



**VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONER
REGULAR MEETING - MINUTES**

Date: November 15, 2023

The meeting was called to order at the conclusion of the Town Board Meeting at 5:51pm by Chairman J. Schaffer.

Present: Commissioners: Other Present:

J. Schaffer-Chairman
S. Donnelly
S. Messina
P. Fitzgerald
J. Fletcher

S. Bowen- Fire District Secretary
P. Willes - Director of Purchasing
J. Farley – Treasurer/Deputy Town Comptroller
N. Angeline- Deputy Treasurer/ Town Comptroller
V. Myers – Town Engineer
J. Paffie – Fire Chief
C. Paffie- Asst. Chief ST4
D. Kirchheimer- Dept. President
D. Rose- Asst. Chief ST1
4 members of the Public

Governance Committee:

T. McCartney- Chair
D. Harrington- Member
M. Tomko- Member

Pledge to the Flag was conducted during the Town Board Meeting.

Motioned by J. Fletcher, seconded by P. Fitzgerald to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2023 Meeting. All ayes. Carried.

Correspondence:

- Received and file Warrant 2023-43F from October 27, 2023.

Bid Openings

None

Resolutions

Resolution R38F-2023 to use funds from the Fire District's Capital Reserve:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Vestal Fire District, in the Town of Vestal, pursuant to the provisions of Section 64 of the Town Law, hereby to spend from the Fire District's Capital Building and Grounds Reserve Fund in the amount of \$260,000 for the purchase of Standby Generators, Electrical Upgrade, Siren and Siren Controls and all associated costs with installation for the Vestal Fire Department Station 1 and Station 3.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution is subject to a Permissive Referendum, notice of which shall be posted and published in accordance with Section 90 of the Town Law.

Motioned by P Fitzgerald, seconded by J. Fletcher to approve the resolution.
All ayes. Carried.

A vote was then taken upon the motion for adoption with the following results:

JOHN SCHAFFER, Chairman	VOTING	AYE
STEPHEN DONNELLY, Fire Commissioner	VOTING	AYE
PATTY FITZGERALD, Fire Commissioner	VOTING	AYE
JOHN FLETCHER, Fire Commissioner	VOTING	AYE
SUE MESSINA, Fire Commissioner	VOTING	AYE

Motioned by S. Messina, seconded by P. Fitzgerald to approve the publication of the Resolution in Binghamton Press and Sun-Bulletin on Wednesday, November 22, 2023. All ayes. Carried.

Motioned by P. Fitzgerald, seconded by J. Fletcher to approve Chairman Schaffer to sign the Gordian Company Job Order to begin the projects at the completion of the Permissive Referendum. All ayes. Carried.

Chief's Report

J. Paffie:

- 1) Equipment- Asst. Chief Paffie explained the HT750 & HT1250 portable radios were donated to other Emergency Service Departments as they were no longer useful.
- 2) Apparatus- Asst. Chief Paffie mentioned that Tower 1 was back out for maintenance issues.
- 3) Radio Communications
- 4) Stations
- 5) Training
- 6) Special Events
- 7) Miscellaneous-Asst. Chief Paffie was asked by Commissioner S. Donnelly about any thoughts he might have based on the discussion in the Town Board Meeting about the Station 4 Project. Based on a complaint from a neighbor near the Fire Station, Asst. Chief Paffie advised he has spoken this person to resolve the issue. It was discussed V. Myers in the Town Board Meeting that there could be a way to reduce the amount of light exposure coming from inside the building & the lights in the parking lot which would be to add light shields to the lights.

- Fire Chief J. Paffie mentioned about siren control that was also another discussion from the Town Board Meeting about Station 4. He considered testing the siren and the sound control of it.

-Asst. D. Rose discussed that the Fire Siren is used for emergencies. The phones should not be the primary source for notifications because they do not always go through right away. The Siren is only on from the hours 8am to 8pm.

