



# VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Date: January 24, 2024**

**Present:**

Commissioner Maria Sexton  
Commissioner Sue Messina  
Commissioner Stephen Donnelly  
Commissioner Robert Greene, Jr  
Commissioner Glenn Miller - ABSENT

**Other Present:**

Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary  
Paige Willes, Director of Purchasing  
John Paffie, District Chief  
Daniel Kirchheimer, Dept President  
2 from the Public

**Governance Committee:**

Chairman Thomas McCartney  
Member Ronald Birdsall

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairwoman M. Sexton.

Chairwoman M. Sexton led the Pledge to the Flag to those present.

Correction to January 10, 2024 Organization Meeting. Resolution 3F – 2024 that amount per hour is \$350.00 and not \$325.00 per the sign retainer from 2023. The letter from the practice manager stated the wrong price and apologized for the error.

Motion by Commissioner S. Messina, seconded by Commissioner R. Greene Jr. to Approval of Minutes of the Organization Meeting of January 10, 2024. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried.

**Correspondence:**

- Received and file Warrant 2024-03P and 2024-03F
- Fire Advisory Board Meeting Minutes for December 4, 2023

**Bid Openings**

None

**Treasurer's Report:**

Presented Vouchers to be paid on January 26, 2024

Motion by Commissioner S. Messina, seconded by Commissioner S. Donnelly to approve Vouchers for payment. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried.

Monthly Treasurer's Report: No report was submitted at this time.

**Management, Oversight & Policy**

**Resolution 12F-2024:** Motion by Commissioner S. Messina, seconded by Commissioner R. Greene Jr. to approve Policy 103.00 Audit of Claims. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried.

**Resolution 13F-2024: Approving the 2023 LOSAP Membership Points listing. Review attached Points Listing.**

*In the matter of approving the 2023 certified points*

WHEREAS, the Fire District is the sponsor of a Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) on behalf of the Vestal Fire Department in accordance with Article 11-A of the New York State General Municipal Law (GML);

WHEREAS, as required by GML § 219-a(2)(c), the Vestal Fire Department has submitted the attached list, certified under oath, of active members of the Fire Department, indicating those volunteers who earned at least fifty (50) points during 2023 to qualify for service credit;

WHEREAS, the certification made by the Fire Department includes a statement that the points recorded on the attached list have been tabulated in accordance with the Point System adopted by the Fire District to be in effect during calendar year 2023, and to the best of the knowledge of the Fire Department, is a true and accurate reflection of the activities performed by the active members;

WHEREAS, GML § 219-a(2)(d) requires the Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) to review and approve the attached list, then return it to the Fire Department to be posted for thirty (30) days; and

WHEREAS, the Board has completed its review of the attached list; NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Board of Fire Commissioners approves the attached list of volunteer firefighters of the Vestal Fire Department and the points earned by these firefighters during calendar year 2023; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this adopted resolution and the attached list shall be returned to the Fire Department for posting for a minimum of thirty (30) days.

Commissioner S. Donnelly raised the motion to approve, Commissioner R. Greene Jr. seconded the motion, and upon roll call the vote of the Board was as follows:

Commissioner Maria Sexton	Aye
Commissioner Suzanne Messina	Aye
Commissioner Stephen Donnelly	Aye
Commissioner Robert Greene Jr.	Aye
Commissioner Glenn Miller	Absent

The resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

**Resolution 14F-2024: Motion to approve** the authorization for Assistant Fire Chief Kahl Miller and Firefighter Dustin McCartney to travel via Chief’s car (32-3) to Oceanside, NY (Nassau Co.) for the Installation Dinner and Ceremony for the District Chief of Oceanside Fire Department Michael Gress on Saturday 2/3/2024. There is a long stand camaraderie between the two departments since the Vestal Fire Department response to and support of the Oceanside community during Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

Travel will begin on Thursday morning 2/1/24 and return on 2/4/24. There is no lodging or meal cost associated with this travel. While in Nassau Co., the members will be attending the NYS Association

of Fire Chief's Long Island trade show on Friday 2/2/24 and Saturday 2/3/24 morning. There will be no cost to attend this business activity.

