



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

Board of
Fire Commissioners
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

Regular Commissioner Meeting Minutes October 9, 2024 @ 6:15pm

Present:

Commissioner Thomas McCartney
Commissioner David Harrington
Commissioner Ronald Birdsall
Commissioner Daniel Kirchheimer
Commissioner Mark Tomko

Other Present: Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary

Paige Willes-Brown, Director of Purchasing
Marisa Butler, Fire District Treasurer
John Paffie, District Chief
Charles Paffie, Assistant Fire Chief
Stephen Langeland, Assistant Fire Chief
William Stout, Assistant Fire Chief
9 others from the public

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Chairman T. McCartney at 6:15pm.

- 1.) The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted during the Organizational Meeting held prior to the regular meeting.
- 2.) Motion by Commissioner M. Tomko, seconded by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board of Fire Commissioners from September 11, 2024. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.
- 3.) Motion by Commissioner R. Birdsall, seconded by Commissioner M. Tomko to approve and pay the Audit of Claims as presented. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.
- 4.) Correspondence Report
 - 4.1 Verbal request from Fire Department Recording Secretary E. Hildebrand to use the Lobby of the Fire District office for the 2024 Fire Department Chief Election on December 12, 2024 from 12pm to 8:00pm. Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner R. Birdsall to allow the Fire Department to utilize the Lobby of the Fire District Office to hold the 2024 Fire Department Chief Election. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.
 - 4.2 Secretary S. Bowen received Vestal Central School District Wide Safety Plan for 2024-2025
 - 4.3 Secretary S. Bowen received a visit and email from Ben Johnson from Mirabito for their event GIVE BACK FRIDAY taking place on November 29th from 11am to 2pm at the Mirabito across from the Target Plaza. Motion by Commissioner D. Harrington, seconded by Commissioner M. Tomko to support the Fire Department in this event. Secretary S. Bowen to forward the email to Chief J. Paffie for his review. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.
- 5.) Secretary's Report
 - 5.1 Secretary S. Bowen present Proof of the meeting announcement in the Press and Sun



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

Bulletin Paper and online.

5.2 Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner D. Harrington to retain the services of Hannigan Law LLC for the 2025 fiscal year. The retainer flat-fee for 2025 will be \$12,500 with the hourly rate \$350 for beyond the scope of work that is included in the flat-fee, such as litigation, bid specifications, building construction, or disciplinary actions. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.

6.) Director of Purchasing Report

6.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Kirchheimer to approve to pay the invoice from Hannigan Law LLC in the amount of \$2,590. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.

Discussion regarding the Town reimbursing the Fire District for a portion of the invoice that pertained to services rendered for drafting the dissolution plan which should be the cost to the Town not the Fire District.

Commissioner T. McCartney to talk to Public Safety Chair S. Messina regarding the invoice.

6.2 Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner R. Birdsall to approve to enter into an agreement with Spectrum Enterprise to provide Fiber Internet services to Station 2 at a cost of \$550 month. All in favor: 5, those opposed 0. Motion Carried.

7.) Treasurer's Report

Treasurer M. Butler has established the on retrieving and EIN number for the Fire District and setting up with New York State sales tax exemption.

Bank accounts will be set up once the Town Comptroller has finished reconciling the Reserve Accounts along with the Revenue and Expense Accounts.

The Treasurer has not received the income and expense reports from the Town Comptroller for this meeting.

8.) Public Input Session

A member of the public wanted to congratulate the Vestal Fire District for successful separation from the Town. There is paperwork and legal stuff to take care of on behalf of LOSAP transferring from the Town to the Fire District. He would need the signatures of the Commissioners and a few other things that is needed to get the transition started.

Asst. C. Paffie questions the time and location on the public election on December 10th. Is it 9am to 9pm?

Commissioner McCartney explains traditionally, that is what we have done for past elections



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

Board of
Fire Commissioners
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

but it is not the legal requirement. The legal requirement is to hold elections in the evenings. Although, McCartney strongly believes that we should not change the way we hold elections. We have been criticized for not publicizing enough but he feels we have done everything we possibly could have done for the minimum requirements for public voting. The election will be held at Vestal Fire Station #3, 2164 Owego Rd. Vestal, NY 13850.

