exercised Marine Equipment and worked on certifying additional members on the equipment.
- June 12, submitted PEOSHA survey for reporting the year 2017.
- June 19, members worked on new truck 17-76 installing various equipment preparing it for service.
- June 25, attended a webinar for a Grant Funding Project potentially available to the FD.
- June 26, members worked on new truck 17-76 installing hard suction mounts.
- July 3, Boat Operations Drill.
- July 6, provided Stand by coverage for Atlantic Highlands during the fireworks.
- July 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> attended Highlands Concert Series while running a 50/50.
- July 17, verified operation of equipment on apparatus while waxing Truck 17-86.
- July 31, preparation for Clamfest.
- August 2-5, Clamfest.
- August 7<sup>th</sup>, National Night Out, Bon Fire.
- August 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Highlands Concert Series.
- August 11<sup>th</sup>, worked on new truck 17-76.
- August 20<sup>th</sup>, Members attended the NJ State Firemen's Association Annual Caucus Meeting.
- September 4, 17-76 Pump Testing and Drafting Drill

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- September 11, 17-85 Rescue Truck Hurst Equipment Servicing.
- September 13-16, NJ State Firemen's Convention.
- September 18, Annual waxing of all Apparatus.
- September 25, Further work on Engine 17-76
- September 29, Highlands Bon Fire.
- October 7, attended Monmouth County Fallen Firefighter and Medal Day
- October 16, Annual CPR Training
- October 17, Annual Blue Mass
- October 20, Highlands Zombie Parade
- October 23, Worked on Engine 76, changed batteries in SCBA Packs.
- October 28, Highlands Halloween Parade
- October 30, Worked on Engine 76, verified equipment is operational and fueled.
- November 6, Facilitated voting for the Borough at the firehouse.
- November 11, Hosted Thank You Lunch for Marlboro Township providing us with the donated Fire Truck
- November 12, Fire Police Assisted Eatontown PD with traffic control at their Veteran's Day Parade.
- November 15, HFD hosted Mid-Monmouth Fire Police Association Monthly Meeting.
- November 16, HFD hosted Police Explorers Spaghetti Dinner
- November 20, in conjunction with AHFD, AHFA, and HFA we held a Bus Extrication Drill.
- November 21, HFD hosted Bayshore Chiefs Meeting
- November 27, Performed a BiAnnual Pre-Plan walk down of the USCG Vessels Shrike and Sitkinak per MOA with Borough and HFD.
- November 30, Assisted with Annual Borough Tree Lighting
- December 4, JCP&L Restoration Training.

### **Upcoming Activities:**

- December 9, in conjunction with Knights of Columbus, Bayman's Association and HFD a Free Pancake Breakfast will be held at OLPH Gym from 9AM-12AM.
- December 16, Toys for Tots being held at the firehouse from 1 PM until all the kids of this borough are served.

I hope that this report provides you with value, should you have any questions on this report please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectively Submitted,



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Chief

Highlands Fire Department

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