



VESTAL FIRE DISTRICT

1136 Front Street, Suite 01
Vestal • New York • 13850
Phone: 607-797-2756
www.vestalfiredistrict.org

**Board of
Fire Commissioners**
David Harrington
Daniel Kirchheimer
Thomas McCartney
Keith Purdy
Mark Tomko

Regular Board of Fire Commissioner Meeting Minutes

March 25, 2026.

1. Present: Thomas McCartney, Chairman - Absent Others: John Paffie, Fire Chief
David Harrington, Commissioner Chuck Paffie, Assistant Fire Chief
Mark Tomko, Commissioner Bill Stout, Assistant Fire Chief
Daniel Kirchheimer, Commissioner Steve Langeland, Assistant Fire Chief
Keith Purdy, Commissioner – Absent Bob Hamilton, 2nd Lieutenant – Station 2
Don Albrecht, 2nd Lieutenant – Station 4

District Staff: Susan Bowen, Fire District Secretary
Paige Willes-Brown, Director of Purchasing
Marisa Butler, Fire District Treasurer - Absent
Clay Ellis, Director of Communications

2. Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Commissioner Kirchheimer.

3. Pledge of Allegiance with a moment of silence for Station 1 Life Member Gary Knewasser and Past Chief Douglas Rose Sr. was led by Commissioner Kirchheimer

4. Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes

4.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the minutes from the February 25, 2026, meeting

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

4.2 Motion by Commissioner Harrington, Seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve the minutes from the March 11, 2026, special meeting

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

5. Correspondence Report

5.1 Received and filed the Fire Advisory Board Minutes from February 16, 2026

5.2 Received thank you letter from Investigator Gregory Amyot, re: facility for NYS OFPC Peace Officer Training

5.3 Received communication from Jerry Karnauch of Broome County Department of Public Works requesting the use of Station 2 to host a meeting regarding bridge work on Glenwood Road on April 21 or April 23 at 6 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to allow Broome County Department of Public Works use of Station 2 to host a meeting regarding bridge work on Glenwood Road on April 21 or April 23 at 6 p.m.



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All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

6. Bid Openings – None

7. Scheduled Appointments (Guests) - None

8. Operations Report – Chief Paffie (or Designee)

- Since the last meeting, there have been 95 calls, with 32 at Binghamton University.
- There was one house fire in Station 4's zone, contained without a second alarm.
- Mutual aid was provided twice to Tioga County, once to Town of Binghamton, and once to West Corners.
- Members recently completed vehicle extrication and Fire Officer II training.
- The committee continues work on the foam pumper project, with progress dependent on foam chamber completion.

8.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve FF Shawn Hayden and FF Ryan Teed to attend FFS: Self Rescue April 13 to April 18 at Binghamton Fire Training Facility and 2nd Lieutenant Don Albrecht to attend Rope Rescue – Operations Level July 11 to July 19 at the NYS Academy of Fire Science.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

9. Department Business Report – President Eaton (or Designee)

Extensive funeral arrangements for past Chief Doug Rose have been organized, including a memorial meal and mutual aid coverage.

- The department president has been, assisting with funeral planning for Doug Rose, which has been a considerable effort.
- A meal for firefighters to "unwind" has been organized at the Elks from 3 to 6 p.m. on Saturday,
- Honor guard members will have a walkthrough/practice run tomorrow night.
- Ken Roe has been contacted to arrange for a bagpiper; a request was made to confirm if a piper can attend the dry run to understand the logistics for Saturday's service.
- Mutual aid coverage for the town during the funeral and viewing has been arranged:
 - Endwell engine at Station One.
 - Five Mile Point tower at Station Four.
 - Silver Lake Engine crew at Station Two.
- Ken Roe will serve as Acting Fire Chief during this period.