A member asked about the legal announcements and meeting minutes being published on the Town website or will there be a new location for the public to view. Commissioner McCartney states we are in the process of forming a Vestal Fire District website and everything will be posted on there moving forward. It will no longer be on the Town website. Commissioner Harrington asks will we be moving prior information over from the Town website pertaining to Fire District matters or just from when we separated for 2024? Secretary S. Bowen explains she had spoke with John Hussar, our rep with Grey Goose Graphics about transferring everything over to the new website.

Asst. C. Paffie asks about the changeover for IT Services. Commissioner Kirchheimer explains moving forward, we will be using Pyramid. The goal is the have everything changed over by the end of October. We have a dedicated engineer, Ron Eubank. He is currently assessing over current inventory and getting new system hardware and software transitioned from the Town. There was a meeting held with Bob Ash, owner of Pyramid and Ron Eubank, a representative from Spectrum and a representative from the phone company. There is a lot of moving parts to this transition but this company is incredibly competent. Ultimately, they are working on improving redundancy of Internet service. He believes that having everything accomplished by the end of October is a little more optimistic personally but the server is in and configured and working everything out. Not only the hardware but also the software. For example, the emails and access to drives. He wanted to recognize Dave Foland, IT for the Department, for his involvement in this process. Commissioner McCartney adds the Town is in full support of helping us in any way they can to get everything fully functioning.

-Asst. C. Paffie asked a question regarding a member that went to life membership and they would like to come back active. He states that there is nothing in the by-laws that state how to handle that. Secretary S. Bowen suggests they will probably have to fill out another application only because it would depend on how many years they have been gone. S. Bowen reads Reinstatement, Article 3, Section 8 that states *“Any member who has a break in service desiring reinstatement must make written request to the Company. Such request shall be subject to provisions of these by-laws. Any member, whose name has been of the current membership roster for one year or more, shall rejoin in the status of a member on probation pending Arson and Sex Offender Investigation and updating current physical status prior to any firematic activities. Any such member, if reinstated, shall have prior service in the Vestal Fire Department recognized as cumulative service except for the purpose of holding office as per these by-laws.”* Commissioner McCartney suggests that a member would do the same process as required as if a new member was joining. You would be able to bring them on as a probation member.

9.) Scheduled Appointments

-Tony Hill, Firefly



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

Board of
Fire Commissioners
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

-Tim Hannigan, Fire District Attorney- Training Session with the Commissioners and Staff.
Education on Roles and Responsibilities on November 8th.

-Ben, Fiscal Advisors- Current plan for borrowing money for large projects and any apparatus
up until 2027

10.) Association(s) Report
-None.

11.) Department Business Report-President Starr (or Designee) for September

-The department participated in Annual Safety Expo House on Saturday, October 8th at
Barnes & Noble Parking Lot in Vestal, New York. This included safety demonstrations,
touch a truck tours, free giveaways such as hats, coloring books, stickers, etc.

-Fire Prevention event at Bridgewater Church Youth Academy for Youth Group

-Provided Support to Binghamton University for Homecoming Fireworks Display

-Participated in Stash Strong 5k Benefit for Brain Cancer Research and flew Flag over the
finish line at Vestal High School.

- Chicken BBQ at Vestal Fire Station #3

-Open House at New Station #4 provided public with an inside look of the facility

12.) Operations Report-Chief Paffie (or Designee)

-The Fire Department responded to 87 calls since September 1st. Approximately 33 of them
have been to Binghamton University for fire alarms, elevator entrapments, and natural gas
orders.

-The total of fire calls for the year are approximately 685.

-2 Mutual Aid Calls Received:

-309 Front Street for a house fire, second alarm house fire.

-912 Murray Hill Rd, also second alarm

- 1 Mutual Aid Call Given:

- Susquehanna County for second alarm house fire

-Foam Mitigation:

-All of the Foam has been removed from the Trucks, the Old Engines, the Stations,
there is a little bit left in the Foam Truck that can't be removed, in the process of



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

getting quotes for how to remove it, to remove it and to recalibrate the foam system for the truck

- All of the Foam has been moved to Buckeye East and awaiting pick up
- No current Class B Foam on any apparatus right now, there is totes on trailers and ready to respond if need be

- Station #1 had an Engine Crew standby for Endwell on October 5th for their dinner dance

- Station #1 standby for Homecoming Football Game at the Vestal High School on October 27th.