Assistant Chief Miller and Firefighter McCartney will be representing Vestal Fire Dept. in "Class A" uniform during the Installation Dinner and Ceremony.

Motion by Commissioner S. Messina, seconded by Commissioner R. Greene Jr. authorizing Assistant Chief Miller and Firefighter McCartney to travel to Oceanside, NY (Nassau Co.) as outlined above. .

Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried

#### **Governance Committee Activity Report:**

- Governance Committee Chairman McCartney presented to the Fire Advisory Board Officers and Staff on January 15<sup>th</sup> the Governance Committee's Management Organization & Functional Responsibility Packet that goes over objectives and goals for 2024. This packet is attached to these minutes and a copy was presented to the Board of Fire Commissioners.

#### **Finance / Records Management:**

**Resolution 15F-2024:** Motion by Commissioner R. Greene Jr., seconded by Commissioner S. Donnelly, to approve to use and transfer of Fire District Assigned Unappropriated Fund Balance to F3410 4060 in the amount of \$8,276.00 for the purchase of a Tool Adapter and Tower Breathing adapters to be used with the new SCOTT SCBA bottles. This is an unanticipated purchase as it was unknow at the time that the new bottles would not work for our Rescue Air Bags, Pneumatic air tools and RDC's and our Tower Air Line for the operator of the bucket.

Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried

#### **Governance Committee Activity Report:**

- Timeline of steps and deliverables for the completion of the 2025 Budget Submittal was created for mid-January through September; budget owners identified and assigned 1/15/24 at Fire Advisory Board meeting. Benchmarks have been established for the committee development of the 2025 budget.
- Initial assessment started on the 5 Year/20 Year Plan; preliminary forecasting from buildings and grounds and vehicle fleet due 4/15/24 for capital projects planning.
- Initial discussion held with new Records Management Coordinator, related to initial priorities with training records. A great deal of improvement in record keeping will be accomplished.

#### **Training / Safety:**

**Resolution 16F-2024:** Motion by Commissioner S. Messina, seconded by Commissioner R. Greene Jr. to approve Fire Department Members to attend NYS OFPC Outreach Courses as listed below:

Captain Scott Orcutt **for Incident Safety Officer at Endwell Fire Department from January 13<sup>th</sup> to January 14<sup>th</sup>**

District Chief John Paffie, Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Paffie, Ed Hildebrand, Joe Gallagher, Joe Driggs, Rebecca Cetta, Alana McKeon, Josh Reid, Foreman Brian Terrell, Ean Conti, Jacob Malik. Captain Scott Orcutt, Brenden Wilcox, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Ivan Espada, Assistant Foreman Don Albrecht, Assistant Fire Chief Steve Langeland, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Shelby Frisbie, Assistant Foreman Alex Eaton, FF Bill Maguire, Captain Bill Fletcher, FF Anthony Mazzeo, Foreman Walter

Rochester, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Steve Gallo, FF Michael Woodward **for the Electric Bus Training at the Johnson City Bus Garage on January 22<sup>nd</sup>**

FF Tyeler Hartman, FF Dominik Gleeson, and FF Brenden Wilcox for **Blended Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations at Five Mile Point Fire Department from January 27<sup>th</sup> to March 9<sup>th</sup>**

Captain Scott Orcutt **for Fire Alarms for the Fire Service at Vestal Fire Department February 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

Assistant Foreman Don Albrecht and Assistant Fire Chief Chuck Paffie **for Fire Alarms for the Fire Service at Vestal Fire Department from February 27<sup>th</sup> to February 29<sup>th</sup>**

