



# 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**  
David Harrington  
Daniel Kirchheimer  
Thomas McCartney  
Keith Purdy  
Mark Tomko

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## **Work Session of the Board of Fire Commissioners Meeting Agenda for October 22, 2025 at 6:30pm.**

Present: Thomas McCartney, Chairman  
David Harrington, Commissioner  
Mark Tomko, Commissioner  
Daniel Kirchheimer, Commissioner  
Keith Purdy, Commissioner  
Paige Willes-Brown, Director of Purchasing  
Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary  
Marisa Butler, Fire District Treasurer – Absent  
1 member from the public

1. Work session was called to order by Commissioner McCartney at 6:30 p.m.
2. Discussion on 2026 Budget
  - There were no changes to the 2026 budget after the public hearing last night and will proceed with the approval process for the next regular meeting.
3. Topics not listed – If needed
  - Election Policy – In depth discussion on the election policy
    - After review of the policy, the commissioners reached an informal consensus to proceed with the petition option and tasked Secretary Bowen with updating the policy document.
  - Old Tower 32-1 – a critical failure during third-party testing.
    - During testing, the tower experienced an immediate and catastrophic failure of a lift cylinder and its electrical system.
    - The primary decision is whether to invest significant funds into repairing Old Tower One, with no guarantee it will pass future tests.
    - The group must choose between repairing the truck for potential resale or selling it "as-is" to eliminate liability.
  - Discussion on Operator Complacency and Lack of Awareness with Apparatus.
  - Update on the sale process and environmental assessment of the old station 4 property. The discussion centered on comparing two competing offers for the old station property and the decision-making process.
    - A request to remove the old station's siren was discussed and dismissed.



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- The status of removing remaining drums from the old station was briefly addressed.
  - Commissioner Kirchheimer finalized the update on the property sale, covering risks and justifications for the chosen offer.
  - Close out of open items from previous minutes
    - The Sale of Old Midi 32-3
    - The use of Electronic Bidding
    - Attorney Communication with the Secretary and the Board
  - A potential bidder for the brush truck body has emerged, prompting a discussion on component sourcing and design specifications.
    - Two entities are interested in bidding on the next round for the brush truck, specifically to build the body and cabinets. They are aware that the district already possesses the chassis.
  - The new F-550 chassis is larger than expected, necessitating a potential modification to the truck body to ensure it fits in the station's bay.
    - The delivery of the first F-550 chassis to Station One revealed a space issue. To address this, Commissioner Purdy suggested a modification to shorten the truck body.
  - A plan was developed to purchase loaner laptops for members taking state courses.
    - The need was identified for loaner laptops for members in the blended basic firefighter program, as some lack personal laptops or home internet access.
    - Commissioner Kirchheimer and IT Director Fischbeck drafted a user agreement/contract for members signing out the laptops.
  - The commissioners discussed the inefficiency of the \$500 purchasing limit for the purchasing director.
    - The proposed new purchasing authority limit for the purchasing director will be \$2,000 for budgeted items. This requires commissioner approval at the next board meeting.
  - The commissioners decided to purchase a non-glass whiteboard for the training area after two expensive glass boards shattered during installation, resulting in a loss of \$470. The decision was made to avoid another costly failure with a fragile material.



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- The team is considering purchasing and installing a new AV setup for the meeting room to enhance professional presentation capabilities. TV's vs Projectors.
  - The proposed setup includes an 85-inch flat panel TV, a 50-inch flat panel TV on another wall, a multiplexer for dual-screen laptop projection, and the necessary HDMI cords.
- Commissioner McCartney presented a nomination for Secretary Bowen to the position of Director of Region Four for the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York.
  - Commissioner McCartney distributed a paper copy of the nomination for the group to review and adjust. He emphasized that all work and meeting attendance for this role would be on Sue's own time, using her own leave, with no chargebacks to the district.
- The Commissioners must adopt official district policies for Hazard Communication and Respiratory Protection to resolve an outstanding OSHA citation.
  - The district was cited by OSHA for lacking formal policies on Hazard Communication (HazCom) and Respiratory Protection. While the district has training and SOGs through ESIP on these topics, it does not have official district-level policies.
  - The district's attorney, Tim Hannigan, has provided policy templates based on the relevant OSHA standards (1910.134 and 1910.1200).
  - These templates were handed over to the Safety Bureau, but no feedback has been received.
- Secretary Bowen shared recommendations from Association Annual Conference.
  - Items regarding Human Resources items
  - Future requirement for fire districts to use a .gov domain for their websites
  - Applications and Humand Rights laws.
  - Keynote speaker Brad Kieserman, head of disaster management for the Red Cross
  - Went over courses that ESIP has that would be beneficial to the Department
  - Conference was deemed beneficial, and it is highly recommended that commissioners attend if they have time.
- The commissioners discussed the payment and reimbursement strategy for recently acquired hydrant adapters.



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- The district will decide by the upcoming Wednesday whether to pay the invoice directly and then seek reimbursement from the Town of Vestal
  - An unresolved issue regarding the reimbursement of Secretary's Bowen's salary from the town was addressed.
    - The district will pay the invoice once the details are worked out, ensuring her employment status and benefits are protected as the expense was budgeted and committed.
4. Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to adjourn the work session at 8:37 p.m.