10. Station Reports (Fund Raiser/Special Events/Member Requests)

- a. Station 1
- b. Station 2
- c. Station 3



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10a.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve Station 3 to host a chicken BBQ on Saturday, May 9, 2026, from 11 a.m. until it is gone. Requesting coverage for the membership including auxiliary from 4 a.m. until 6 p.m.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

d. Station 4

11. Membership (New and Current) – None

Chief Paffie asked about on the progress on the application policy. Commissioner Kirchheimer deferred it to Commissioner McCartney upon his return

12. Commissioner Report

a. Commissioner McCartney – Administrative/Policy

- Commissioner Report

- Commissioner McCartney's activities from February 27 to March 25 were reported, including meetings on the training site, grants, cancer benefits, and a meeting with Carol Giorgio and neighbors about Station 4 siren complaints.
- In response to a query, Commissioner Kirchheimer explained that Commissioner McCartney advised the neighbors that a letter was sent to the county requesting the siren not be used for Binghamton University calls.
- While the county's response to the letter was not "warm," the neighbors were reportedly pleased that an effort was being made.
- A formal request by Chief Paffie was made that in any future meetings Commissioner McCartney has with the neighbors regarding the siren, a second person from the fire commissioners or a chief officer must also be present. Commissioner Kirchheimer to Relay the request to Commissioner McCartney

b. Commissioner Harrington – Financial/Records Management/Quality Assurance/LOSAP

- Commissioner Report

• Finance Report

- The fiscal budget policy continues to be refined with appendices and examples, but it will not be implemented until next year's budget cycle.
- Preliminary financials and bank reconciliations have been signed off on by the district treasurer.
- The 2025 end-of-year version of the 5-year/20-year financial scenario is under review.
- Key upcoming budget timeline dates were announced:
 - April 20: Budget owners submit to the District Chief and District Treasurer.
 - May 14: District Treasurer provides a draft to the District Chief.
 - May 15: Fire Commissioners submit their budgets to the Treasurer.
 - May 29: District Fire Chief and Assistant Chiefs review the draft and provide revisions to the Treasurer.



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- Grants and Funding
 - The committee is ensuring all three entities (district, department, and Fred Singer facility) are registered in federal and state grant systems.
 - Purchases are being made against the BDC grant for wildland firefighting equipment.
 - Work is underway on the Broome County Community Grant application for the Fred Singer facility, with pricing received for metal siding, the maze, and the smoke building.
 - A one-page marketing handout for potential donors is in progress.
 - The committee is exploring logistics for accepting donations via paper check, QR code, and possibly Venmo.
 - The Fred Singer Training Corporation is now a registered charity with the NYS OAG Charities Bureau, making it eligible for corporate matching gift programs.
- Records Management
 - Regarding NIMS courses affected by the federal shutdown, the Fire Coordinator provided a resolution that gave captains and lieutenants access to the required 100, 200, and 700-level courses.
 - The committee revised its outreach plan and will now combine all training information into a single bulletin rather than sending separate correspondences.
 - A meeting was held with Secretary Bowen, Safety Officer Eaton, FF Basila on March 18. It was noted that Doug Rose attended this meeting and was fully engaged.

c. Commissioner Tomko – Training/Safety Programs/Fred Singer Training Facility

- Commissioner Report

- Approximately 95% of required tracking is being done, but data is scattered across the T-drive, paper files, and other locations.
 - The goal is to standardize processes and centralize data storage to make it easier for officers.
 - The team is exploring software programs to allow for electronic vehicle checks via iPads, automating the time-consuming process of data transfer.
 - The physicals process is also being reviewed to find ways to offload and streamline it, potentially looking into programs offered by UHS or other providers to manage the process and improve communication.
- A question was asked about a previously suggested survey form to be turned in at the end of physicals. Commissioner Tomko confirmed that this was not complete.
- Assistant Chief Paffie suggested that the department has a tendency to take on too much at once, which results in incomplete projects and frustration. He proposed focusing on three or four specific topics, completing them, and then moving on to the next set of goals. This would allow for clearer results and ensure that all stations are implementing changes uniformly, preventing situations where one station completes a task while others do not.
- Assistant Chief Paffie advocated for resolving the most important topics, establishing a single, correct procedure, and then disseminating it to everyone. This approach should be taken before personnel invest time entering information, as forcing them to redo work will cause significant dissatisfaction.
- Training Site Updates:



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- Estimates for building siding have been received.
- Loose stairs in the maze are being repaired.
- The site checklist is being rewritten and consolidated into a single form, which will be made available online with a QR code and DocuSign capability.
- The site is being divided into two separate areas for vehicle extrication and vehicle fire training per a request from Director Waddell.