Assistant Foreman Don Albrecht **for The Rules Have Changed...The Firefighter's Guide to Lightweight Wood Construction at Vestal Fire Department from March 12<sup>th</sup> to March 21<sup>st</sup>.**

FF Grace Kelley, FF Joshua Fischbeck and FF Keelin Kistner for **Interior Firefighting Operations at Endwell Fire Department from March 19<sup>th</sup> to April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Captain Bill Fletcher for **Apparatus Operator: Pump Operator at Vestal Fire Dept from April 9 to May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Tyler VanDervort and Assistant Foreman Don Albrecht **for Fire Officer 2 at Broome Community College from June 10<sup>th</sup> to June 14<sup>th</sup>**

Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried

**Resolution 17F-2024:** Motion by Commissioner R. Greene Jr., seconded by Commissioner S. Messina to approve the Water Rescue Team and apparatus for water rescue training with Campville Fire Department in Campville on Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried

**Resolution 18F-2024:** Motion by Commissioner R. Greene Jr., seconded by Commissioner S. Messina to approve Assistant Fire Chief Chief Chuck Paffie and Captain Scott Orcutt to attend the National Foam (Fluorine Free Foam) - Flammable Liquid Fire Fighting School that will be held on March 19-21, 2024 at TEEEX Fire Field in College Station, Texas. To cost of the course is \$2,499 per person. Travel will be from March 18<sup>th</sup> to March 22<sup>nd</sup>. All associated cost and expenses with this trip will be presented at the next Fire Commissioner Meeting in February for approval. Expenses are budgeted and covered under budget line F3410 4034R.

\*Note: This course or a similar course, is not offered NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried

#### **Governance Committee Activity Report:**

- Appointment of a Director of Training, Deputy Director of Training and Training Site Coordinator was established. Initial discussion with new training staff regarding establishing a revised firefighter training strategy for compliance. A focus on improving the training site facility maintenance and administration of the Fred W. Singer Training Site was initiated.

- Appointment of new Safety Officer and Assistant Safety officer and instructions to improve the fire department safety program to include inspections, fireground safety program and compliance readiness.

### **Building & Grounds / Quartermaster / IT:**

An insurance inquiry has been filed with McNeil & Company for wind damage that was sustained to the Station 1 roof that needs immediate repair. Governance Committee Member Mike Petcosky is coordinating the inquiry with the insurance company and Town Engineer Vern Myers.

### **Governance Committee Activity Report:**

- Analysis of all facilities and grounds for maintenance and capital improvement considerations. Quotes for services and maintenance are being reviewed. Collaboration and planning with the Town Highway Department on Snow / ice mitigation and grounds maintenance are being addressed.
- Quartermaster established. Inventory and records update in progress.
- Information Technology – assessment of all IT resources is in progress. Estimates for IT services are being evaluated from vendors and the Town IT department.

### **Fleet Management:**

#### **Governance Committee Activity Report:**

- Report & Strategic Recommendations for M 32-2 and M 32-3 Fire-Fighting Apparatus was reviewed by the Governance Committee. A project meeting will be called in February for the M 32-2 and M 32-3 replacement mini-pumper design committee. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the mission, direction, function, and strategic guidance from the Governance Committee to move forward on the project.
- Review of all Fleet maintenance items and concerns. Aerial apparatus testing and tire preventive maintenance and replacement items are the current priority to be addressed. Aerial testing will take place in the next thirty days due to the annual testing not being completed in 2023. Tire replacement schedule for fire apparatus will begin immediately.

### **Chief's Report**

- Operational report, alarm report, highlights of significant incidents, response to SUNY, mutual aid received and given, Broome Co. OES and NYS OFPC inquiries, station activity, fire prevention / education, Foam mitigation.