- Chief's Association Meeting on October 3rd, discussion about being dispatched by name. Newer dispatchers, with little to no experience and the way the cad system is built, there is no possible way for it to be changed to a name instead of a number, they are going to keep it the way it is.

- Water Rescue Team is in the process of creating a Battalion 3 Water Rescue

13.) Station Reports (New Members/Membership Changes/Fund Raiser/Special Events)

a. Station 1

- 1 new member, in process

b. Station 2

- 13b.1- Request from Station 2 Auxiliary for Election Day Bake Sale on November 5th from 6am to 1pm.

c. Station 3

- 13c.1- Request from Station 3 Auxiliary for Election Day Bake Sale on November 5th from 6am-6pm.

d. Station 4

Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve the bake sales. All in Favor: 5. Opposed: None. Absent: None.

14.) Commissioner Reports

a. Commissioner McCartney

- Meeting was held with Town Public Safety Chair, Sue Messina. She is the liaison for the Fire District and a discussion was had on the memorandums and understanding regarding the payment of bills. The Town is going to continue to pay our bills until our



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

finances are established. The IT services are going to continue to be provided. They are going to continue to handle payroll.

- Discussion with the water department land, the training site.
 - We have to sign an MOU with the water department for the use of that moving forward and also the fact they are going to start charging for the water which will come out in a detailed policy how that's going to work.
- Employment status for Secretary, S. Bowen.
 - S. Bowen is going to stay an employee for the Town of Vestal and she is going to work for the Fire District to protect the benefits for working for the town for so long.
- Discussion about LOSAP Entitlement.

The information in the Business Office has to come over to the Fire District. It has to be done no later then December 31, 2024.
- Discussion on Deed Transfer
 - A discussion was had with the Town Board and the Town Attorney. Station #1 and Station #2 deeds are going to be transferred to the Fire District.
- Discussion with Admin Office
 - New contracts and need to signed immediately. We need to issue a request for bid for snow & ice mitigation, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, radio repair, apparatus, and preventative maintenance repair. Legal process of advertising for bids minimum 7 days for a bid. A big concern is snow & ice removal. A scope of work was given to Commissioner Kirchheimer that was provided to us to help write our bid spec. Hopeful with expediting this process, we should try to get a contract in place by the end of October. The Town Highway Department has decided they can't support our original ask for an MOU for snow & ice removal. The scope of work will be given to Secretary, S. Bowen on October 16th to advertise for bid for the snow & ice mitigation.
- Discussion with Doug Rose. (Security Officer)
 - Doug Rose will have access control to video cameras in the district office. The outside door at the District office will have an access control reader that all members of the department will have access to the lobby area. The office space in the District office is limited to fire district personnel. The front door will be locked to the public and there are video cameras and door release buttons in the 2 full time employees offices and also, in the vestibule area where the sliding glass door is.
- Final Meeting
 - There has been quite a time spent on reviewing and developing Fire District policies. They had a final Governance Committee, Chief, Staff and Senior Staff meeting to discuss rules engagement with the Fire Commissioners.
- New Office Location
 - Assisted with moving some of the office equipment to the new office location.
 - New Fire District logo will be placed on the front door of the office building
- Fire Expo
 - A board was displayed at the Fire Expo to showcase our new logo. Thank you to Jean Stout for taking pictures of all of the fire stations and the training site.