d. Commissioner Kirchheimer – Facilities/Information Technology/Physical Security/Human Resources

- Commissioner Report

- A new cleaner started at Station 4 this week.
- The sale of an unspecified property is still under contract, with an expected completion in a couple of weeks.
- Facilities Report
 - Facilities Director Dusty McCartney's report indicates 18 closed and 5 open work orders year-to-date, with all open orders in progress or awaiting parts.
 - Completed work includes:
 - Station 1: Replaced four ball valves in the truck room, repaired a roof leak, and completed electrical work for TVs.
 - Tower 1: Repaired air hose for the auto eject.
 - Station 2: Replaced the ladies' room toilet.
 - Station 3: Replaced the ladies' room toilet, repaired a water leak in central storage, and replaced a mop sink faucet.
 - Station 4: Repaired a leaking faucet in the truck bay, replaced a water heater valve, and repaired a truck bay heater (completed by the overhead door company).
- Physical Security Report
 - No new notable security events or entry denials were reported.
 - Director Colin White has access to change logs, access levels, time groups, denials, and a cardholder list.
 - A quote is being obtained from the computer shop for the installation of additional key access for central storage, per the quartermaster's request.
 - Two key fobs for the new cleaners have been dropped off at the office for them to pick up.
- Informational Technology Report
 - The computer shop has apologized for delays in installing laptops in the apparatus due to backorder issues.
 - Work is underway to set up an IT environment for a future part-time staffer, whose job description is currently on the website.
 - The ESIP computer use class/policy is still being assessed.
- Member Relations
 - Line of duty death benefits for Doug Rose.
 - Funeral planning for Doug Rose and Gary Knewasser.



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e. Commissioner Purdy – Asset/Equipment/Fleet Management

- Commissioner Report

- Quartermaster Report
 - Inventory for the period ending in February 2026 has been completed, with all items signed out.
 - The boots missing since November were located and signed out to the member they were issued to.
 - Quotes for the 2027 budget are being gathered. A quote for a keyless entry lock for central storage was received from Director Colin White.
 - Ordering of more carbon hoods is on hold as they are not NFPA compliant; more information is expected by April.
- Fleet Report
 - Vehicles out of service as of March 24 include Brush 32-1.
 - Vehicles pending work in 2026 are Boat 32-4 and Brush 32-1.
 - Maintenance tickets are open for a boat tune-up.
 - Chief 4 vehicle had its graphics replaced.
 - A quote is pending for outfitting the spill trailer.
 - Several tires have already been replaced this year.
 - Rescue 32-1 is experiencing light tower issues again.
 - Miller Town is engaged on tickets but has not been on-site for repairs recently.

13. Director of Communications

- TV coverage of Doug Rose's death was on Monday, interviewing FF Alex Zimmer, 1st Lieutenant Shelby Frisbie, and Station President Sean Fitzpatrick, resulting in good coverage.
- A reporter from the Press and Sun-Bulletin interviewed Station President Sean Fitzpatrick, 1st Lieutenant Shelby Frisbie, and the Chief, with a story expected to be published by the end of the week.
- Commissioner Kirchheimer expressed significant gratitude for the communications director's support during a difficult situation.

14. Secretary Report

14.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve Secretary Bowen to attend the New York Association of Local Government Records Officers Annual Conference, June 7, 2026, to June 9, 2026, at High Peaks Resort in Lake Placid. Registration is \$30.00 and lodging \$704.20. Meals are included with the conference apart from travel days.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

14.2 Discussion on LOSAP payments of deceased members



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It was discovered that a payment was made to member Richard Ward after his passing on December 20. Payments for February and March were stopped, but the January payment of \$120 was cashed by the family during the management of his estate.

Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to allow the family of Richard Ward to keep the January 2026 payment of \$120.00.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

14.3 Discussion on Knox Box Replacements

- The current Knox Box system is two generations obsolete, and parts are no longer available.
- Robert Hamilton reported that the new system operates via an in-vehicle keypad with individual PIN codes, which tracks access and removes the need to involve the county for activation.
- Tower 1 needs a new Knox Box, and Chief 4 vehicle is not operational.
- A plan was proposed to purchase two trial units this year using funds from the radio maintenance budget and the Tower 1 project budget.
- The full replacement can be phased in over a couple of years. The new units would use the keypad system, while the old units would continue to require county activation in the interim.

