



Lakewood Fire District No. 1

316 River Avenue
Lakewood, NJ 08701

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Subject: Hiring of Fire Chief

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HIRING OF FIRE CHIEF

The Board of Fire Commissioners, at its regular monthly meeting held last evening, announced the promotion of Fire Captain Jonathan Yahr to the position of Fire Chief of the Lakewood Fire Department. The promotion was made upon the recommendation of the Board's Personnel Committee, comprised of Chairman David Mizrahi and Commissioner Harrison Pfeffer, after an exhaustive review and evaluation of the District's personnel needs. When Captain Yahr assumes the Fire Chief position on November 1, 2020, he will have the distinction of being the Fire Department's first career Fire Chief. He will replace the outgoing Chief, Michael D'Elia, Jr., who held the position of Assistant Chief and then Fire Chief for the past eight (8) years, serving the community and guiding the Department with pride and professionalism.

"Over the past several years, the Department's career personnel has increased to more effectively service the exponential increase of residential and commercial properties within the Township. The Township's rapid growth has placed demands on the delivery of fire protection and suppression services and the need for fire prevention and fire education programs. The Board has accomplished meeting those needs through exercising sound, short and long-term fiscal control and budgetary restraint. The process of choosing Captain Yahr was thorough and I am confident that he had the right combination of experience and expertise to effectively lead the Lakewood Fire Department into the future" remarked David Mizrahi, Chairperson of the Board and Personnel Committee.

Captain Yahr was born and raised in Lakewood and graduated from Lakewood High School in 1993. He joined the Lakewood fire service in August of that year as a volunteer with the Lakewood Fire Department serving as a member of Junior Hose Company No. 3 and Lakewood Hook & Ladder No. 1, and continued to serve as a volunteer firefighter, Lieutenant and Captain until 2013. Professionally, he was a firefighter with the US Navy stationed at Lakehurst Naval Air Warfare Center and a part and full time Lakewood Fire Department firefighter since 2002. In 2012, he was promoted to first level supervisor (Captain) and in 2017 promoted to second level supervisor (Captain) where he has worked ever since.

When Captain Yahr assumes the position of Fire Chief on November 1, 2020, he will command a career staff of twenty-one (21) firefighters and officers and a volunteer firefighting force of seventy (70) firefighters and fire-police. Outgoing Chief D'Elia commented that he has known Captain Yahr for many years and that the "Lakewood Fire Department is in capable hands with the promotion of Captain Yahr. He is a consummate professional with the experience and knowledge of firefighting the Department needs at this time." When notified of his appointment, Captain Yahr stated "I am both humbled and excited to be chosen to lead this excellent Fire Department. The Lakewood Fire Department has provided me with the training and experience and I hope to build on the progress that has been made by those that came before me."

The Lakewood Board of Fire Commissioners continue to address the changing needs of the community and its expanding population and development. They work tirelessly to address fire service needs so as to efficiently and effectively maximize fire protection within the fiscal constraints authorized by the taxpayers. This appointment is a reflection of the Board's commitment.

The recruitment of volunteer firefighters and fire-police remains ongoing and the Fire District continues to seek individuals who have a desire to serve the Lakewood Community in one of these capacities. Individuals interested in becoming volunteer firefighters or fire-police are encouraged to visit the Fire District Website at lakewoodfd.org and submit the requested information expressing their interest through the "Join the Lakewood Fire Department" link.