- Asst. C Paffie added that the apparatus was moved from the old Station 4 to the New Station based on being told Spectrum was going to be there to set up Internet Tuesday, November 13, 2023 between 8:30 am to 9am. However, a subcontractor for Spectrum ran the Coax line but did not bring the rest of the equipment to complete the install. The administration office has been working on getting in contact with the account representative to complete this install.

-Asst. C. Paffie stated the Firehouse Subs fundraiser date was moved to November 27, 2023 through December 2, 2023 at the new Fire Station 4.

Treasurer's Report:

Presented Vouchers to be paid.

Motioned by S. Messina, seconded by J. Fletcher to approve Vouchers for payment. All ayes. Carried.

Budget & Finance:

- 1) Motioned by S. Donnelly, seconded by S. Messina to approve the following:
 - a) Extra Services Bergmann Architects as outlined/described on the attached Additional Services Agreement. Through discussion/negotiation between the Town Engineer and Architect the original request of \$51,000 was reduced to \$41,000, approximately 20%. The Town Engineers supports the extra services explanation and fee. The overall Architect fees are slightly over 10% of the total project budget which is acceptable.
 - b) For Chairman Schaffer to sign off on the Notice of Additional Services for Bergmann Architects.
All ayes. Carried.
- 2) Motioned by P. Fitzgerald, seconded by J. Fletcher to approve the purchase of SG 4000 Smoke Generator Plus Package in the amount of \$5,577.01 this includes a 3% discount from Sourcewell. The SG 4000 Smoke Generator Plus includes Cleaning solution for the generator, the Smoke Generator, Wireless Kit, Transport Case and Smoke Liquid.
All ayes. Carried.
- 3) Motioned by S. Donnelly, seconded by J. Fletcher to approve retroactively for Chairman Schaffer to authorize Fire District Secretary to Set up and Sign off for a new Spectrum Enterprise account for new coax service at the New Station 4. There is a one-time fee of \$99.00 for installation and a Monthly cost of \$134.98 which includes Spectrum Business Internet Ultra at \$114.99 and 1 Static IP Address at \$19.99.
All ayes. Carried.
- 4) Motioned by S. Messina, seconded by P. Fitzgerald to approve the purchase of an installation of the following in regards to Stand-by Generators, Electrical Upgrade, Siren and Siren Controller, and all associated costs for installation of all equipment.
Station. 1:
\$95,866 for generator and electrical infrastructure
\$5,000 for siren controller install (electrical)
\$4,383 should there be a need to replace the Siren due to the age of the siren.

Station 3:
\$145,368 for generator and electrical infrastructure
\$5,000 for siren controller install (electrical)
\$4,383 should there be a need to replace the Siren due to the age of the siren

Quotes were received through Matco Electrical Corp under the Gordian Company for both stations for the purchase of the generators and all associated electrical upgrade. Siren and Siren Controller will be purchased through Federal Signal.

The funds would come from the Fire District's Capital Building and Grounds Reserve Fund in the amount of \$260,000 subject to a Permissive Referendum.

Personnel:

None

Old Business:

- 1) Request Status of the removal and disposal of the old Foam.

-Asst. Chief Paffie mentioned he did contact a vendor to discuss the removal and disposal of the old Foam. Chairman J. Schaffer advised the insurance company had requested a status about the removal and disposal of the old Foam. Ass. Chief Paffie added he has not received a response, but will advise with information when contacted.

New Business:

- 1) At their regular Town Board Meeting, it was resolved that the Vestal Town Board and the Vestal Board of Fire Commissioners will begin the process of separating the two boards as the Town of Vestal is the only town in New York State that still operates this matter. The Fire District Attorney advises that the Town Board cannot put in place interim fire commissioners during this process. The Town Board may put in place a **Governance Committee** to oversee the fire district until commissioners are elected in December of 2024.