15. Elections (Annual or Special) - None

16. Treasurer Report

16.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to approve February 2026 Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss, and Budget vs. Actual report. All reports and bank reconciliations were reviewed by Commissioner Harrington.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

17. Approval to Properly Audit and Pay Claims as Submitted

17.1 Notification of checks printed and postdated to mail out after approval due to Treasurer M. Butler being unavailable.

17.2 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the Audit of Claims for 2026 Expenses & Encumbrances dated March 26, 2026, in total amount of \$49,465.52.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18. Director of Purchasing Report

18.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve hydrostatic testing for (41) cascade cylinder bottles and labor for approximately (6) hours at \$125 an hour (4 trips, 10-11 bottles per trip) for an estimated cost of \$3,500 to be completed by Jerome Fire Equipment.



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All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.2 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the purchase of (1) TFT Flow Meter 2.5" (Part #EFJ-NJN1250) and (1) TFT Flow Meter 1.5" (Part #EFF-NFNF300) not to exceed \$3,000. The funds will come out of the Foam District budget.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.3 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the purchase of (1) Sensit Gold G2 Gas Meter (LEL/CO/O2/H2S) with Hard Case, (1) Sensit Calibration Kit, (1) Calibration Kit (4GAS), (1) Regulator with Cal. Adapter Assembly, which includes shipment of hazmat gas at a total estimated cost of \$9,700 from Colden Enterprises. These funds will come out of the New Tower 32-1 Project.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.4 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the purchase of (10) Indian Smokechaser Pro Backpacks, FP300 Dual Action Fire Pump, Model #190654 for an estimated cost of \$2,800 from FirePenny Firefighter Equipment. This purchase is part of the DEC Grant.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.5 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the purchase of (2) Reznor Heaters for Station 2 for an estimated cost of \$4,200 from R.E Michel Company, LLC. This purchase will come from Building Capital Improvement Line in the budget for Station 2.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.6 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve debit card expenses from February 2026 in the amount of \$25,773.61.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.7 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve all Chief's Monthly Mileage Reports with the exception of Assistant Chief Miller's report, from February 25, 2026, to March 25, 2026.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.



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18.8 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to accept and deposit a check from Little Meadows Volunteer Fire Company in the amount of \$20,000 for the sale of old Midi 32-3. The money will be deposited into Line A230CR2.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.9 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to accept and deposit a check from Apalachin Fire District in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the Annual Training Site License.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.10 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to accept and deposit a check from West Corners Fire District in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the Annual Training Site License.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

18.11 Notification of cyber insurance invoice paid online

19. Policies and Procedures - None

20. Unfinished Business – None

21. New Business

21.1 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve Commissioner McCartney to request quotes from Delta Engineering and Lakeside Engineering for a Structural Integrity Evaluation of the Live Fire Training Structure.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

21.2 Motion by Commissioner Tomko, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to approve the purchase (1) Sensit Gold G2 Gas Meter (LEL/CO/O2/H2S) from Colden Enterprise for \$2,701.98 to come out of Station 4's Operational Budget

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

22. Resolutions – None

23. Announcements – None

24. Public Input Session



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-
- Chief Paffie publicly thanked the department president Andy Eaton, Commissioner Kirchheimer and Secretary Bowen for the significant work they have done to support Past Chief Rose and his family.
 - Commissioner Kirchheimer acknowledged the gratitude, emphasizing it was a group effort with many people contributing. He described the situation as overwhelming and noted the large void left in the department.
 - The sentiment was to ensure it was on the record that a substantial amount of work and time was invested to make sure the family received everything they deserved.

25. Executive Session

25.1 Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Tomko to enter executive session to discuss the resume and employment history of an individual(s) which may lead to his or her employment under Public Officers Law Section 105 (f).

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:18 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to exit the executive session and enter back into regular session.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

Exit Executive Session at 7:23 p.m.

No decisions were made from the Executive session.

26. Motion by Commissioner Kirchheimer, seconded by Commissioner Harrington to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

All in favor: 3 (Kirchheimer, Harrington, Tomko) Opposed: None Absent: 2 (McCartney, Purdy) Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Bowen
Fire District Secretary