



# VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01  
Vestal • New York • 13850  
Phone: 607-797-2756  
[www.vestalfiredistrict.org](http://www.vestalfiredistrict.org)

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

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## **Work Session of the Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Minutes for August 13, 2025.**

Present: Thomas McCartney, Chairman  
David Harrington, Commissioner arrived at 6:55pm  
Mark Tomko, Commissioner  
Daniel Kirchheimer, Commissioner - Absent  
Ronald Birdsall, Commissioner  
Paige Willes-Brown, Director of Purchasing  
Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary  
Marisa Butler, Fire District Treasurer

1. Work session was called into session at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner McCartney.

2. Discussion on 2026 Budget

- The proposed budget increase was revised down from a \$6 increase to \$5.75. After further adjustments, there is a concern it might exceed 6%, with a desire to keep it below that threshold.
- Changes from a previous meeting are marked in red in the "proposed budget" column on page seven of the provided packet.
- Debt service went down, allowing for a higher allocation to the capital reserve.
- The BAN (Bond Anticipation Note) renewals bill from Orrick was over \$23,000, which is an increase. The 2026 budget for renewals is also \$23,000, but 2025 invoices have already exceeded that, suggesting the budget is too low. An additional \$15,000 might be needed, bringing the total to around \$35,000.
- Bills from the debt services from July/August are still pending but expected soon. The cost is expected to rise due to more debt coming in. There is time to adjust the budget before the September 24 adoption date.
- A resolution to override the 2% tax cap will be prepared for the next meeting to provide flexibility. It was suggested this should be an annual practice.
- Made various budget line item adjustments that were missed in the last meeting.

3. Hose Bid Review:

- o Bids were received from US Fire Service, Halo First Responder Products, and JPB Fire Sales and Service.
- o US Fire Service's bid was invalid (not notarized, did not meet hose material specs, no spec sheets).



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- Halo's bid was invalid (unsigned, potential delivery delays, possible hidden tariffs).
  - JPB's bid complied with all requirements, offered fast delivery, and is the only valid bidder. The group leaned towards awarding the contract to JPB.

## 4. Internet Connections

- Empire Dark Fiber Contract:
  - The district has an outstanding balance of approximately \$22,500 for a five-year contract on two unused "dark fiber" lines with three years remaining.
  - The contract was allegedly transferred illegally from the Town of Bustleton to the fire district by an Empire representative without authorization.
  - The district's IT setup (managed by Pyramid consultants) does not use this fiber.
  - The group is considering hiring an attorney (estimated cost: \$2,000) to challenge the contract versus paying the remaining \$21,000+. They agreed their IT consultant, Pyramid, should provide a recommendation.

## 5. Other topics not listed

- NERIS System Implementation:
  - The district is transitioning to the new Nears fire reporting system, with a go-live date of October 1st.
  - A one-time software build charge of \$2,300 is expected to be covered by the county.
  - There is an urgent need for training in September for power users and chiefs.
  - A formal project kickoff meeting is needed to define roles and create an implementation plan with major milestones, which will be presented to Chief Paffie for buy-in.
- Pesh Inspection and Compliance:
  - A voluntary Pesh inspection resulted in citations for lacking a respiratory protection plan and a hazard communication plan.
  - The attorney's office has drafted plans based on OSHA standards that need review by department staff (Derek and Andy) before board adoption.
  - A hazardous waste cleanup company will provide a quote to decontaminate the basement at station three to clear another citation.
- Workplace Violence Prevention Program:
  - The district was cited for not having a violence prevention program.
  - The town has a plan that can be adapted. This will involve an annual survey of stations to identify risks.



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- Personnel

- Commissioner Ronald Birdsall submitted his resignation, effective August 13th, 2025, due to life changes. The board will formally act on the resignation and thanked him for his service.
- It was recommended that Keith Purdy will be brought on to replace him as Commissioner Five. This will be acted on next meeting.

6. Motion by Commissioner Harrington, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to adjourn the work session at 8:05 pm