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

-
- Discussion with Fleet Director
 - HV warranty discussions
 - b. Commissioner Harrington
 - Grants and Funding
 - Grants and funding the AFG grant will be checking the FEMA go site to determine if we received notification of not being awarded a grant during this cycle. We're in the process of getting a third price for the wildland gear so that we can purchase new gear and utilize our DEC Grant money.
 - Tioga Downs Community Foundation grant for the Fred Singer Training Site. Applications are due 10/25 and also continuing to research the local community grants for funding. He did speak with our grant's coordinator, Bill Fletcher and will continue to focus on the Fred Singer facility. Being a multi-agency, we have a higher probability of getting awards so that will be a continued focus.
 - Records Management
 - Working with records management coordinator Doug Rose, reports are current to date, both fire and other. There is some missing information being followed up on. We're checking on some missing information. We'll be following up with the Chiefs and the officers in charge on some of the missing information.
 - Working on updating more user-friendly on-scene information sheets for gathering data on scene for reports. Hopefully, maybe even some laminated cheat sheets on apparatus for gathering information. Trying to improve the quality of the data on our reports, so the more information, the more cheat sheets maybe, and the more outreach maybe it'll be less rework and rewrite. We are going to be looking at processes this year, process improvement. So, we can't fix everything, so he will be working with Doug Rose.
 - SOGS, AOGS, & Fire District Policies
 - As the Fire District files and approves the Fire District policies, there's going to be a lift on the SOGS and AOGS to stay in sync back to the Fire District policies. There will be a lot of policies coming out from the Fire District, reviewing them, approving them. As we are starting a new Fire District, we have to get some of these policies in place before the first of the year. So, he thinks that will be a big lift next year for district policy processes and procedures to try to get more efficient. We need to make sure that the members are aware of them, that the Fire Department leadership is aware of them and that they're realistic and feasible and we just can't have a lot of policies posted. But we have to communicate them out. We have to educate everybody so we understand we can go from maybe a handful of policies to say 30 policies. We are going to pick the bigger policies and more urgent.
 - Finance
 - Reminder for the October 15th Public Hearing for the 2025 Proposed Budget at 6pm at Station #3. It's important that we understand the 2025 budget and then everyone will appreciate why we're proposing it and what it is to separate and start up as our own.
 - c. Commissioner Tomko



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

-
- He wanted to thank Chris Lupold, Derek Waddell, and Bruce Willis for leading their respective areas. Also, a thanks to all of the station chiefs and the members for pitching in on all of the training and safety stuff that goes on.
 - Hazmat Decontamination training has been completed with Broome County.
 - Truck company ops are scheduled for this month.
 - Most members up to date on ESIP Training.
 - New Training Report is out and is in use.
 - Physicals
 - Issue with physicals being done, but a note stating to follow up with primary doctor. We are going to be working on a plan to get some better communication and some status on that and it brings up the need whether we need a discussion, whether we need a medical director or somebody like that to address specific issues with the physicals. He is going to reach out to the other departments having the same issue with Guthrie following physicals.
 - Fred Singer Training Site
 - Thank you to all of the members who helped participate in fixing it up and getting all all of the repairs done. Bruce Willis, Training Site Coordinator, is planning to purchase more equipment and stuff to do the repairs and maintenance on it going forward with leftover grant money from the County. The Burn building has another new crack in the ceiling tile and the BC corner should be repaired this week. Once that is fixed, it should be back to NFPA standards for training purposes. He requests a list of improvements and things to add and he will find out if we could be accepted for grants to help with that. The Vestal Fire District will now be preparing a video from a marketing and awareness is one of our three outreaches that we're going to be doing for improving our facts and information to the public. People don't know enough about the training site. The training site should be a fairly distributed operation for cost for other fire agencies, not just Vestal.
 - d. Commissioner Kirchheimer
 - Buildings & Grounds
 - He will be reaching out to station captains and the station president to watch for issues in the truck rooms and non-truck room areas that need attention.
need attention.
 - Station #2 Building
 - There are some lights that are intermittent and not working which would require an electrician to come in.
 - Stations Cleaning Services
 - For the time being, the cleaning services that were provided by the Town won't be available as they are on a leave of absence. So, it is a work in progress to do the bidding process for hiring a private company for cleaning services and evaluating the need for how often we need it done.
 - Videos Showcasing Vestal Fire
 - Grey Goose Graphics, we're currently in the process of developing videos for showcasing Vestal Fire. So, the first video is going to be about the district and a little bit of history and the Fire Department. The second one is going to be on recruitment. The third one is going to be on the Fred Singer Training Site.