Governance Committee:

- o Tom McCartney - Chair
 - o Dave Harrington - Vice Chair / Member
 - o Ron Birdsall - Member
 - o Mike Petcosky - Member
 - o Mark Tomko - Member (external to the Vestal Fire Department)
- a) The Town Supervisor & current Chair of the Board of Fire Commissioners will conduct in full cooperation with the Governance Committee by the Fire District Secretary, Fire Department Chief and Fire Department President.
 - b) The Governance Committee will then establish a list of duties and objectives. The Governance Committee should express the objectives to the Fire Department and the Town Supervisor/Chair of the current Fire District.
 - c) The meetings that will be put into place will be twice a month starting 11/16/2023 or as needed for the future Vestal Fire District.

- d) Discussion of the current fire district assets, policy, employees, records, and finances shall be held to be able to identify gaps and recommend improvements.
- e) All members of the Governance Committee need to obtain the necessary training as recommended by state Fire District Law.
- f) The Governance Committee Chair will report back to the Town Supervisor Chair Board of Fire Commissioners and brief the Fire Department President on progress of the committee.
- g) The Fire Chief will be made aware of any anomalies as they are determined if they create a risk to fire department operations.
- h) The Governance Committee Chair will provide a brief update on activities to the members of the Vestal Fire Department President at monthly department meetings.
- i) Depending on what the State Comptroller's Office decides, The Town Board will proceed to dissolve the current Vestal Fire District. Public Meetings will be held necessary to meet compliance to state Fire District Law to form a new Vestal Fire District.
- j) The Governance Committee will establish policies and procedures for the new Fire District and communicate the policy to the Fire Department Chief and Fire Department President.
- k) There is plan to determine the new Fire District budget for fiscal year 2025 and provide the Town of Vestal a tax levy to be collected for 2025.
- l) The Public election of a new Board of Fire Commissioners will be held in December of 2024. Therefore, the Governance Committee will be considered the New Board of Fire Commissioners.

Public Comments:

- 1) A member of the public explained since going back to Standard Time, the Training Site lights are left on all the time. He doesn't see why the lights should be left on if no one is there using the facility. Fire Chief J. Paffie responded by explaining that Vestal Fire Department volunteers are not the only department that occupies the facility, other Departments lease it as well. He says he will put word out to make sure the lights should be shut off when the facility is not in use.
- 2) Fire Chief J. Paffie wanted on record that he and the other chiefs were 100% on board in favor of the Vestal Fire District and Town of Vestal officially separating. Chairman Schaffer agreed and that it's been a long time coming. It will remove the burden from the Town Board and the Supervisor. This process will benefit everyone in the long run.

- 3) V. Myers, the Town Engineer, asked how does one become a fire commissioner. Chairman J. Schaffer discusses that members of the Board of Fire Commissioners do not need to include all present firemen. It is advised to have at least four firefighters and one outsider for Commissioners.

- 4) T. McCartney proceeds further discussion on the transformation. The Board of Fire commissioners are made up of 5 people that are elected by the public. It doesn't have to be members from the Fire Department but 5 people that would become the governing body for the fire district. The fire district is a \$2.2 million-dollar business that you intend to run. Tom believes it's a smart business plan, to be capable to know and understand the business side. The current group, the appointed Governance Committee, has a total of 209 years of experience in emergency services. Four of them are past fire chiefs and one is the President of the EMS Board of Director. All know and understand the emergency services as a business. This group will seek advice from others. This group will work real close with fire department administration, fire chiefs, and all town officials and will move this agenda forward. We are going to do what's best for the town, what's best to protect the citizens of the town and to ensure that our fire fighters are safe. That is the whole agenda.

Commissioners Comments:

Future Meeting Dates:

Fire District Meeting: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at the conclusion of the Town Board Meeting.

Motioned by S. Messina, seconded by P. Fitzgerald to adjourn the meeting at 6:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paige Willes
Director of Purchasing

Susan Bowen
Fire District Secretary