Chief J. Paffie reported out that Vestal Fire responded to a total of 42 incidents from January 1<sup>st</sup> to the morning of January 24<sup>th</sup>. Twelve of those were to Binghamton University. There was one second alarm Structure Fire in town at 513 Front Street. The fire department received mutual aid from Endicott Fire, West Corners Fire and Endwell Fire. The fire department responded to four mutual aid assistances calls. On standby for Endicott and Endwell Fire for a water rescue call for a possible

subject threatening to jump. Responded to Endwell for three structure fires in their district, all within the past week and half.

Question was raised on how many alarms were at BU and if were receiving funds from them? The fire department responded to 12 and no were are not.

Another question was asked on the protocol to responding on campus. The fire department responds to 2 or more detector activations in a building on campus. The dorms are set up for supervisory alarms which is an activation of only one detector. If two or more detectors activate in dorm, fire department responds.

When the change in protocol first was instituted, the fire department was going to about 8 a year to 900 a year due to every smells and bells incident.

Commissioner S. Donnelly made a recommendation to sit down with President Harvey Stenger to address supporting Vestal since they support Johnson City and Binghamton.

Commissioner S. Messina stated that they don't have a choice with Binghamton and Johnson City because they are paid fire department and we're volunteer fire department. We're not eligible.

Governance Committee Chairman T. McCartney offer another topic of discussion probably during a work session is to start a bunk-in program with BU students that are already firefighters in their home departments. Chief J. Paffie and T. McCartney talked briefly about it and the message they are receiving from the university is positive. However we need to have a good, solid strategic plan going forward.

Vestal Fire Department will be receiving (60) 5- gallon pails of universal green foam Broome County office of Emergency Services. This is to help them replace the bad form of PFAS foam that can be harmful to firefighters. We also met with Buckeye representatives at the Buckeye terminal on Shippers road, right behind Lowe's. Buckeye is looking to replace some of their foam that they purchased with the special tax district replacing some of that foam. We're talking possibly 4 totes of 275 gallon and possibly being able to remove some of the bad foam also. Which is a huge lift on Vestal Fire. The foam mitigation, we're still trying to work on quotes to get the bad foam removed from the trucks and the stations.

Since the beginning of year because the firefighters have to do annual PESH online training and mass fit test, and as was stated earlier, there's several spring state classes that are out there that members are taking.

### **Old Business:**

On January 16, 2024, Special Election was held at Vestal Fire Department Station #3 from 12pm to 9pm. This Election was held to receive the approval of the voters of the Fire District to purchase under Bond for \$2,040,000 to replace the 2002 Tower 32-1 Vehicle. Total of 86 votes were casted with the vote was in favor of the purchase 83 to 3.

Legal Notice of Estoppel will be published in and online of the Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin on Monday, January 29, 2024.

Question was raised by Commissioner M. Sexton that going forward, whenever the next vote occurs, are we good with making the announcement through the regular town board proceedings, so it can be on the video. Also, do it on the website as well to try to hit as many people as possible.

Governance Committee Chairman T. McCartney that we certainly can and we have had it on the website and in the minutes in the past.

Commissioner M. Sexton continued as we better our technology and get more people to engage with us and they'll become more aware because it is concerning and some residents have said it about the 86 people showing up for vote for millions of dollars. It's an awareness thing.

**New Business:**

None

**Public Comments:**

President D Kirchheimer reminded the Commissioners of a small ceremony for the installation of officers at the Department Meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup> at 7pm with dinner prior to at 6pm.

**Commissioners Comments:**

Commissioner M. Sexton commented she want to thank all the firemen for all they do. As you know, we could not do it without the all the dedication of everybody. Commissioner M. Sexton was notified by Broome County Dispatch of the fire on Front Street where she showed up at midnight. Every day she has a greater appreciation that these are people not paid coming in off their time. Thank you very much for all the work that you put.

Next meeting of the Fire District will be February 28, 2024 at 5pm

Motion by Commissioner S. Messina and seconded by Commissioner R. Greene Jr. to adjourn the meeting at 5:35 pm. Ayes: Sexton, Messina, Donnelly, Greene Jr., Opposed: None, Absent: Miller. Carried.