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

-
- Sale of Old Station #4
 - There was a meet up with a real estate broker well versed in the commercial real estate. They are going to try to maximize the sale price and using the process with the actual professional will not only get the best price but also ensure there no even appearance of impropriety.
 - e. Commissioner Birdsall
 - Fleet Maintenance
 - We have multiple service vendors for vehicles based on authorization and certifications that depends on who the bidder is and who is awarded. All Chevy bulletins and all mileage-based service process have been completed on the Chief's vehicles. These vehicles will track information as we do on all other fleet apparatus. Tickets must be created by the Chiefs moving forward. A warranty issue has been brought up on the Chiefs vehicles. The vehicles should be going to a dealership based on the manufacturer. When the Chiefs vehicles were purchased, they came with warranties but as soon as we go out of service and take them elsewhere, the warranties become void.
 - The TFT inlet valves for the air bleeders must be open when hydrant water is entering the pump or the air pressure will not permit the warm gear to open the valve and apparently this is nothing new, but we've been having some issues with that and I guess that's part of the problem.
 - New Vendors
 - As far as HME service system has all the outstanding issues loaded and improperly with the new dealership Millertown. Millertown Garage, the progress has improved dramatically since they have switched from their previous location. The communications and fulfillment have definitely improved with HME.
 - Chief Paffie wanted to state on the record that Millertown has found stuff that Mark Aswad and his company did not do for Vestal Fire. It would be an option to see about continuing the warranty period because of the poor service and give us more time to them to prove good warranty service back to Vestal Fire.
 - Apparatus
 - Engine 32-1 leaves for foam tank replacement when Tower 32-4 returns later this week.
 - Rescue 32-2 cascade system to be checked once Rescue 32-1 returns by an air system technician.
 - Improving of truck check sheets and training review throughout the department. It seems as though; the generators are not always ran as needed and not ran on load.
 - Will need to go for bid on Service Contracts as we are a new district and this would be for all apparatus vendors.
 - Command car fleet management is being initiated. A need to establish a baseline that all Chevrolet bulletins and all mileage based service processes have been completed on the command cars. These vehicles will track information as we do on all other fleet apparatus moving forward. Tickets must be created by the command car operators.

Command cars are the highest running fleet vehicles we operate, and the safety of the Chief's is critical.

Command Car 32: Model year 2015 with 60,707 miles.



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-321-6033
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
Ronald Birdsall
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney II
Mark Tomko

Command Car 32-1: Model year 2019 with 12,680 miles.
Command Car 32-2: Model year 2019 with 44,518 miles.
Command Car 32-3: Model year 2019 with 34,140 miles.
Command Car 32-4: Model year 2019 with 67,000 miles.

15.) Old Business

15.1 Old Engine 32-3 – There were concerns regarding how the bids were received and notice from one of the bidders being sent to former Board of Fire Commissioners. Recommendation to rebid the truck with clear and precise instructions for bidding. Bids will be opened at the October 30th Special Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting. Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner R. Birdsall to put the Old Engine 32-2 back out to bid. All in Favor, 5 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion was carried. Secretary S. Bowen to notified all bidders of the rebid and give clear and precise instructions for the bidding process if they choose to rebid on the truck.

Discussion ensued on releasing the old Engine 32-2 as a reserve engine and place it up for sale. Further discussion is needed about the need of a having a reserve engine before any decision is made.

16.) New Business

16.1 Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner R. Birdsall to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for FF Alexander Eaton for Mutual Aid Firefighting Services to Campville Fire Department in the Town of Owego Fire District. Signatures will be needed from FF Alexander Eaton, District Chief J. Paffie, Chairman T. McCartney, Campville Fire Chief and Chairman of the Town of Owego Fire District. All in Favor, 5 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion was carried.

16.2 Motion by Commissioner M. Tomko, seconded by Commissioner D. Harrington to accept a check from Broome County Government in the amount of \$5,223.85 for the payment of the Small Community Grant for the Fred Singer Training Site. All in Favor, 5 Ayes, 0 Opposed. Motion was carried.

17.) Executive Session (if needed) – None

18.) Motion by Commissioner D. Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner R. Birdsall to Adjourn the meeting at 7:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Bowen
Fire District Secretary